

Committee for Social Development

**Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI
Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013, of
impropriety or irregularity relating to NIHE
managed contracts and consideration of any
resulting actions**

**Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence
and Written Submissions relating to the Report**

Ordered by the Committee for Social Development to be printed 3 July 2014

Membership and Powers

The Committee for Social Development is a Statutory Departmental Committee established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Standing Order 48.

The Committee has power to:

- consider and advise on Departmental budgets and annual plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- consider relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on any matters brought to the Committee by the Minister for Social Development.

The Committee has 11 members including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and a quorum of 5.

The membership of the Committee since 23 May 2011 has been as follows:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)

Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Jim Allister⁷

Ms Paula Bradley¹

Mr Gregory Campbell³

Mr Trevor Clarke⁸

Mr Michael Copeland

Mr Stewart Dickson¹¹

Ms Dolores Kelly¹⁰

Mr Fra McCann

Mr Sammy Wilson^{2,4,5,6,9}

1 With effect from 20 February 2012 Ms Paula Bradley replaced Mr Gregory Campbell
 2 With effect from 26 March 2012 Mr Alastair Ross replaced Mr Sammy Douglas
 3 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Gregory Campbell replaced Mr Alex Easton
 4 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Sammy Douglas replaced Mr Alastair Ross
 5 With effect from 11 February 2013 Mr Sydney Anderson replaced Mr Sammy Douglas
 6 With effect from 07 May 2013 Mr Sammy Douglas replaced Mr Sydney Anderson
 7 With effect from 09 September 2013 Mr Jim Allister replaced Mr David McClarty
 8 With effect from 16 September 2013 Mr Trevor Clarke replaced Ms Pam Brown
 9 With effect from 16 September 2013 Mr Sammy Wilson replaced Mr Sammy Douglas
 10 With effect from 30 September 2013 Mrs Dolores Kelly replaced Mr Mark H Durkan
 11 With effect from 01 October 2013 Mr Stewart Dickson replaced Mrs Judith Cochrane

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Introduction

1. Strand One, paragraph 9 of the Belfast Agreement states the following:
2. The Committee will have a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Department with which each is associated and will have a role in the initiation of legislation. They will have the power to:
 - Consider and advise on Department budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
 - Approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of relevant primary legislation;
 - Call for persons and papers;
 - Initiate enquiries and make reports; and
 - Consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the Minister for Social Development.
3. Under the Programme for Government, the Housing Executive has committed to improving the thermal efficiency of Housing Executive stock and to ensure that all its properties are fully double-glazed by March 2015.
4. On 8 May 2012, in response to an Assembly question, the Minister announced that he was suspending the double-glazing programme pending a rigorous review of the double-glazing specification and until the new contract provision, to include any revised specifications, can be put in place.
5. On 16 May 2012, the Chairperson of the Committee for Social Development wrote to the Minister to express the Committee's concern in relation to the review of the double-glazing programme. The Chairperson asked the Minister to specify who had provided the advice which led to his decision to suspend the programme pending a review and to confirm on what basis the potential for significant savings had been made.
6. In his response to the Committee dated 24 May 2012, the Minister stated that his decision came about as a result of a meeting with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21 to discuss, 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Windows and Doors'.
7. In a BBC NI Spotlight programme, which aired on 3 July 2013, allegations were made of wrongful political interference in the NIHE, potential breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and misleading of the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development.
8. In the Spotlight programme it was alleged that the Committee was misled in the letter of 24 May 2012 as the Minister had not met with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation but with representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd – a company which the programme stated had links to the Democratic Unionist Party.
9. The Minister appeared before the Committee on 4 July 2013, of his own volition, to respond to the allegations made in the Spotlight programme. At the start of the meeting, the Committee agreed to hold an Inquiry into these allegations.
10. The BBC NI Spotlight allegations were also debated in a special sitting of the Assembly on 8 July 2013.

The Committee's Approach to the Inquiry

11. The Committee drew on extensive procedural and legal advice throughout its Inquiry.
 12. At its meeting of 3 October 2013, the Committee agreed, by majority vote, the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry. The Terms of Reference contain three distinct strands that the Committee agreed it would inquire into:
 - (i) Decision making relating to the award, modification and cancellation of NIHE maintenance contracts to establish any impropriety or irregularity and, in particular, whether the actions of Ministers were appropriate;
 - (ii) Allegations that the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double-glazing;
 - (iii) The adequacy of actions proposed by the Minister, DSD and the NIHE to address previous, well documented failings in relation to procurement and contract management;
- And
- Should the Committee identify any evidence of fraud or corruption in relation to the operation of NIHE maintenance contracts and/or any actions indicating possible breaches of relevant codes of conduct, these will be reported directly to the appropriate authorities.
13. At its meeting of 3 October 2013, the Committee agreed that it would approach the Inquiry in phases and decided to initiate Phase One of the Inquiry by investigating Strand (ii) of the Terms of Reference. The Committee also agreed that it would not publish interim reports on each phase of the Inquiry.
 14. At its meeting of 14 November 2013, the Committee considered and agreed an approach to the Inquiry that reflected the principles of procedural fairness. A copy of the agreed approach is included in Appendix 10.
 15. The Committee commenced its evidence sessions under Phase One of the Inquiry on 14 November 2013. The Committee received oral evidence from witnesses at its meetings of 14 November 2013; 21 November 2013; 12 December 2013; and 9 January 2014. The Committee also recalled a number of witnesses to give evidence to the Committee under affirmation/oath on 13 March 2014 and 3 April 2014. The Committee heard evidence from:
 - Senior officials from the Department for Social Development
 - Senior officials from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive
 - Turkington Holdings Ltd
 - Glass and Glazing Federation
 - Minister McCausland
 - Special Adviser to Minister McCausland
 - Former Private Secretary to Minister McCausland.
 16. The minutes of evidence from these sessions are at Appendix 2.
 17. The Committee held a number of meetings to review and consider the evidence received under Phase One of the Inquiry. These meetings were held in closed session on 20 February 2014; 10 April 2014; 10 June 2014; and 17 June 2014.
 18. At the Committee meeting of 10 June 2014 the Committee considered the option of rescinding its decision not to produce interim reports in respect of the Inquiry.
 19. At the Committee meeting of 17 June 2014, the option of rescinding its decision not to produce interim reports was debated further. The Committee considered the motion: "*That the Committee for Social Development produces a stand-alone report on Phase 1 of its Inquiry*". The motion was carried by majority vote.

Phase One – Process Challenges

20. In addition to the oral briefings, a significant volume of documents have been placed before the Committee as part of its consideration of evidence under Phase One of the Inquiry. These documents were collated and analysed for relevance prior to each of the witness sessions and formed the basis for the initial questioning of witnesses.
21. There was a continual process of review of Hansard transcripts of oral evidence sessions to ensure that any conflicts in evidence were addressed. Again this was a time-intensive process.
22. The Department for Social Development was the key source of documentation for the Inquiry. However, not all of the written evidence was made available to the Committee in the first instance and subsequently this resulted in delay.
23. Furthermore, the Committee showed considerable flexibility in accommodating witnesses who were not available to attend the evidence sessions as scheduled. The availability of witnesses was a key factor in delaying Phase One of the Inquiry. The Committee was particularly concerned by this and addressed the barriers to provision of evidence to the Committee at a meeting on 9 January 2014. The Department accepted that there had been issues in sending information to the Committee in a timely fashion and that the Inquiry had been a learning experience for their officials. The Department gave an assurance that it would work with the Committee Clerk to produce a better system for the provision of papers.
24. Finally, the Committee had sought information from the BBC regarding the material that the producers of the Spotlight programme had used to prepare its programme of 3 July 2013. The BBC had initially refused the Committee's request for information. However, the Committee resubmitted a revised request for information and in response the BBC provided all information it had received from the Department for Social Development under its Freedom of Information request in August 2012. The delays in securing the information originally requested from the BBC also contributed to the delay in the Committee's consideration of Phase One of the Inquiry.

Background

25. On 8 May 2012 the Minister, in response to an Assembly question, indicated his concern about *“the value for money of the Housing Executive’s specification to contractors for window installation”*. He noted that these concerns followed from discussions *“with those in the glass and glazing industry”* and that this was *“well worth looking at, because a substantial amount of money could be saved on the figure previously quoted by the Housing Executive.”*
26. On 16 May 2012, the Chairperson of the Social Development Committee wrote to the Minister to express the Committee’s concern in relation to the review of the double-glazing programme. In his letter the Chairperson noted that following his attendance at the Committee’s meeting on 3 May 2012, the Minister had also stated, in relation to window installation, that *“I am advised that there is potential for significant savings to be made”*. The Chairperson queried who had given him this advice and on what basis the savings had been estimated.
27. In his response to the Chairperson, dated 24 May 2012, the Minister stated that his decision to review the double-glazing specification came about as a result of a meeting in April 2012 with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) and Fusion21 to discuss the GGF Good Practice Guidelines for the Installation of windows.
28. The Minister advised that following this meeting he had asked for further research to be carried out into potential cost savings if the GGF method of installation was adopted.
29. The Minister further advised that when initial research indicated that significant cost savings could be realised, he instructed that a review of the double-glazing programme be carried out and that all new work under the programme be suspended until the review was completed.
30. A BBC NI Spotlight programme, which aired on 3 July 2013, made allegations of potential wrongful political interference in the NIHE, potential breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and potential misleading of the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development.
31. It was alleged that the Committee was misled in the letter of 24 May 2012 as the Minister had not met with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation but with representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd – a company which, the programme stated, had links to the Democratic Unionist Party.
32. The Minister appeared before the Committee on 4 July 2013, of his own volition, to respond to the allegations made in the Spotlight programme. In his briefing to the Committee, the Minister repeatedly stated that the meeting of the 16 April 2012 had been with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) and that his key reason for accepting the meeting was to discuss the potential savings which could be realised if the GGF guidelines on installation were followed.
33. The Committee agreed at this meeting to hold an Inquiry into the allegations made in the programme.

Timeline of Key Events

34. Figure 1 provides a timeline of key events and can be supplemented with the following information.
35. On 16 April 2012 the Minister, accompanied by his Private Secretary, Special Adviser and senior officials from DSD and the NIHE, met with representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd.
36. On 30 April 2012 the Minister wrote to the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to request that the NIHE rigorously review the specification for the installation of double-glazing as he was concerned that it was not delivering best value for money. The Minister stated that until the review is complete all further double-glazing installations should be put on hold until the new contract provisions, to include any revised specifications, were put in place.
37. The Minister informed the Assembly of his decision in response to an Assembly Question on 8 May 2012.
38. On 10 May 2012, Mr Daithí McKay MLA tabled a written Assembly Question (AQW): *“To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme and who he met on each occasion”*. The AQW was referred to the Housing Director’s office on 11 May 2012 and Mr Michael Sands, the senior DSD Housing official who had accompanied the Minister to the meeting with Turkington’s, prepared a draft response on 22 May 2012. The original draft of the response referred to the Minister’s meeting of 16 April 2012 with Turkington Holdings Ltd. On 24 May 2012, the Minister’s Special Adviser reviewed the draft and requested that the reference to Turkington Holdings Ltd be removed and replaced with *“Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”*. The final response to the AQW was amended to reflect the change made at the Special Adviser’s request.
39. The Chairperson of the Committee wrote to the Minister on the 16 May 2012 regarding this issue.
40. In the draft response, Mr Michael Sands again referred to the Minister’s meeting of 16 April 2012 with representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd. On 22 May 2012, Mr Sands received an email from the Minister’s private office advising him that the Minister had requested that his response to the Chairperson be amended. In particular the Minister had requested that the reference to Turkington Holdings Ltd be removed from the letter to the Chairperson and replaced with *“representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation.”*
41. On 16 May 2012, the Minister’s former Private Secretary, Ms Barbara McConaghie, amended the minutes of the Minister’s meeting of 16 April 2012 with Turkington Holdings Ltd. Ms McConaghie removed the reference to Turkington Holdings Ltd in the title of the minutes and changed it to *“Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”*. There had been a number of inconsequential amendments to the minutes in the days after the meeting in April 2012 prior to this significant change one month later.
42. On 16 May 2012, Ms McConaghie also retrospectively amended the Minister’s diary entry for the meeting of 16 April 2012 to remove the reference to Turkington Holdings Ltd and replace with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
43. Between 7 June 2013 and 1 July 2013, the BBC sent five letters to the Minister and one letter to his Special Adviser inviting them to comment on a number of issues which were to be the subject of a Spotlight programme. In particular the BBC put it to the Minister that he had misled the Committee and the Assembly in his response to both the Assembly Question of 10 May 2012 and his letter to the Chairperson of 24 May 2012.

44. The Minister sent three responses to the BBC on 26 and 28 June 2013. In his responses, the Minister totally rejected and refuted the ‘scurrilous’ accusations that he had repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting of 16 April 2012. The Minister demanded that these accusations be withdrawn and warned that if the BBC were to continue with these allegations then he would have no choice but to seek legal recourse.
45. On 28 June 2013, the Minister held a meeting with his senior officials from DSD to discuss the letters he had received from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme. In preparation for this meeting the DSD officials actively sought to establish what information the NIHE had released to the BBC as part of the Freedom of Information request. The NIHE confirmed in an emailed response that at no time did they think that the representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd. were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Minister’s response of 28 June 2013 to the BBC, which was prepared by senior DSD officials, was issued following this meeting.
46. Following the broadcast of Spotlight programme on 3 July 2013 the Minister agreed to appear before the Committee on 4 July 2013 to address the allegations made in the programme, including the allegations that he had misled the Committee over the status of attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012.
47. In his evidence to the Committee on 12 December 2013 as part of the Inquiry, the Minister acknowledged and apologised that he had “*inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter*”. He advised that this was entirely due to his genuine belief at the time that the attendees represented the Glass and Glazing Federation and to errors in the subsequent typing of the letter in respect of the meeting with Fusion 21.

Figure 1.

TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS – PHASE ONE

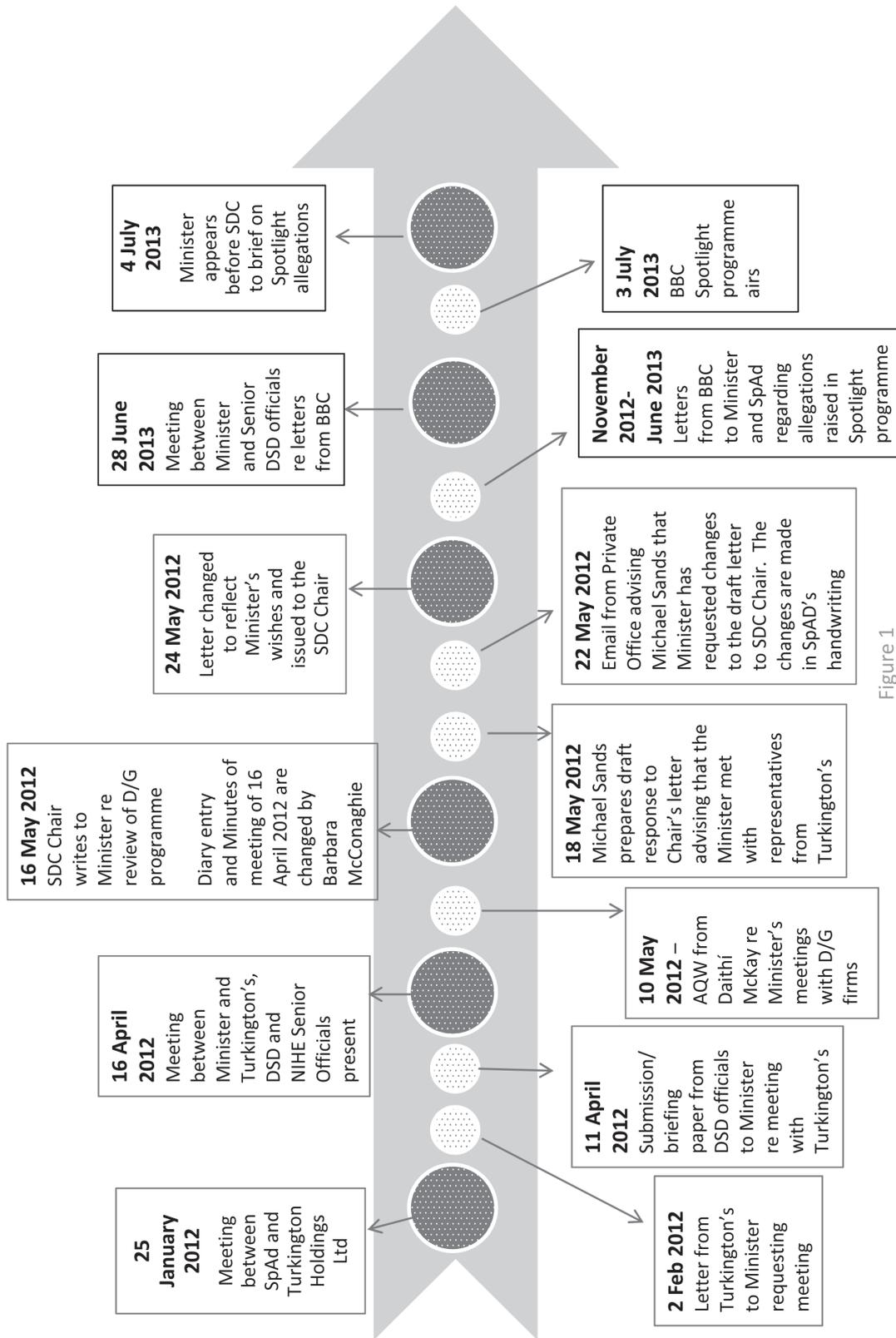


Figure 1

Key Points of Evidence

Mr Jim McKeag (Managing Director) and Mr Ian Young (former General Manager) Turkington Holdings Ltd (14 November 2013)

48. In their evidence to the Committee on 14 November 2013, Messrs Ian Young and Jim McKeag from Turkington Holdings Ltd explained that they had acted as a sub-contractor for Mascott in the supply and installation of windows for the NIHE.
49. They explained to the Committee that in carrying out this work they had concerns regarding two key issues: health and safety issues associated with the requirement for windows to be factory glazed then fitted on site; and the method of installation which they believed could be done differently, thereby minimising the need for redecoration grants and resulting in significant cost savings to the public purse.
50. The witnesses explained that they only pursued a meeting with the Minister after failing to get a response from the NIHE on these issues despite having met and discussed these with NIHE officials in late 2011.
51. The witnesses from Turkington's stated that since they had not heard from the NIHE they contacted and subsequently met with the Minister's Special Adviser on 25 January 2012, and that he had suggested that they write directly to the Minister to request a meeting to discuss these issues.
52. Written evidence to the Committee indicates that on 2 February 2012, Turkington's wrote to the Minister seeking an opportunity to meet him to discuss the potential cost savings if the Housing Executive was to follow the GGF guidelines for the fitting of double-glazed units. The letter further advised that Turkington's were active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
53. The Minister accepted this request for a meeting and senior officials from DSD Housing Division submitted a briefing paper to the Minister and Special Adviser, as requested by the Minister's Private Office, in preparation for the meeting. The NIHE officials who attended had not been asked to prepare a briefing.
54. The Committee noted that the briefing prepared for the Minister and Special Adviser was clearly titled "Meeting with Turkington Holdings: Double-glazing in Housing Executive Homes".
55. Under repeated questioning from a number of Members at the evidence session on 14 November 2013 regarding their status at the meeting of the 16 April 2012, Messrs Young and McKeag were adamant that it could not possibly have been construed by anyone at the meeting that they were representing any organisation other than Turkington's.
56. The Committee heard from Mr McKeag that *"We had no authority to be there [at the meeting] on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Had we wanted to, we would have contacted the Glass and Glazing Federation"*.
57. The Committee heard subsequently from Giles Willson, the Deputy Chief Executive of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF), that the GGF had not been contacted by Turkington's requesting authority to act as representatives of the GGF at the meeting of 16 April 2012.
58. He also noted that Turkington's were long term members of the GGF and, as such knew of the established protocol to adhere to if they wanted to represent the GGF in a meeting. He also noted that no complaints had been received that the GGF had been misrepresented by Turkington's.
59. The Committee further noted that Mr Young, who had attended the meeting with the Special Adviser on 25 January 2012, was adamant both in written and oral evidence, that the Special Adviser could not possibly have been left with the impression after the meeting of 25 January

2012 that they (Turkington's) would write to the Minister as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Mr Michael Sands (Deputy Director of Housing, DSD), Dr John McPeake¹ (Chief Executive NIHE) and Mr Declan Allen (Head of Procurement NIHE) (14 November 2013)

60. The Committee heard from Mr Sands who attended the meeting of the 16 April 2012 and provided a draft response to the Chairperson's letter of the 16 May 2012.
61. Under questioning from Members Mr Sands acknowledged that he was of the opinion that the meeting of 16 April 2012 was with Turkington Holdings and that this opinion was established as a result of being aware that the Minister had received a letter from Ian Young of Turkington Holdings requesting a meeting.
62. The Committee also noted that a paper was prepared in order to brief the Minister for the meeting of the 16 April 2012 and that this was prepared by the Housing Director's Office of which Mr Sands is Deputy Director. This paper is titled "*Meeting with Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive Homes*".
63. In response to a written question posed by the Committee regarding the organisations that attended the meeting of 16 April 2012, Mr McPeake advised the Committee that the NIHE had been contacted by email on 28 February 2012 notifying it that the Minister had agreed to meet Ian Young of Turkington Holdings.
64. He informed the Committee that his diary entry for the meeting subsequently read "*Meeting with Minister McCausland and Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Turkington Holdings, to discuss double glazing in NIHE houses*".
65. Mr Sands also acknowledged that during the meeting of 16 April 2012 the Turkington employees never claimed to be representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.
66. Dr McPeake supported this, stating that while there was extensive discussion at the meeting about Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines '*They [Turkington's] never purported to be representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation*'.
67. Dr McPeake also informed the Committee that the NIHE had responded to a BBC Freedom of Information request on this issue and made it clear in their response that the meeting of the 16 April 2012 had been with representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd.
68. Mr Sands' view on the status of the attendees was also reflected in his draft response to the Chairperson of the Committee which was sent to the Minister and which referred to the Minister having attended a meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd. Members noted that this was also included in Mr Sands draft response to an Assembly Question on 10 May 2012.
69. In what the majority of Committee Members considered a key piece of evidence, Mr Sands informed the Committee that he had received an email from the Private Office stating that the Minister wished the reference to "Turkington Holdings Ltd" in the draft to be changed to "representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21".
70. The majority of Members were concerned about Mr Sands' admission that he did not highlight to the Minister that this gave an inaccurate representation of the meeting. However, Mr Sands responded that it was the Minister's responsibility to accept or change drafts and because the original letter from Turkington's had referred to them as being active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, he (Mr Sands) had no difficulty making this change.
71. During the course of questioning Mr Sands also acknowledged that in making this change the meaning of the subsequent paragraph of the letter which begins '*As a result of this meeting*'

1 Retired March 2014

also changed to suggest that the meeting of 16 April 2012 had included Fusion21 when in fact it did not.

72. Mr Sands accepted that this did not reflect the meeting of 16 April 2012 because Fusion21 had not attended that meeting.

Mr Nelson McCausland - Minister for Social Development (12 December 2013)

73. The Committee heard evidence from the Minister for the first time on 12 December 2013.
74. The Minister was clear that his sole reason for agreeing to the meeting of 16 April 2012 was to discuss potential savings in relation to the NIHE double-glazing programme.
75. He noted that the status of the individuals at the meeting was immaterial to him. However, it was his genuine belief at the time, based on the repeated reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) guidelines during the meeting and their strong association with the GGF, that they (Messrs Young and McKeag), in fact *represented* the GGF and its interests.
76. The Minister emphasised that the importance to him was not who they were but rather the potential savings that could be realised if the GGF guidelines on installation were adopted by NIHE contractors.
77. The Minister advised the Committee that while he knew staff from Turkingtons were at the meeting it was his genuine belief that they were not representing the interests of that firm but rather the interests of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
78. As a result he subsequently asked for the letter to the Chairperson to be amended to reflect that the meeting had been with 'representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation'. In addition, given that he had met with Fusion21 and recollected that similar issues had been discussed with them, he also asked for this to be included in the letter.
79. The Minister noted that as part of the normal process, should officials have concerns about amendments requested by him, they could advise him of these via the Private Office, but none were received in this case. As a result, the letter in its amended form was issued to the Chairperson on 24 May 2012. The Minister acknowledged that the letter was badly drafted and pointed out that the meeting with Fusion21 took place a week later than suggested in the letter.
80. Members questioned the Minister about his knowledge of the note of the meeting, which had gone through several iterations, and which finally identified Messrs Young and McKeag as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) and was titled as a "*Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation*". Members noted that earlier drafts had accurately listed the above attendees as representatives of Turkington's and the meeting was also titled accordingly.
81. Importantly, the Minister stated that, as it was his position at the time that the attendees were representing the GGF, the note was finalised to reflect that position. However, he also claimed that he only actually saw the note of the meeting "*a considerable time afterwards*", "*maybe nine or ten months*" and wasn't aware until "*the past couple of weeks*", as a result of the document discovery process initiated by the Inquiry, that there had been several iterations of the note.
82. Additionally, he confirmed that he had not carried out any inquiries to determine who requested the changes to be made to the note and that his Special Adviser had told him that he did not have a role in rewriting the note.
83. The Minister did acknowledge as a result of the document discovery process and reading the evidence of the Turkington witnesses given on 14 November 2013, he had "*inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter*".

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84. A number of Committee Members put it to the Minister that the changes made to the letter to the Chairperson, to the Minister's diary, to answers to draft Assembly Questions, and to the note of the meeting were not simple administrative errors but rather they were part of a clear concerted effort to remove Turkington's from the record.
 85. In addition, a number of Members highlighted that of all the attendees at the meeting only the Minister (and also, it became clear, the Special Adviser) believed the meeting had been with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). This was despite the Minister having access to the same information as officials which clearly stated the meeting was with Turkington's.
 86. Some Members also queried the Minister's position that he only became aware that the attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 had been Turkington employees when he read the evidence they gave to the Committee on 14 November 2013.
 87. Members noted that the Spotlight programme, broadcast on 3 July 2013, referred to Mr Young confirming to the BBC that he did not tell the Minister that they represented the GGF and that he could not explain why the Minister portrayed those discussions as such.
 88. A number of Members also noted that the Minister had threatened legal action against the BBC on 28 June 2013 over allegations that he had met with Turkington's rather than the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) and must therefore have been aware that there were questions being asked about the status of Messrs Young and McKeag at the meeting of 16 April 2012. However, the Minister, in response to a question, claimed that at that point he still believed the meeting had been with the GGF and that Departmental officials did not advise him otherwise.

Mr Stephen Brimstone – Special Adviser to Minister McCausland (9 January 2014)

89. The Committee heard from Mr Brimstone for the first time on 9 January 2014.
 90. The Committee heard that the request for a meeting with the Minister originated from Mr Brimstone's meeting with Turkington representatives on 25 January 2012.
 91. In his evidence Mr Brimstone noted that *"The confusion clearly came on the back of the pre-meeting that I had had with Turkington's and my expectation, and I briefed the Minister to this effect, that Ian Young would be writing to him as being from the Glass and Glazing Federation"*.
 92. However, a number of Members noted this expectation conflicted with Mr Young's evidence and subsequently Mr Trevor Turkington's written evidence. Both were unequivocal that there could have been no confusion, as a result of their discussions with Mr Brimstone, that they would be writing to the Minister as Turkington's.
 93. Several Members pursued this issue but Mr Brimstone maintained that it was his 'recollection' that this was the outcome of the meeting of 25 January 2012.
 94. In relation to the change to the note of the meeting of 16 April 2012 Members noted that Mr Brimstone stated that the change was to reflect *"what was clearly the Minister's opinion"* that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation and not with Turkington's.
 95. Some Members suggested that such a change would be in order if this was in fact the Minister's belief. Mr Brimstone agreed that the change would have been made *"in the interests of accuracy"* and that it would be expected the change would be made *"to reflect the Minister's view"*.
 96. In challenging the view of some Members that there were efforts to write Turkington's out of the record, other Members referred to the written evidence which clearly highlighted the references to a meeting with Turkington's. Some Members noted that the only changes, based on the Minister's view, were to the letter to the Chairperson of 24 May 2012 and to the final iteration of the note of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
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97. Contrary to this it was pointed out to Mr Brimstone that throughout the period of the Inquiry not one person, other than the Minister, had provided written or oral evidence that indicated that the meeting of the 16 April 2012 had been with anyone other than Turkington's. Additionally, correspondence within the Department also reflected the position of officials that the meeting was with Turkington's. Mr Brimstone accepted that was the case.
98. Mr Brimstone reiterated that the confusion arose as a result of his expectation of a letter coming from the Glass and Glazing Federation requesting a meeting. He stated that he had not actually seen the letter when it arrived in the Department as he was on paternity leave.
99. On being questioned as to whether he had seen the email, which he had been cc'd on, noting the meeting with Turkington's and which contained a briefing note for the Minister for the meeting, Mr Brimstone said he had not read that email. He went on to say that he was cc'd into hundreds of emails and that it was impossible to read them all.

**Ms Barbara McConaghie (former Private Secretary to Minister McCausland)
(9 January 2014)**

100. Ms McConaghie gave evidence to the Committee under affirmation on 9 January 2014.
101. Members focussed on Ms McConaghie's role in drafting and amending the minute of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
102. Under questioning Ms McConaghie confirmed that she had amended the minute of the meeting of 16 April 2012 despite her written evidence to the Committee that she had not seen the final version of the minute until it was provided to her by the Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer (DALO). However, while Ms McConaghie acknowledged that she had made changes to the minute she also stated that she would not have done this under her own volition, but would have been instructed by a more senior official.
103. Members noted that they had now received six versions of the minute but that the various iterations, until the final version, reflected minor changes.
104. Some Members were concerned that Ms McConaghie could not remember who instructed her to make the changes to the minute from "*Meeting with Turkington's*" to "*Meeting with Turkington's representing Glass and Glazing Federation*". This concern arose as Ms McConaghie stated the instruction to change the minute could only have come from one of two people. When pressed on this issue she stated "*I'm assuming that the instruction come from either the Minister or the special adviser since they were under the impression that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation*".
105. She previously suggested that Mr Sands might also have made this request but subsequently ruled him out as he "*was under the impression that the meeting was with Turkington's*".
106. Members also questioned Ms McConaghie regarding why she had also retrospectively changed the Minister's diary entry for the 16 April 2012 to reflect that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) rather than Turkington's. Ms McConaghie said that it was not unusual for her to make changes to the diary but she did not know why the diary entry was changed.
107. Members also noted that the changes to both the minute and the retrospective change to the Minister's diary occurred on the same day – 16 May 2012 – one month after the meeting had taken place.
108. When asked whether she had spoken to Mr Brimstone about a forthcoming letter from the GGF Ms McConaghie stated that she did remember Mr Brimstone telling her that the GGF would be writing to the Minister inviting him to a meeting. However, Members heard that when the invitation came in she treated it as an invitation from Turkington's stating "*Basically, I have to go on what was written, you know?*" This referred to the fact that the letter that was sent requesting a meeting with the Minister was from Turkington's.

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109. She noted that Mr Brimstone was not available to clarify the issue so, as is the procedure, she sent an email of 22 February 2012 to officials for advice on whether the Minister should accept or decline this invitation.
110. Some Members advised that, given the typical busy day of a Private Secretary and the fact that the incident took place two years previously, it would be understandable for a person not to recollect all the details regarding changes to one particular minute for one meeting. Ms McConaghie also acknowledged having a bad memory and this contributing to her inability to recall the details.
111. In conclusion, Ms McConaghie stated that she had no “*personal motivation*” to change the minute and that “*There is no reason for me to go in to change it, unless I was instructed to do it*”.

Mr Nelson McCausland - Minister for Social Development (3 April 2014)

112. The Committee considered further evidence from the Minister, under affirmation, on two occasions. The Chairperson called an early adjournment of the meeting on 13 March 2014 and this was reconvened on 3 April 2014.
113. In a short opening statement on 3 April 2014 the Minister addressed issues relating to his meeting with Departmental officials on 28 June 2013 and Ms McConaghie’s inability to recollect who had given her instructions to change the minutes and diary entries. He then stated that he had nothing more to add to his evidence given to the Committee on 12 December 2013.
114. The Minister was asked whether he had discussed with his Special Adviser Ms McConaghie’s assumption in her evidence of 9 January, that it was either the Minister or the SpAd who was likely to have instructed her to change the minutes and the diary entry. The Minister referred Members to the SpAd’s evidence and noted that he himself had nothing more to add, other than he had no recollections.
115. When questioned about an answer he had given previously to the Committee that the note had been finalised to reflect the Minister’s position that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF), the Minister reiterated this was the case but noted that he did not know *how* that happened.
116. The Minister went on to say “*The position was that, as the Minister in the Department and therefore responsibility at the top of the Department, I was under the impression that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. That then obviously became what I would describe as the accepted narrative, and the note was finalised to reflect that*”.
117. Some Members suggested that, given it was only the Minister or the SpAd who had been identified as believing the meeting was with the GGF, it was strongly suggestive that it was either the Minister or the SpAd who had instructed Ms McConaghie to make the changes to the note. However, the Minister refused to speculate stating “*I have no clear knowledge and recollection*”.
118. One Member returned to a point made in previous evidence regarding the Minister’s position that he was unaware that Messrs Young and McKeag had represented Turkington’s at the 16 April 2012 meeting until he had an opportunity to read their evidence given to the Committee on 14 November 2013.
119. The Member noted the Minister had had communications with the BBC and was therefore aware of Mr Young’s statement to them regarding his status at the meeting, he was also aware of the NIHE position issued via a Fol to the BBC that NIHE officials believed the attendees were representing Turkington’s. It was stated that this constituted evidence that the Minister was aware of which suggested the contrary to the Minister’s then stated belief.

120. However, the Minister reiterated that *“there was no firm evidence”* and that the issue of the status of the Turkington’s attendees only arose late in June 2013 in letters from the BBC and that it did not seem to be particularly important.
121. He emphasised that the important issue to him was the potential cost savings, estimated to be in the region of £15m.
122. The Minister was reminded that his SpAd had referred to being “shocked” in July 2013 after seeing the letter of 2 February 2012 as it was clearly from Turkington’s. He was asked whether the SpAd had brought this to the Minister’s attention. The Minister said that he had spoken to the SpAd who on reflection believed the word *‘surprised’* would have been more appropriate than *‘shocked’*. The Minister then stated that he had nothing more to add on the matter. He then later stated that both he and the SpAd remained under the impression that the meeting had been with representatives of the GGF until the evidence session on 14 November 2013.
123. On further questioning regarding the importance of the status of the attendees the Minister restated his position, made in previous evidence, that *“It made absolutely no difference whatsoever in what capacity they came — none at all”*.

Mr Stephen Brimstone – Special Adviser to Minister McCausland (3 April 2014)

124. The Committee invited Mr Brimstone to give additional evidence under affirmation.
125. A number of Members questioned Mr Brimstone regarding his stated *‘shock’* at seeing the letter from Turkington’s for the first time in July 2013.
126. Mr Brimstone noted that the letter had the Turkington logo as opposed to the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) logo but he was still of the belief in July 2013 after reading the letter that while the attendees were from Turkington’s they were acting as representatives of the GGF.
127. On questioning from Members as to whether he raised his concerns with the Minister regarding the letter Mr Brimstone said, in relation to the Turkington logo being on the letter rather than the GGF logo, *“I’m fairly sure that would’ve been raised, but I can’t go any further than that, Chair”*.
128. Some Members were concerned that while Mr Brimstone acknowledged that had he seen the letter from Turkington’s on February 2012 it would have *“raised flags”*, yet it didn’t raise flags when he did see the letter in July 2013. This was despite the public interest and the Committee announcing it was going to hold an Inquiry into this matter.
129. Mr Brimstone stated that despite having read the letter after the Spotlight programme was aired in July 2013 it didn’t ring *“any great alarm bells”* or give him cause to investigate further. He stated that at this point he still believed that the meeting had been with Turkington staff representing the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) *“despite what the letter said”*.
130. Under further questioning Mr Brimstone said that if he had seen the letter in April 2012 he *“probably” “would have sought clarification as to who they were actually representing”* on the basis that he was expecting a letter from the GGF inviting the Minister to a meeting.
131. Mr Brimstone confirmed that he had personally changed a draft answer to an Assembly Question (AQ) on 24 May 2012 to reflect that the meeting of 16 April 2012 had been with representatives of the GGF rather than with Turkington’s.
132. He further explained that in the letter to the Chairperson dated 24 May 2012 the *“Minister made that change”* and unlike changes to Assembly Questions this change did not go into the *“system”* and was *“changed at the private office level”*. Members noted the apparent disparity between Mr Brimstone’s evidence that the changes to the letter had not entered the system and his statement that once the Minister had signed off on the letter *“there was nobody came*

back to say, "Minister, you are wrong in that". And that is normally what would happen". Earlier evidence by Mr Sands had indicated that he had made the change on request from the Minister which is suggestive of the changes to the letter entering the 'system'.

133. Mr Brimstone also noted that while the change to the Assembly Question was initiated by him, this was only to reflect the Minister's thinking.
134. Members pointed to the fact that while Mr Brimstone acknowledged that he initiated change to the letter to the Chairperson and to the AQ to reflect the Minister's thinking, he maintained that he had no role in initiating the same change to the minute of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
135. When pressed further on whether he could rule out the possibility that he had caused the change to the minute to be made he replied "Yes".

Mr Will Haire – Permanent Secretary, Department for Social Development (3 April 2014)

136. Mr Haire was invited to give evidence under affirmation on 3 April 2014.
137. The Committee's questioning of Mr Haire focussed on the challenge function exercised by officials in relation to the Minister's belief that he had met with the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) rather than Turkington's. The Committee also subsequently requested written clarification on a number of issues from Mr Haire.
138. The majority of Committee Members were concerned that, despite the extensive documentation held by the Department which made it clear from the outset that the meeting was with Turkington's, the Departmental officials accepted the Minister's position that the meeting was with the GGF.
139. Mr Haire explained that there was a "very strong line from the Minister at the time" that the meeting of 16 April 2012 was with the GGF and this was based on the SpAd's view of his meeting with Ian Young and Trevor Turkington on 25 January 2012.
140. The majority of Members expressed their surprise that this position could be allowed to be sustained in the face of the evidence and the view of the senior housing official who had also attended the meeting with Turkington's. One Member pressed Mr Haire on this issue stating that it was a question of *fact* who the meeting had been with, not one of opinion or understanding.
141. Mr Haire noted that the key issue in shaping the Minister's position was the pre-meeting held on 25 January 2012 between the SpAd and Ian Young and Trevor Turkington. Mr Haire stated "*..that the key element in this process was coming from their understanding at the pre-meeting and the understanding that the political adviser took from that and his discussions with the Minister*".
142. Mr Haire went on to say in respect of how Ministerial decisions are progressed in the Department that "*The Minister makes the decision, he's the head of the Department, it's the Minister's decision. He makes decisions and the system then puts that in place*".
143. When questioned by the Committee on how the changes to the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 came about, Mr Haire replied that he could not give any more insight into that issue other than that which others had already given to the Committee.
144. Under questioning Mr Haire queried why the Committee appeared to be so concerned about *how* the Minister's decision was communicated to Ms McConaghie to initiate the change to the minute. He referred to the Committee already having heard evidence that the change was made under the Minister's direction though the Minister himself was clear that he didn't directly communicate this to Ms McConaghie.

145. He explained, in relation to how the Minister's position is communicated, that *"it is not that he necessarily himself said it but the point is his volition is made clear in the private office and then the system runs and does these things. That's how Departments run"*.
146. Members noted Mr Haire's comment that *"He's [the Minister's] taken his position, and that is the position of the Department"*.
147. A number of Members questioned Mr Haire on his written submission to the Committee regarding discussions held in the Department in June 2013 and why, in the face of queries from the BBC, the Department continued to maintain that the meeting had been with the GGF. It was pointed out to Mr Haire that he had said in his submission: *"However, the Minister still believed at this time [June 2013] that this meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and officials were not aware of alternative evidence to indicate this was not the case."*
148. Mr Haire explained that the key issue at that time was that there was no new evidence. He said *"we had no additional material in front of us, on the 28th [June 2013], which changed the view which we had before that process."* Mr Haire went on to say *"So, there is nothing new. The only thing we had was a statement from the BBC at that stage."*
149. Mr Haire noted that once the Department had the evidence provided to the Committee by the Turkington representatives on 14 November 2013 the Minister changed his position.

**Mr Jim McKeag (Managing Director) and Mr Ian Young (former General Manager)
Turkington Holdings Ltd (3 April 2014)**

150. Members invited Messrs Young and McKeag back under oath to address Mr Brimstone's position that he had been left with the impression following the meeting of 25 January 2012 that Mr Young would be writing to the Minister as a representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) to request a meeting with the Minister.
151. Mr Young had previously stated that there was nothing said at the meeting of 25 January 2012 to give the impression that he would be sending the letter in that capacity. Members noted that the Minister and SpAd had placed a great emphasis on the meeting of 25 January 2012 as the origin of their understanding that the letter would be from the GGF and, therefore, that the attendees subsequently represented the GGF at the meeting on 16 April 2012. This was confirmed by Mr Haire's evidence.
152. Mr Young indicated, as he had in previous evidence, that the discussion at the meeting of 25 January 2012 focussed on the GGF guidelines for installation. However, regarding the meeting held on 25 January a Member asked *"And there's no way that you feel anyone at the pre-meeting in the Radisson could have left with any impression other than that this was to be a meeting with Turkington's?"* To which Mr Young replied *"No, definitely not. No"*.
153. The Committee accepted that Turkington's had not in any way benefitted from their engagement with the Department and noted that while they had tendered for the new double-glazing contracts which incorporated the new installation method they had not been successful in the tendering process.

Committee's Consideration of Evidence

154. In reaching a conclusion on whether the Minister had deliberately misled the Committee, Members took into consideration a number of key issues provided in both written and oral evidence throughout the Inquiry.

Meeting of the 25 January 2012

155. The Committee agreed that the meeting of 25 January 2012 was central to the events that followed and that the evidence in respect of this meeting was therefore significant. In particular, the Committee agreed that the written and oral evidence provided by the witnesses from Turkington Holdings on 14 November 2013 and later under oath on 3 April 2014 was significant and inconsistent with that given by Mr Brimstone, on 9 January 2014 and 3 April 2014, in his appraisal of that meeting.
156. On this issue Members were presented with Mr Brimstone's stated impression, following the meeting of 25 January 2012 that any subsequent letter would come from the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). However, the Committee noted the evidence of Mr Young that while the GGF guidelines were discussed at this meeting, both he and Mr Turkington were unequivocal they had represented Turkington's, not the GGF, at the meeting and there was nothing that they said that could possibly have given Mr Brimstone the impression that they would forward a letter requesting a meeting as representatives of the GGF.
157. When it was put to Mr Brimstone that his impression was therefore not rooted in anything he replied "*I accept that*" but went on to say he could only give his interpretation.
158. In relation to this issue Members also considered the letter sent by Turkington's to the Minister seeking a meeting with him to discuss the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines for window installation. The Committee noted that while the letter refers to Turkington's being active members of the GGF they at no time purport to be acting as representatives of the GGF. The Committee accepted that this is consistent with Mr Young and Mr Turkington's appraisal of the meeting of 25 January 2012 with Mr Brimstone that they had represented Turkington's and would be writing to the Minister in that capacity.
159. The Committee therefore accepts the evidence from Turkington's that they had represented their own company in discussions with Mr Brimstone on 25 January 2012 and would be seeking a meeting with the Minister as Turkington's; and did not give Mr Brimstone any reason to suggest they would be writing to the Minister as representing the GGF.

Documentation held by the Department

160. Members also agreed that once the letter from Turkington's was received by the Department it was treated as such – not as an invitation from the GGF. The invitation was circulated to relevant officials and marked clearly as a request from Turkington's to meet the Minister.
161. Members noted that the Minister's original diary entry for the meeting date stated it was a meeting with Turkington's and the briefing prepared by officials for the meeting was also clearly marked as a briefing for the meeting with Turkington's.
162. Members also considered the oral evidence from the two senior officials from the Housing Executive and the senior DSD official who accompanied the Minister to the meeting of 16 April 2012. These senior officials were clear in their evidence that they had understood the meeting of 16 April 2012 to be with Turkington Holdings Ltd and not the Glass and Glazing Federation. Members noted Mr McPeake referred to the entry in his diary which also referred to a meeting with Turkington's scheduled for the 16 April 2012.

163. The Committee also noted that the Turkington officials stated in their evidence that they made it clear who they were representing at the meeting by providing an introduction about Turkington Holdings at the start of the meeting.
164. The majority of Committee Members therefore agreed that at the time of the meeting there was a common acceptance among officials that the meeting held on 16 April 2012 was with Turkington's.
165. Most Members of the Committee were unconvinced by Mr Brimstone's evidence that he had not seen a copy of the letter of 2 February 2012 from Turkington Holdings Ltd until July 2013. These Members also found it difficult to accept Mr Brimstone's evidence that if he had seen Turkington's letter when it arrived in February 2012 or in April 2012 it would have raised flags in his mind, but that he did not have those same concerns when he saw the letter in July 2013 despite the allegations made in the Spotlight programme and the initiation of a Committee Inquiry into the matter.

Changes to records

166. The Committee noted that the senior housing official who attended the 16 April 2012 meeting drafted the response to the Chairperson of the Committee, in which he referred to the Minister meeting with Turkington's, as reflecting his understanding of their status at the meeting.
167. The Committee noted that this letter (dated 24 May 2012) was changed prior to being sent to the Chairperson to reflect the Minister's stated understanding that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
168. The Committee also noted that the entry in the Minister's diary which indicated he had a meeting with Turkington's on 16 April 2012 was changed retrospectively on 16 May 2012 to indicate that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
169. The Committee also noted that an Assembly Question on 10 May 2012 on this matter was also changed to reflect that the Minister had met the GGF.
170. The majority of Members were also concerned that the final version of the official note of the meeting was changed to reflect that the meeting had been with the GGF and that the Turkington attendees were listed as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation when in previous versions they had been correctly listed as being from Turkington's.
171. The Committee accepted Ms McConaghie's evidence that on 16 May 2012 she would not have acted of her own volition in changing the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 with Turkington Holdings Ltd and the corresponding entry in the Minister's diary relating to this meeting. Rather she would have been instructed to make these changes.
172. However, most Members found it difficult to accept that having indicated that she assumed that only the Minister or Special Adviser were likely to have given her these instructions, on the basis that only they were of the opinion the meeting had been with the GGF, she could not recollect which of them had issued these instructions.
173. The Committee also noted that the Minister and Mr Brimstone either could not recall or denied having any part in giving instructions to change the minutes and diary entry. The Committee also noted that both Mr Brimstone and the Minister stated in their evidence that they were unaware of the various iterations of the minutes until December 2013.
174. The Committee accepted that, regardless of how the message was communicated, it was clear from both the Minister's evidence and that of the Permanent Secretary that it was the Minister's position that the meeting had been with the GGF and the 'system' put that in place.

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175. The Committee would also put on record the Minister's position that these changes were made in order to reflect his genuine belief at the time that the meeting had been with representatives of the GGF.

Lack of Departmental/Ministerial Challenge

176. The majority of Members were deeply concerned at the lack of challenge exhibited by senior civil servants when the Minister requested factually correct information contained in the letter to the Chairperson to be changed, namely the removal of Turkington's and the insertion of Glass and Glazing Federation (and Fusion21) instead. The Committee noted that this lack of challenge also extended to the changes to Assembly Questions requested by the SpAd.
177. The majority of Members also expressed their concern in relation to the evidence provided by the Permanent Secretary in which he stated that once the Minister had made his decision that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation, this then became the Department's position.
178. Most Members found it difficult to believe that senior civil servants accepted the view of the SpAd and the Minister in relation to the meeting of the 16 April 2012, and allowed this to become the prevailing position of the Department, in the face of the facts held by senior officials.
179. The majority of Members considered that this acceptance may have led not only to the Committee being misled by the Minister, but also the Assembly given the Minister's response through Assembly Questions on this matter. However, the Committee also noted that, following their evidence to Committee, the original answers to Assembly Questions had subsequently been changed by the Department to reflect the actual status of the Turkington representatives at the meeting of 16 April 2012.
180. The majority of Members expressed surprise regarding the Minister's evidence that he only became aware that the representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd had represented the Glass and Glazing Federation at the meeting of 16 April 2012 when he read the Hansard transcript of their oral evidence to the Committee on 14 November 2013.
181. In relation to this Members noted that despite the broadcast of a programme on 3 July 2013 which suggested the Minister may have misled the Committee and the initiation of an Inquiry into this allegation and other serious matters raised in the programme, the Minister never sought to seek further clarification from his officials or attendees at the meeting as to their views on the matter, or to investigate the nature of information held by the Department on the meeting.
182. The majority of Members found the Minister's reasoning for not querying this at an earlier juncture tenuous i.e. between April 2012 and December 2013 no-one came forward to him with any information to suggest anything to the contrary.

Committee Conclusions

183. At the Committee meeting of 17 June 2014 Members discussed the written and oral evidence that it had received in relation to Phase 1 of its Inquiry. On the basis of this evidence it considered whether the Minister may have deliberately or inadvertently misled the Committee.
184. During deliberations, Members considered the Minister's evidence to the Committee on 12 December 2013 in which he accepted that he had "*inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter*" of 24 May 2012. It was considered by the majority of Members that the determined efforts that the Minister and his Special Adviser made to remove Turkington's from the record would suggest that it was neither unintentional nor inadvertent.
185. A consensus could not be reached as to whether the Minister had deliberately or inadvertently misled the Committee. The following motion was therefore proposed: *That the Minister for Social Development deliberately misled the Committee for Social Development.* The Committee divided on the motion and it was carried by a majority vote.
186. The majority of Members also expressed their deep concern about the inaction of senior civil servants in the Department for Social Development to robustly challenge the Minister when they knew he was factually incorrect in his statements to the Assembly and Committee.
187. In accordance with its procedural fairness guidelines the Committee agreed to provide the report to those individuals it deemed may be adversely affected by its findings and to include these as received in an appendix to the report.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 1

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 4 July 2013

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Ms Pam Brown MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Ms Judith Cochrane MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA
Mr Mark H Durkan MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr David McClarty MLA

10:09am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

1. Ministerial Briefing - Issues raised by BBC Spotlight Programme, 3 July 2013

11:09am The following officials joined the meeting.

- Mr Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development
- Ms Susan McCarty, DSD

The Chairperson noted that the previous evening's Spotlight programme had raised significant public commentary and concern. He noted that the Committee had agreed to pursue an inquiry into issues raised.

The Minister spoke to the Committee on issues raised in the programme. He outlined that there were omissions in the Spotlight programme, including the ASM report on the Housing Executive. The Minister emphasised that the Department's priority was to ensure that tenants received good quality services that were value for money and that, as Minister, he sought personally and politically to always act with integrity.

The Minister stated that he would welcome the recall of the Northern Ireland Assembly on Monday 8 July as an opportunity to set the record straight and that he was determined to root out the wrong.

Members expressed the need for all relevant parties to be examined by the Committee in the course of an inquiry, including the BBC.

The Minister emphasised the need for a good relationship between the Minister for Social Development and the Chair of the Housing Executive and the Committee noted that it was aware there are now monthly meetings between the Department and the Housing Executive.

Members of the Committee noted that allegations such as those made in the Spotlight programme can often undermine public confidence and asked what could be done to restore public confidence. The Minister expressed that the key was to get accurate information to the public.

The Chair noted again that the Committee would be pursuing the issue via inquiry and that no judgement had been made at this stage. He stated that the Committee would look at all available evidence and that the Terms of Reference for an inquiry should allow for the

questioning of as wide a range of witnesses as possible. The Minister reiterated that he welcomed the inquiry and he had always acted with propriety and probity, with a commitment to achieving value for money.

1:26pm The officials left the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 3 October 2013

Café Room, Foyle Arts Centre, University of Ulster Magee Campus

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA

10:30am The meeting commenced in closed session.

11:56am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

1. **Matters Arising**

The Chairperson asked the Committee if it was content to agree the Terms of Reference for the Committee Inquiry as drafted.

A consensus could not be reached on the Terms of Reference and the Committee divided on the following proposals:

- The motion was proposed: “That, in the first bullet point in the Terms of Reference, the term Ministers be changed to DSD Ministers”

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 6; Abstentions 0

AYES

Mr Gregory Campbell
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Sammy Wilson

NOES

Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Mickey Brady
Mr Jim Allister
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr Fra McCann

The motion was not carried.

- The motion was proposed: “That the Terms of Reference are agreed as drafted”

The Committee divided: Ayes 6; Noes 3; Abstentions 0

AYES

Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Mickey Brady
Mr Jim Allister
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr Fra McCann

NOES

Mr Gregory Campbell
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Sammy Wilson

The motion was carried.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to accept the Terms of Reference as drafted.

The Chairperson noted that a scoping paper relating to the methodology and timeframe for the Inquiry would be discussed in closed session at next week’s meeting.

This discussion and vote was recorded by Hansard.

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 14 November 2013

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Mr Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Orme (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Dolores Kelly MLA

10:06am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

10. Inquiry

1:03pm Proceedings recommenced in public session.

The Chair declared the meeting open to the public. The following Members were present:

Alex Maskey
Mickey Brady
Fra McCann
Paula Bradley
Trevor Clarke
Jim Allister
Stewart Dickson

1:04pm Sammy Wilson and Gregory Campbell joined the meeting.

10.1 Declaration of Interests

Jim Allister declared that in his former profession he represented Turkington Holdings Ltd in legal matters, primarily in planning matters and that in 2004 when he was the DUP candidate in the European elections Turkington Holdings Ltd supplied the party with vans. Mr Allister also declared that he believes that when he was an MEP he invited Turkingtons to a business breakfast.

Gregory Campbell inquired as to the extent of information Members were required to inform the Committee of. The Chair advised Members should divulge what they themselves deem pertinent to the Inquiry and reminded Members they can also individually contact the Standard and Privileges Committee to ask for advice on this matter.

Sammy Wilson declared that as Finance Minister he attended breakfasts and dinners at which individuals were in attendance who may later be called to appear before the Committee for the Inquiry.

10.2 Procedural Fairness

This session was recorded by Hansard.

The Chair drew Members attention to the Clerk's draft paper on procedural fairness. The Chair outlined the importance of the Committee agreeing the paper at the outset of the Inquiry in order to ensure the integrity of the Inquiry and that any risk of challenge to the findings of the Committee is minimised.

Members agreed to the paper as drafted.

The Chair reiterated that, having received procedural and legal advice on the remit of the Committee and the terms of reference, the Committee is satisfied it has the statutory authority to conduct the Inquiry and the Committee will, should it deem it necessary, ask witnesses to testify under oath or affirmation.

1:10pm Michael Copeland joined the meeting.

10.3 Evidence Session One

1:15pm The following witnesses joined the meeting:

- Ian Young, former Divisional Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd
- Jim McKeag, Managing Director, Turkington Holdings Ltd

This session was recorded by Hansard.

The Chair outlined to the witnesses the reasons for calling them to give evidence to the Inquiry which centred around the meeting of 16 April 2012 and the Minister's letter of 24th May 2012 to the Chair. The Witnesses affirmed they were clear on the reasons they were before the Committee.

The witnesses presented oral evidence to the Committee and then answered questions from Members.

1:50pm Paula Bradley left the meeting.

1:53pm Paula Bradley returned to the meeting.

1:59pm Stewart Dickson left the meeting.

The Chair summarised the oral evidence by the witnesses from their presentation and their subsequent answers to questioning by Members. The witnesses agreed with the Chair's summary.

The Chair gave the witnesses the opportunity to put on record any further comments they wished to make.

Jim McKeag commented that substantial savings were derived by Turkingtons taking the initiative but that he perceived his company as having been lambasted unfairly by the press over the issue.

The Chair thanked the witnesses for their evidence presented to the Committee.

10.4 Evidence Session Two

2:05pm The following officials joined the meeting:

- Michael Sands, DSD
- John McPeake, NIHE
- Declan Allen, NIHE

This session was recorded by Hansard.

The Chair outlined to the witnesses the reasons for calling them to give evidence to the Inquiry which centred around the meeting of 16 April 2012, the Minister's letter of 24th May 2012 to the Chair and the first draft of the letter of 24th May 2012. The Witnesses affirmed they were clear on the reasons they were before the Committee.

Michael Sands presented oral evidence to the Committee and then answered questions from Members.

2:50pm Fra McCann left the meeting.

2:52pm Gregory Campbell left the meeting.

2:53pm Fra McCann returned to the meeting.

The Chair gave a summary of the oral evidence provided by Michael Sands. Mr Sands agreed with the Chair's summary but stated that he had not noticed, when he made the amendment asked for, the line in the final letter that gave the impression the letter still referred to one meeting.

2:58pm Stewart Dickson returned to the meeting.

John McPeake and Declan Allen presented oral evidence to the Committee and then answered questions from Members.

3:02pm Paula Bradley left the meeting.

3:05pm Paula Bradley returned to the meeting.

During questions from Members John McPeake agreed to provide to the Committee an email he received from the Department giving him advance notice of the meeting of 16th April 2012.

3:42pm Michael Copeland left the meeting.

The Chair gave the officials the opportunity to put on record any further comments they wished to make.

The officials declined to make any further comment.

The Chair thanked the officials for the evidence presented to the Committee.

3:48pm The officials left the meeting.

The Chair stated to Members that the Committee will continue to ask for relevant emails and documents from the Department.

10.5 Fusion21

The Chair asked the Committee if they were content to accept written evidence from Fusion21 as opposed to oral evidence. The Committee were content that Fusion21 provide written evidence to the Committee but requested Fusion21 confirm if they met the Minister on 14 May 2013.

3:50pm Michael Copeland returned to the meeting.

10.6 Further Evidence Phase One

The Chair reminded Members that a second letter had been sent to the BBC and asked if Members were content to wait on a reply before making a decision on the programme makers providing the Inquiry with oral or written evidence. The Committee noted that the BBC was taking a long time to provide the Committee with any kind of answer to its initial request for documentation. The Committee agreed to await a response from the BBC to its most recent letter before requesting legal advice on the matter.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Minister was scheduled to give evidence to the Committee on 5 December 2013 but asked were Members content for this to be rescheduled, at the request of the Department, to 12 December 2013. Members were content.

The Committee agreed to request written evidence from Barbara McConaghie and clarification from the Department on the minutes or aide memoire produced of the meeting of 16 April 2012.

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 21 November 2013

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Patricia Casey (Bill Clerk)
Mrs Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Orme (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: No apologies.

10:05am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

1. Inquiry

1.1 BBC

The Committee agreed to take legal advice regarding the letter received from BBC Litigation.

12:45pm The Chair adjourned the meeting.

12:51pm The meeting was recommenced in public session.

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Orme (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

1.2 Evidence Session

12:52pm The following official joined the meeting:

- Giles Willson, Deputy Chief Executive of the Glass and Glazing Federation

The official gave evidence to the Committee, and took questions from Members.

12:53pm Stewart Dickson joined the meeting.

12:53pm Sammy Wilson MLA joined the meeting.

12:55pm Trevor Clarke MLA joined the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

1.3 Fusion 21

The Chairperson advised Members that the Committee has written to Fusion 21 requesting further clarification on any meetings with the Minister for Social Development, after 23 April 2012.

1.4 Witnesses Phase Two

The Committee noted the Clerk's memo regarding calling witnesses for Phase Two of the Inquiry and agreed with Approach One.

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 12 December 2013

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Orme (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

10:04am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

3. **Committee Inquiry – Evidence Session with Minister McCausland**

The Chairperson noted his disappointment at the way in which the Department has responded to information requests made by the Committee, noting that further relevant evidence has only become available after initial Committee requests, and that all information released by the Department is first ‘noted’ by the Minister.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the DSD Permanent Secretary to brief the Committee on 9th January 2014 regarding how he intends to deal with future document requests from the Committee.

10:12am Minister McCausland joined the meeting. The Minister gave evidence to the Committee. The Minister then took questions from Members.

12:06pm The Minister left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to call the following witnesses to the meeting on 9th January:

- Stephen Brimstone, Special Advisor to Minister for Social Development
- Michael Sands, Deputy Director of Housing, DSD
- Barbara McConaghie, former Private Secretary to the Minister

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to write to Susan McCarty, Housing Director’s Office, DSD to seek clarification on communications sent to the NIHE by the Department.

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 9 January 2014

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Orme (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA

10:04am The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

1. Evidence Session with Stephen Brimstone, Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development

11:44am The following official joined the meeting:

- Stephen Brimstone, Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development

The official briefed the Committee.

The official then took questions from Members.

Members expressed a desire to write to the Glass and Glazing Federation seeking more details on the Federation's press release of October 2011, which announced that the Federation was building a relationship with the Minister's Special Adviser. The Chairperson noted that the Committee had already written to the GGF seeking clarification regarding this press release.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to follow up with the Glass and Glazing Federation to seek a response to its request for clarity on the contents of the press release.

1:05pm Mr Brimstone left the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard

1:06pm The Committee suspended.

1:24pm The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public.

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

2. Evidence Session with Barbara McConaghie, Former Private Secretary to the Minister for Social Development

1:26pm The following official joined the meeting:

- Barbara McConaghie, former Private Secretary to the Minister for Social Development.

The Chair advised Ms McConaghie that although the Committee presumes the professional integrity of witnesses throughout the inquiry process, it had agreed to administer an oath or affirmation where it had received conflicting or contradictory evidence.

Ms McConaghie was advised that aspects of her written evidence contradicted oral evidence that was previously given by Michael Sands and that it was for this reason she had been requested to give evidence under oath or affirmation.

The Chair confirmed with Ms McConaghie that she had been advised by the Department of the potential legal implications of giving evidence under affirmation. The Chair asked Ms McConaghie to consider the wording of the affirmation and then read this into the record when she was ready.

Ms McConaghie considered the wording of the affirmation then read the following into the record:

“I do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.”

Ms McConaghie then took questions from Members.

1:50pm Stewart Dickson MLA left the meeting.

Agreed: Members agreed to review all inquiry evidence received thus far in closed session on 23rd February.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

Thursday 13 March 2014

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Paula Bradley MLA

10:07am The meeting opened to the public.

1. Evidence Session with Mr Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development

10:20am The Minister joined the meeting.

The Minister took questions from officials.

10:56am The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

20 March 2014

[EXTRACT]

Thursday 3 April 2014

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)

Apologies: Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

9:35am The meeting opened to the public.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move into closed session to discuss correspondence received from the Department in relation to the Committee Inquiry

9:35am Closed Session

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note correspondence received by Department and proceed with today's evidence sessions as scheduled.

9:42am Open Session

1. Evidence Session with Mr Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development.

10:08am The Minister joined the meeting.

The Minister read the affirmation:

I, Nelson McCausland, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

The Minister took questions from the Committee in respect of the Committee's Inquiry.

10:50am Trevor Clarke MLA joined the meeting.

11:46am The Minister left the meeting

This session was recorded by Hansard.

11:46am Proceedings were suspended.

11:56am Proceedings recommenced in public session.

The Chair declared the meeting open to the public. The following members were present:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

2. Evidence Session with Mr Stephen Brimstone, Special Adviser to Minister McCausland

11:56am Mr Brimstone joined the meeting.

Mr Brimstone read the affirmation as follows:

I, Stephen Brimstone, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Mr Brimstone took questions in relation to the Committee's Inquiry.

1:11pm Mr Brimstone left the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

1:11pm Proceedings were suspended.

1:11pm Stewart Dickson MLA left the meeting.

1:11pm Gregory Campbell MLA left the meeting.

1:42pm Proceedings recommenced in public session.

The Chairperson declared the meeting open to the public. The following Members were present:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

3. Evidence Session with Mr Will Haire, Permanent Secretary for the Department for Social Development.

1:42pm Mr Will Haire, Permanent Secretary, DSD joined the meeting.

Mr Haire read the affirmation as follows:

I, Will Haire, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

1:45pm Fra McCann MLA joined the meeting.

Mr Haire took questions in relation to the Committee's Inquiry.

2:06pm Sammy Wilson MLA left the meeting.

2:39pm Mr Haire left the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

4. Evidence Session with Messrs Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd

2:40pm The following officials joined the meeting:

- Mr Jim McKeag, Managing Director, Turkington Holdings Ltd.
- Mr Ian Young, former Divisional Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd.

Mr McKeag read the oath as follows:

I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Mr Young read the oath as follows:

I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Mr McKeag and Mr Young took questions in relation to the Committee's Inquiry.

2:56pm The officials left the meeting.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

[EXTRACT]

Tuesday 17 June 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present:

- Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Jim Allister MLA
- Ms Paula Bradley MLA
- Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
- Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
- Mr Michael Copeland MLA
- Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
- Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
- Mr Fra McCann MLA
- Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance:

- Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
- Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)

12:06pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were as noted above.

2. Chairperson's Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take a briefing from officials from the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and Department for Social Development on the Statutory Rule SR 150/2014 The Jobseekers Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 at its meeting of 19 June 2014. Following consideration of this evidence, the Chair indicated that there would be an option for the Committee to rescind its decision to annul the Rule, should it deem this course of action appropriate. The Committee agreed that the agenda for the meeting of 19 June 2014 should be issued to reflect this decision.

3. Matters Arising

The Committee considered the option of rescinding its decision not to produce interim reports in respect of the Inquiry.

The following motion was subsequently proposed:

That the Committee for Social Development produces a stand-alone report on Phase 1 of its Inquiry.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes; 7
Noes; 3
Abstentions 0

AYES:

- Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
- Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
- Mr Jim Allister MLA
- Mr Michael Copeland MLA
- Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA
The motion was carried.

4. Committee Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI 'Spotlight' programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety or irregularity relating to NIHE-managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions – Review of Evidence for Phase 1

The Committee discussed the written and oral evidence that it had received in relation to Phase 1 of its Inquiry. On the basis of this evidence it considered whether the Minister may have deliberately or inadvertently misled the Committee

1:06pm Trevor Clarke MLA joined the meeting.

1:15pm Gregory Campbell MLA left the meeting

1:17pm Paula Bradley MLA left the meeting.

A consensus could not be reached as to whether the Minister had deliberately or inadvertently misled the Committee. The following motion was therefore proposed:

That the Minister for Social Development deliberately misled the Committee for Social Development.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes; 7
Noes; 2
Abstentions 0

AYES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

1:37pm Paula Bradley MLA returned to the meeting

5. Date, time and place of next meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on Thursday 19 June in the Room 29.

1:41pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

3 July 2014

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)

12:10pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Matters Arising

Agreed: Members agreed to delay publication of minutes from the closed session on 17 June 2014 until the date of publication of its report on Phase 1 of the Inquiry.

Members noted a letter from the Department stating that Michael Sands returned to work on Monday 23 June 2014.

3. Committee Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI 'Spotlight' programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety or irregularity relating to NIHE-managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions – Consideration of Committee's draft report on Phase 1 of the Inquiry

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 1-10 of the report, the Introduction.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 11-19 of the report, relating to the Committee's Approach to the Inquiry.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 20-24 of the report, relating to Phase One - Process Challenges.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 25-33 of the report, relating to the Background to the Report.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 34-47 of the report, relating to the Timeline of Key Events.

The Committee agreed to amend paragraph 48 of the report to include the names of the representatives from Turkington Holdings Ltd.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 48-59 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from Turkington Holdings, incorporating the agreed amendment to paragraph 48.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 60-72 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from Michael Sands, John McPeake and Declan Allen.

12:18pm Michael Copeland MLA joined the meeting.

The motion was proposed That paragraph 81 be amended to change the word 'stated' to 'claimed'.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 6;
Noes 1;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Mr Trevor Clarke MLA

The motion was carried.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that paragraph 88 should also be amended to change the word 'stated' to 'claimed'.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 73-88 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from the Minister for Social Development, incorporating the agreed amendments to paragraphs 81 and 88.

12:20pm Sammy Wilson MLA joined the meeting.

12:20pm Gregory Campbell MLA joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 89-99 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from the Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development.

12:22pm Dolores Kelly MLA joined the meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed to insert the word 'said' into paragraph 106 of the report.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 100-111 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from Barbara McConaghie.

The Committee agreed to amend paragraph 122 of the report to say 'sought a meeting with the Minister', rather than 'invited'. The Committee agreed to amend other references to 'inviting' the Minister to a meeting to 'seeking' a meeting with the Minister where they occur in the report.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 112-123 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from the Minister for Social Development.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 124-135 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from the Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development.

The Committee agreed to amend '6' to '16' in paragraph 143 of the report.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 136 to 149 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from the DSD Permanent Secretary.

The Committee considered paragraphs 150 to 153 of the report, relating to Key Points of Evidence from Ian Young and Jim McKeag.

The motion was proposed That paragraph 151 be amended to change the word 'stated' to 'claimed'.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 1;
Noes 7;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Trevor Clarke MLA

NOES:

Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

The motion fell.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 150 to 153 of the report.

The Committee agreed paragraph 154 of the report, relating to the Committee's Consideration of Evidence.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 155-159 of the report, relating to the meeting of 25 January 2012.

The Committee considered paragraphs 160-165.

The motion was proposed That paragraph 165 be amended to change 'Members' to 'A number of Members'.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 3;
Noes 6;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Gregory Campbell MLA
Trevor Clarke MLA
Sammy Wilson MLA

NOES:

Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA

The motion fell.

The motion was proposed That paragraph 165 be amended to change 'Members' to 'A majority of Members'.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 7;
Noes 3;
Abstentions; 0.

AYES:

Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Gregory Campbell MLA
Trevor Clarke MLA
Sammy Wilson MLA

The motion was carried.

The Committee agreed to add the words 'she had assumed' to paragraph 172 of the report.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 166-175 of the report, relating to Changes to Records.

12:34pm Paula Bradley MLA joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to use the phrase 'the majority of Members' in paragraphs 176-179 and in any instance in the report where the majority position was reflected in respect of the evidence.

The Committee agreed paragraphs 176-182 of the report, relating to lack of Departmental/Ministerial Challenge.

The motion was proposed That the words 'determined' and 'made' be inserted in paragraph 184 of the report, so as to read '...the determined efforts that the Minister and his Special Adviser made to remove...'

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 7;
Noes 4;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Jim Allister MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Paula Bradley MLA
Gregory Campbell MLA
Trevor Clarke MLA
Sammy Wilson MLA

The motion was carried.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 183-187 of the report, relating to the Committee's conclusion.

The Committee agreed "That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Social Development Committee to the Assembly".

The Committee agreed in principle to the inclusion of a minority report in an appendix to the main report.

The Committee agreed to send copies of the report to the Minister for Social Development, the Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development, the Permanent Secretary to the Department of Social Development and Barbara McConaghie for comment, to be received by next week's meeting, for inclusion in the report.

4. Date, time and place of next meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on Thursday 26 June in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

1:07pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

3 July 2014

Thursday 3 July 2014

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

12:32pm Proceedings recommenced in closed session, in Room 29 Parliament Buildings.

Present:
Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

1. Minutes of proceedings

Agreed: The draft minutes of the closed session meetings of 17 June and 24 June were agreed. The Committee agreed that these would not be published until the report on Phase 1 of the Inquiry was published.

19. Committee Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI 'Spotlight' programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety or irregularity relating to NIHE-managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions – Committee Report into Phase 1 of Inquiry

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department requesting additional time to provide a response to the Committee's draft report.

The following motion was proposed:

That the Committee for Social Development notes correspondence from the Department for Social Development requesting an extension to the deadline for responding to the Committee's report on Phase 1 of its Inquiry.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 6;
Noes 3;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

The motion was carried.

The following motion was subsequently proposed:

In the interest of fairness and proper procedure that the request by the Department to have an extension until 11 July to review the written evidence not provided in the draft report is agreed by the Committee.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 3;
Noes 6;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

NOES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

The motion fell.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for any subsequent response received by the Department by 11 July 2014 to be included in the report as an addendum.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the minority report as an appendix to its report on Phase 1 of its Inquiry.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 1 - Minutes of Proceedings - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 2 – Minutes of Evidence - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 3 – Written Evidence - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 4 - Meeting between Minister for Social Development and Turkington Holdings Ltd 16 April 2012 - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 5 - Amendments to Assembly Questions, the Minister's Letter to the Committee Chair and the Minister's Diary Entry re meeting of 16 April 2012 - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 6 - Correspondence between BBC, Minister for Social Development and his Special Adviser 7 June -1 July 2013 - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 7 - Meeting of 28 June 2013 between Minister and Senior DSD officials - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 8 - Requests from Other Contractors re Double Glazing Programme - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 9 - Correspondence from the Department for Social Development - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 10 - Committee Approach - Procedural Fairness - stand part of the report.

The Committee agreed that Appendix 11 – Minority Report - stand part of the report.

The following motion was proposed.

That in keeping with normal Assembly protocol that the report be printed and embargoed until the date of the debate in Assembly.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 3;
Noes 6;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

NOES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

The motion fell.

The following motion was proposed:

That the Committee agree that the report is printed.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 5;
Noes 2;
Abstentions 0.

AYES:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chair)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA

NOES:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA

1:07pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 2

Minutes of Evidence

4 July 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Ms Pam Brown
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mrs Judith Cochrane
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Sammy Douglas
 Mr Mark Durkan

Witnesses:

Mr Nelson McCausland	<i>Minister for Social Development</i>
Ms Susan McCarty	<i>Department for Social Development</i>

- The Chairperson:** I thank the Minister, Nelson McCausland, for attending this morning's Committee meeting at short notice. Minister, if you do not mind, I will make a couple of introductory remarks. Following last night's 'Spotlight' programme, there has been a very significant amount of public commentary and concern. I want to place on record that you and I engaged after midnight, and you offered and agreed to come before the Committee this morning. Serious matters were referred to in the programme last evening. None of us around the table knows the veracity or otherwise of any of those matters. However, there are clearly a number of very important matters that need to be addressed. I advise you that the Committee has agreed to undertake an inquiry, subject to advice from the Assembly's Legal Services about how that inquiry might be conducted, its terms of references, scope, and so on. That will all be agreed by the Committee. I have asked members to be rigorous in their jobs this morning, as we are obliged to be under statute, but, by the same token, to be mindful of their language and of treating allegations as fact.
- Minister, I know that you want to address the Committee on a number of matters, so, without any further ado, the floor is yours.
- Mr Nelson McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** Thank you very much, Chair. As you said, we had a text conversation very early today. I welcome the opportunity, and I thank the Committee for the opportunity, to come along to deal with some of these matters.
- There are three or four broad areas that I wish to set out. It is important that I have a good relationship with the Committee. I value that very much because if we are going to deliver the best outcome for the people of Northern Ireland, we need to have the Department, the Minister and the Committee working together.
- Three things in particular were of concern to me. One is the priority of service for tenants. I have always been concerned, as are Committee members, that our tenants, who are our constituents and the people whom we work with and represent, should get the best service from the Housing Executive. As I have outlined on a number of occasions in the past, I have had real concerns about the sort of service that has been delivered. Secondly, I want to ensure that we get value for money, because that is right and proper. Those two concerns are not totally unconnected. If you get value for money and you can save significant amounts of money in one area, that money can be reinvested in the service provided for tenants. It is often bandied about that there is about £1 billion-worth of maintenance outstanding on Housing Executive properties. The £18 million here and the £15 million somewhere else will not wipe out that £1 billion, but it makes a start. Thirdly, it is important for me, personally, that, in everything

- that I seek to do in this role as Minister for Social Development, in political life in general and in other aspects of life, I always seek to act with integrity. I know that that is written into all sorts of codes and guidance about public life. However, apart from that, that is a principle for me.
6. I turn to the 'Spotlight' programme itself. It was a rather strange programme. It was a bit of a hotchpotch, with things pulled together and bits put in and bits left out. Therefore, I think that the most helpful approach would be for me to identify a number of specific issues that were raised in the programme and address those, one after the other; that will probably provide more structure.
7. The first issue is accusations and allegations about the actions of my special adviser. I have to say that in working with that special adviser, in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) previously and now in the Department for Social Development (DSD), I have found him, at all times, to be a person of extremely high ability and the highest level of integrity. He gives the highest possible standard of service in all that he does. I want to put that on record.
8. The interaction between him and a member of the DUP who served on the Housing Executive board featured prominently in the programme. However, that interaction was, in fact, a single telephone conversation that lasted a matter of minutes. That conversation was about passing on information about the context of all of this, namely that there was an immense amount of focus on one particular company but that, at the same time, we were becoming increasingly concerned that the issues identified in respect of that one company also applied, to varying degrees, to a number of other companies. That has now been demonstrated to be the case, and we have been vindicated. If you look at the ASM report, which I will return to, you will see that that was largely ignored. The context of the conversation between the special adviser and the councillor from Lisburn was about passing on information about that broader context to inform that discussion. That was the right thing to do, and I have no criticism at all of what he did. In the programme, he was very badly misrepresented.
9. Having touched on that one point, I want to get to some of the core issues here. There were issues raised about my involvement and my motivations in being involved. My position on the termination of the Red Sky Group contract by the Housing Executive in July 2011, shortly after I came into the Department, has been a matter of public record for some time.
10. **I want to pause here to say this:** an awful lot of the stuff that was in the programme last night was cobbled together from that which is already available in the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) report that was published on 20 February 2013. A lot of the things that were mentioned in the programme are things that have been in the public domain — correspondence, and so on — since February. There is nothing there that is particularly new.
11. It is significant, however, that although last night's programme drew on the PAC report, it did not give it anything like the significance that it should have been given. It also skited over the Northern Ireland Audit Office report. There was virtually no mention of the ASM report, which is now lodged in the Assembly Library and is freely available on the departmental website. I will come back to the ASM report in due course. There was no mention of the Housing Executive's qualified accounts and the resultant comments from the Comptroller and Auditor General. So, an awful lot of things were left out of the programme that, had they been included, would have created a very different picture.
12. It is worth noting, perhaps, that the Housing Executive's next annual report and accounts are due to be laid in the Assembly today and that the Comptroller and Auditor General will comment on them tomorrow. It will be interesting to

- see whether the issues that he raises tomorrow are similar to those that he has raised in the past about the Housing Executive. An awful lot was left out of the programme.
13. In the course of the programme, the former chairman of the Housing Executive, Brian Rowntree, specifically stated that the ASM report sat on my desk for a year. He was very clear about that; he said that it sat on my desk for a year. That is totally and utterly untrue. The report sat in the Housing Executive for a year while officials chewed over it and considered it, but it definitely was not sitting on my desk for a year.
14. In fact, since the draft ASM report was received in June 2012, and he went in July 2012, and I sent it to his successor, who was the acting chair, he would never have had any knowledge of whether it sat on my desk or anyone else's desk because he was not there. That fact did not, in any way, prevent him from making the accusation that I was sitting on something for 12 months as though I was trying to conceal something. I wanted it out there, and we pressed the Housing Executive again and again to get that out. That is why we not only put it in the Assembly Library but made very sure that it was available to every person in Northern Ireland by putting it on the departmental website. I believe in full and total transparency.
15. Returning to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract; shortly after taking up office in May 2011, I expressed my concerns about contract management, on the foot of briefing on the governance review findings carried out in 2010 and on the issues leading to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract in July 2011.
16. There has been a great deal of speculation and a great deal of insinuation and innuendo that I sought either to extend the contract with the Red Sky Group or to assign the contract to a new company. That is not the case. Anyone who reads carefully and examines the series of correspondence between me and the then chairman of the Housing Executive — and those exchanges are in the public domain and are freely available through the Freedom of Information Act and the PAC report, which I mentioned earlier — will see that that is not the case, and that has been made clear again and again.
17. I refer members to the detailed correspondence published in the PAC report 'Northern Ireland Housing Executive Management of Response Maintenance Contracts', which was published in March. In reference to that, in the letter that I received on 15 July 2011 from the then chairman, Brian Rowntree, he said:
- "As regards contract-monitoring arrangements, please find attached a short summary of our monitoring arrangements for response maintenance contracts" —*
18. and this is the key bit:
- "which you can see are very thorough."*
19. Thorough indeed. So thorough that for years, there were irregular payments going on. If your monitoring arrangements are as thorough as that, you should not have had happening, across districts and across companies, the sort of thing that was happening. I got that written assurance, and verbal assurance as well, from him that all was well elsewhere; that there was only an issue with this one company. As I have said already, ASM says different. It vindicates our stance that the same issues in varying levels and to different degrees — from company to company, it varies — irregular payments, and so on, were found across a number of these companies.
20. In particular, my letter to the then chairman on 7 July 2012 makes it clear that I believed that the most appropriate way forward was for an open procurement exercise for the Red Sky Group contracts to be undertaken. That was subject to the administrator being able to provide assurance that those contracts could be serviced until such an exercise could be undertaken. When the Housing Executive advised that the administrator could provide services

- only until the end of July, and thereafter the company would be sold, and that it would take in the region of four months for an open procurement process, I confirmed to the then chairman that the Housing Executive should proceed with the termination of the Red Sky Group contracts and reassign those contracts to adjacent contractors to ensure continued provision of services to tenants.
21. My preference was that, rather than simply transferring the contracts from Red Sky to the companies around it, an open procurement process would be undertaken. Why was I concerned about simply handing the contracts over to the adjacent companies, even though, in the end, that is what had to be done? The fact is that, at that point, the issues were already becoming clear. The issues were not simply about one company and one Housing Executive district. There were a number of companies — Leeway Maintain was another company that was mentioned at that stage; it features in the ASM report. There were questions, even then, about irregular payments to that company. So I knew for a fact that this problem was not simply restricted to one company; it involved a number of companies. It was not restricted to one Housing Executive district; it spread across a number of districts. So you have a number of companies, a number of contractors and a number of districts where there are irregularities. I had no confidence that we were not in the situation of taking a contract off one company and handing it across to another company that might be as bad. That is why I asked for assurances from the chairman. He gave me assurances. He said that they had robust response-maintenance monitoring in place that was very thorough. Those assurances proved not to be of much value.
22. I can assure you, categorically, that I have never sought to influence any contracts, neither this nor any other contract. Indeed, I do not have any role in this. This is, as I have always advised, an operational matter for the Housing Executive alone. It makes the decisions.
23. The third point was the meeting with Red Sky. I have a list to hand. I just checked how many companies we are asked to meet over a period of time. The list covers 2011, 2012 and 2013. I am looking at a list of companies from the construction and building sector. We met H&A Mechanical Services, the Construction Employers Federation, Kingspan, the Federation of Master Builders and the Mears Group, which was in the other day. So there is a whole range of companies with which we have met on different occasions. There is a lengthy list of companies that we meet, and that is normal practice, so there is nothing at all unusual. My role, as Minister, is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland, and, by and large, if people come and ask for a meeting, I will meet them. I never claim to know everything, and I am always happy to learn. If I can meet a company and find out that something can be done in a better way that provides a better service for tenants and saves money, I will be happy to talk to them and listen to them, and I may well learn from them. That includes companies not only here in Northern Ireland but in Great Britain, where maintenance contracts are handled in a somewhat different way. That is a key part of my role and responsibility as Minister if I am to discharge the duties of my office. At meetings, I listen to views, and I investigate if I believe that I should follow them up.
24. My officials also attended that meeting with Red Sky. My prime motivation was to support the workers and protect jobs, if possible. At the time, I was lobbied by people from a number of political parties in East Belfast, directly, in writing and in other ways. The case was put that there was concern about the loss of employment in that area, and I listened carefully, because it is right and proper that if MLAs ask for a meeting or make a case in writing, I should respond to them and listen to them. I remember receiving a letter about Red Sky from Naomi Long, in East Belfast. So it was not just a case, as was implied, that one particular political party had an

- interest in this; a number of political parties were interested. I noticed that Mr Copeland commented on that in the media today. So that deals with the issue of the Red Sky meeting.
25. Fourthly, I want to pick up on the allegation by Brian Rowntree that he was, in some way, victimised. I had many meetings with Brian Rowntree up until the point when he resigned as chair. That was right and proper, because it is part of the system that Ministers should hold accountability meetings with chairpersons. It is our job to hold to account the people who are appointed to lead these organisations. There, I met with the chair of the Housing Executive, in the same way that, in the past, in DCAL, I would have met from time to time with the chair of Sport NI or some other arm's-length body. That is normal practice. The purpose of those meetings is to challenge the chair, hold him to account and ensure that everything is done properly and responsibly. I would have failed utterly if I had not met with Brian Rowntree. He resigned of his own account. It came as a surprise to me; he could have stayed. However, he was disappointed with the way in which the issue unfolded.
26. I noticed that at the end of the programme, there were issues raised about victimisation by even the permanent secretary, and I will return to that matter at the very end. During the programme, a number of issues of fraud were raised. That is a matter for the Housing Executive to consider and to take forward urgently. These matters must be explored in detail. There were references to a Housing Executive official being on a trip to America and to officials taking trips to the Odyssey. Those are already covered in the Northern Ireland Audit Office report and in the PAC report, which I mentioned earlier, 'Northern Ireland Housing Executive Management of Response Maintenance Contracts. As far as I am aware, those date to about — this is an approximate figure — a decade ago. They have certainly been dealt with in the past. If there
- are things that should be investigated by the police, they should be. I do not want to see anything coming forward in regard to an arm's-length body such as the Housing Executive where there is improper behaviour or a lack of probity and propriety. Those things should not happen.
27. Sectarianism was brought up and majored on in the programme. If you look carefully back over Hansard reports and correspondence and statements that I have made, it is a word that I have never used. In regard to this matter, I have never accused anyone of being sectarian. It has been talked about. Others have commented on it. That is their perception. I have never, ever mentioned it. However, last night, it was implied that I had made that type of accusation. I think that that was maybe even stated today, but that is not the case. I was very careful not to say that.
28. The next thing was the nature of the problems, and this brings us back to the ASM report. I have already put my thoughts about this on record. There was something endemic and systemic in the structures that was wrong. The problems were in more than one district and across more than one contractor. If it was just one district and a number of companies, or if it was one company and one or possibly two districts, you could argue that it was a bit of a blip, it happened somewhere, things went wrong, but it is not widespread. The message was coming very clear that it was more than one company and more than one district. The Housing Executive had not initiated a forensic review of the other contractors. That is what I decided to set in motion.
29. Shortly after taking up office in May 2011, I expressed my concerns about contract management on foot of briefing on the governance review findings carried out in 2010 and on the issues leading to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract in July 2011. However, in light of my continuing concerns about the issues that led to that termination by the Housing Executive, I was concerned that the

- same things might be present in other contracts that had not been the subject of any full investigation. I asked, therefore, that a forensic investigation be carried out of a sample of Housing Executive maintenance contracts, including the adjacent contractors, because they would be the recipients of the Red Sky contract. I asked it to provide me with assurances on the other contracts, the quality of service to tenants and the proper use of public funds. The ASM investigation report is available on the Department's website. It confirms that I was absolutely right to have concerns. It was all the more alarming since the failings identified in the report post-dated the work that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive had already done in relation to the Red Sky contracts.
30. It was interesting that last night's 'Spotlight' did not deal with the wider context of the ASM report. It got a very, very fleeting, momentary mention, but it is a document that if anyone is going to look thoroughly at the contracts issue, needs to be gone through. There are some bits of it — small amounts — that have been redacted for commercial/legal reasons, but the report is there. I assume that every member of the Committee will have read that report and looked at it carefully and thoroughly. It is significant that it was not really part of the programme, and one can draw one's own conclusions, I am sure, as to why. It shows the partial nature, I think, of the programme. Lots of evidence; if you are going to look at a subject thoroughly, you will look at all the evidence. You do not just pick and choose the little bits that might suit a particular, predetermined or preconceived outcome. You look at all the evidence, including the ASM report.
31. The ASM report lists very clearly the companies where there were problems. For example, it says:
- "We have summarised below the districts where the number of jobs in which errors were identified were in excess of 50% ...:*
- Leeway Maintain
Belfast 5
Carillion*
- Castlereagh
H & A
Carrickfergus
Newtownards
MDC"*
- now defunct —*
- "Lurgan
Portadown
Omega
Collon Terrace
PK Murphy
Antrim".*
32. So all those details are there in the report. If you have not read it, I would encourage you do so.
33. That brings me on to the next point, Chair, which is about potential savings, and, in fact, potential savings that are really real savings — the savings of £15.1 million in relation to double glazing. 'Spotlight' does not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly in the stewardship of public funds. It is important that we have good stewardship of public funds because, as I said already, if money is wasted in one area, it is not able to be used in another area. For example, to do maintenance work, which is especially relevant considering the £1 billion backlog of Housing Executive maintenance work that has existed for many years.
34. Nor does 'Spotlight' recognise the work that I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double-glazing programme. Bear in mind that I took up office in May 2011 and immediately thereafter raised this issue with officials in June 2011, and I have been working on it ever since. So I came into the Department in May and started work with officials on the issue of double glazing in June — within a matter of weeks.
35. You are maybe asking why I raised it — or maybe not, because I think that everybody knows why I would raise it. There is not an MLA in the Assembly who, if they are doing their job properly, would not know that that is one of the issues that people were very unhappy

- with. They were living in Housing Executive properties that did not have good insulation, and, therefore, with fuel poverty being so much to the fore, they were being put in a very difficult situation because they were heating their home, but the heat was being lost through the windows. It is a big issue, and the amount of correspondence that I get even now, week after week, from MLAs saying, “When will this estate be done, and when will that one be done?”, is because there is a real desire politically and across the community and across all political parties to have good double glazing in the social housing sector.
36. I started that work in June 2011. In October 2011, the Housing Executive was already on record as reviewing the specification for windows. I emphasise that date — October 2011. That was a time when I was bidding for extra money — an extra £2 million — under the October monitoring round to put into double glazing. So, at that time, I asked for extra money, and we got that extra money to do that work. The important thing is that the Housing Executive itself was reviewing specifications in October 2011, long before any meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation, which came in April 2012 — more than or around six months later. Six months prior to that, the Housing Executive itself was working on that issue. I wanted it ramped up before we even put it in as Programme for Government target. The specification was discussed with the Housing Executive in December 2011, and it was acknowledged that it needed a new specification. Again, I emphasise the date — December 2011, which was long before any meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation in April. The implication has always been that, somehow or other, I met the Glass and Glazing Federation and that that meeting was what made me decide to change the specification. However, that process was already under way, long before that meeting.
37. My focus at the meeting, however, on learning of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines, was to seek advice on the guidelines from my technical officials. My technical officials advised that the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its glazing specification and should benchmark its approach against that advocated by the Glass and Glazing Federation. I, therefore, sought to progress that issue with the Housing Executive, which was already reviewing its specification. I emphasise that point: it was already reviewing it.
38. The outcome of my focus in that area culminated in the identification of estimated savings to the public purse of £15.1 million. I believe that that has led to a better standard of work that minimises the disruption to tenants. Throughout this process, my position and role have always been matters of public record. This morning, Mr Copeland raised on the radio the breakdown and nature of the savings and how they could be understood. It is very, very simple. Of the £15.1 million — this has been said before — £9.6 million was for redecoration grants. It always seemed strange to me that we were paying out a redecoration grant to Housing Executive tenants because of the amount of damage that was done to the window surrounds when their windows were installed. I have had windows fitted, I think, twice in my life, and when they were fitted, I did not have that problem. Why? It was because of the way that they were put in. If you or I go to a company and ask for windows to be fitted, they will be fitted in a particular way that does not require the chipping away of the surround. Therefore, you do not have to replaster and do not need a redecoration grant. That is how my windows were fitted, and I assume that, for most people here, it will be how their windows were fitted. That is because the companies that do such work generally operate to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. It is good practice, and removing the need for redecoration grants saves £9.6 million. I would rather spend £9.6 million on dealing with problems with cold, damp

- houses than spend it unnecessarily on redecoration grants.
39. There was also a figure of £5.5 million for other efficiency savings on the new contracts. You can be clear about the £9.6 million because you can have an idea about what the average redecoration grant is for each house. The other figure was an estimate that was based on the likely savings that would result from a contract being awarded, and certain other specification changes brought additional savings totalling around £5.5 million. When you put the two together, you get a total of £15.1 million. I think that the position about how that came about is, therefore, very clear.
40. At the meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation, a higher figure of what the saving would be was quoted. However, in a sense, that is largely irrelevant because the clear point was that there was a saving to be made. The Housing Executive was looking at the specification, we were looking at the specification and were encouraging the Housing Executive to look at it more fully, and people in the trade were saying, "Actually, that's right.". So the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines are good. They apply in the private sector, and there is no reason why they should not apply in the social sector as well.
- I will emphasise and underline this point because last night's programme did not pick up on it at all. The timeline was: into the Department in May 2011; working with officials on this issue in June 2011, and working on it ever since; information from the Housing Executive in October, when we bid for the extra money in the monitoring round to review the specification; and in December, the specification was discussed at a meeting with the Housing Executive. The meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation took place only the following year.*
41. The current position on the Programme for Government target for 2012-13 is that 8,856 homes have been glazed against a target of 8,600. So we have exceeded the target. I say that because there is a myth floating around about work being stopped. In one year, 8,856
- homes were glazed, and that was above the target. This year's target is to complete a further 9,000, and I can confirm that the Housing Executive has begun the procurement process for a dedicated double-glazing contract under regulation 19 — the restricted procedure of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 — which involved the issue of an advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. So the contract for the double glazing has gone out to tender through the Official Journal of the European Union, as you would expect for a large contract. Presumably companies can tender from every part of Northern Ireland, every part of the United Kingdom, every part of the British Isles and every part of Europe.
42. The tender process is entirely a matter for the Housing Executive, because I have absolutely no role to play in it, and the process remains under way. I do not see the tender documents, and I have no role in the tender documents. I do not know who has tendered for the contract. I know nothing about it. It is a matter that the Housing Executive deals with, and that is the case with all contracts.
43. There is a scandal, and I have said this before in the Chamber, in the failure of the Housing Executive over the years to identify problems in maintenance. I touched on the issue of Housing Executive double glazing, and the other issue that has come up recently is cavity wall insulation. In my constituency, I have a number of estates that contain affected houses. Of the houses affected, 25% of them happen to be in North Belfast and the Shankill, but the problem spreads into some of the estates in West Belfast and across the Province. I have had correspondence from MLAs regarding particular estates in their areas. The problem is in houses that were built in the late 1950s and early 1960s with no cavity wall, which meant they had no insulation. In this day and age, that is unacceptable.
44. I have looked back at the correspondence that I, as an MLA, have had with the Housing Executive over

- the years about a particularly difficult estate, where problems of cold and damp are very severe. The Housing Executive was constantly telling tenants, “Your problem is condensation.” There is a problem that has been acknowledged, but we had to hammer away to get it acknowledged. It was almost as if the Housing Executive lived in a state of denial about those things. I went back to them again and again, and I am not a technical expert, but I could not understand how, when I went to somebody’s home and saw mould growing on the walls and paper coming off the walls, the problem was being denied. We are in a position where that sort of situation is no longer being denied. We are challenging the Housing Executive to deliver, not only on double glazing but on insulation.
45. I encourage the Committee, and I mentioned this to the Chair, to go over and look at examples in Liverpool. I was over there recently, and the new vice-chair of the Housing Executive took me to see an example of a house that had been retrofitted to deal with that issue. It was a superb job. I spoke to the tenants, and they were impressed. If we can get that service those for people, it will help. There are 5,000 of those, and 9,000 single-layer walls across the Province. So there is a big issue about that.
46. I am coming to the end, Chairman. I just have a few points to make to finish off. First, I did not suspend or put on hold the double-glazing programme. I asked that the specification be reviewed, and, in the meantime, work contracted would continue. The target for 2012-13 was exceeded. There was a lot of talk about suspension, but it was untrue. The target for this year is 9,000. That does not sound like suspension to me. When we are talking about contracts and specifications, the previous specification included use of a hinge that was provided by a company in Scandinavia. Those hinges were imported into Northern Ireland via Dublin and ended up here with the Housing Executive contractors. The specification was for a hinge that only one company in the whole world makes. Why on earth would you specify, so precisely, a hinge of a type that only one company in the world was producing?
47. I move now to Fusion 21, of which mention was made in the course of the programme. It is a matter of record who was at that meeting, and I answered a question for written answer in September 2012 to that effect. That meeting was about procurement, in a general way. After the meeting, Fusion 21 contacted my officials about the double-glazing programme and was rightly told that that would be a Housing Executive contract that would be put out to open procurement, and that it should contact the Housing Executive head of procurement. I understand that it did contact the Housing Executive to discuss that. Within weeks or, in fact, almost within days of the meeting, on 14 May 2012, an e-mail was sent from Fusion 21 to an official in the Department. It stated:
- “Thank you for taking the time to speak to me last week and to bring me up to date on the position regarding the Housing Executive window contract.”*
48. It is clear enough what was discussed at the meeting. The e-mail continued:
- “Following on from our conversation, I went back to Fusion 21 head of procurement and chief executive to see if this now created an opportunity for Fusion 21 to become involved to deliver the cost savings and social outcomes as presented to you. Having had a number of discussions, a number of issues have become apparent to us, and I thought that it might be useful to highlight the outcome of our discussions.”*
49. The e-mail goes on to speak about Fusion 21’s particular potential role with regard to the contracts.
50. The interesting thing is that ‘Spotlight’ seemed to suggest that there was a meeting with Fusion 21 on a particular day, and that was it. They spent a long time investigating this; they have been at this programme for about a year. There were months of research, yet no mention of that further correspondence and contact, not only with my

- Department, but, as I am aware, with the Housing Executive chief executive, who met Fusion 21 in, I think, January 2012. It would have been more reflective of the facts if the programme had actually said that the meeting was the start of a process in which contracts, and so on, were discussed.
51. I move now to the chairman's position. The previous chairman was in post for nine years. Nine years is a fairly long time. All the issues that have been identified — the overpayments, the issues about the £18 million, the planning maintenance contracts and the response maintenance contracts — were around for years when he was at the helm of the organisation. If you look at previous reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and we wait to see the next one when it comes out today and tomorrow, it is quite clear that the message comes across again and again that, under his leadership, the Housing Executive was far too slow. It was far too slow in addressing issues. When I looked at the organisation, I saw that there was procrastination within it; there was obfuscation; there was delay. That is why the Housing Executive sat on the ASM report for a whole year; it was so slow. It is that lack of alacrity, that lack of progress. We should have been far further down the road of addressing these issues, and we should not have had to wait until the end of his nine-year period for something to happen. That is the difficulty that I had with regard to the role of the chairman. There was a failure to deliver; it was far too slow.
52. There was also a reference to a letter about maintenance staff, following a letter from Red Sky. That is a matter for the Housing Executive. It is also a matter of record, as that was covered in the PAC report. That was the letter from Pauline Gazzard, which was dated 17 November 2008. It was written to Colm McCaughley at the Housing Executive. That goes back to 2008, long before I was ever near the Department. It is not anything new. In last night's programme, it seemed that it was something new. It is on record. It is there in the PAC
- report, if you want to read it. You did not need to watch 'Spotlight' to learn about it; it is in the PAC report.
53. I apologise for the length of this, Chairman, but you will appreciate that a lot of issues were dealt with last night and I want to see these through to completion. As regards the meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation in April 2012, I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues. My role as Minister is to make myself available to all the people of Northern Ireland, with the odd exception where there is some legal or other issue and it would be a pointless meeting. I have always sought to make myself available in going out to meet people in constituencies, going on visits, talking to organisations, talking to individuals and talking to MLAs. It is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly when it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, I will not be deterred from doing so.
54. My aim in relation to the double glazing programme has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015 is met, while ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011, and long before this meeting ever took place. The Housing Executive, as I have previously said, as far back as October 2011 was already reviewing its double glazing specifications and had advised that it needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream. Indeed, I discussed the change of specification at a performance review meeting in December 2011 with the chairman and chief executive, just in passing to say that — sorry, there was a point that I was going to make there but I will come back to it in due course.

55. The official record of the meeting notes that, at the outset, one of the attendees advised, as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation:
- “there were better ways of resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers.”*
56. That is a quotation from the minutes of the meeting, it is also a quotation that was in a letter that I sent to ‘Spotlight’. However, it chose not to use that particular quotation because it did not fit in with its chosen narrative.
57. The minute of the meeting also records that the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation advised:
- “if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed, this could potentially result in savings estimated at £26.8 million.”*
58. That figure was estimated and the figure subsequently reached was much smaller, but £15.1 million in anybody’s money is not an insignificant sum, and if you can save £15.1 million, so be it. It is a good thing to do. Indeed, the Housing Executive’s chief executive also referred to the proposed review of the specification and that it hoped, following board approval, to have new tenders placed and contracts in place in the autumn. It is clear that this work was already under way. By the way, the minute of that meeting was the subject of an FOI request in the autumn of last year from Sinn Féin MLA Daithí McKay, so that has been common knowledge for a long time — to some people, anyway. The minute of the meeting is very clear: it is headed ‘Meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation’ and it refers to the guidelines.
59. In relation to my duty as Minister, if Turkington Holdings or indeed any other company had asked me for a meeting, I would have done so because, as I said earlier, here is a list of people we have met. There is nothing new and nothing unusual in that. The point is not who attended the meeting, but the fact that they brought to my attention the guidelines and that they believed there could be significant savings if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were considered. I, therefore, raised this with my technical officials, which was right and proper.
60. My motivation for ensuring that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014-15 through the provision of double glazing is also a matter of public record. When I came into office, I was astounded to learn that the Housing Executive estimated that 48,000 of its homes required double glazing. It is a reflection of its record-keeping that when it finally got round to checking that out, it was actually 24,000. That is 24,000 out of 90,000; a quarter of its properties, not half as it initially estimated. The Housing Executive had not kept detailed records on its systems. That figure was not recorded; it was an estimate. The actual figure was 24,000. If 24,000 people get a better deal and are living in warmer, cosier homes that are cheaper to heat, that is a job well done. Therefore, I ensured that, in the Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive gave a commitment that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014-15 through the provision of double glazing. I was not prepared to wait for 10 years, which was the original figure, to have this done. We need to have it done by 2014-15, and it will be done.
61. However, I also had to ensure that the double-glazing programme delivered value for money for the tenants of the Housing Executive and the taxpayers of Northern Ireland, and that is why I asked the Housing Executive to research the specifications used, as I was concerned that the specifications for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer best value for money. Following the review carried out by the Housing Executive, the revised specification for the procurement and fitting of double glazing has resulted in an estimated saving of £15.1 million.
62. The final point is that, at the end of the programme, there was an accusation made by Brian Rowntree about the

- permanent secretary in the Department, and, so, there was a question about the role of the permanent secretary in contacting Mr Rowntree.
63. I heard only last week for the very first time of this development, following 'Spotlight' approaching my permanent secretary. This relates to an internal audit report that was prepared inside the Housing Executive, which, following a second report, was withdrawn. So there were two internal audit reports in the Housing Executive, and the second one replaced the one that had been withdrawn.
64. The standards expected of Mr Haire as the accounting officer are to ensure that the Department and any subsidiary to it or organisation sponsored by it operates effectively and to a high standard of probity. Mr Haire is expected to carry out his role and ensure that others carry out theirs in line with the Civil Service's core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.
65. It is also his duty under the code of ethics that if he becomes aware of actions by others that he believes conflict with the code, he should report those actions. Since the second report raised an issue, Mr Haire has referred the second report to the Northern Ireland Audit Office for its consideration, and there the matter sits at present. Mr Haire saw this as an accounting officer issue and did not at any time involve me in it. When, out of courtesy, Mr Haire rang Mr Rowntree to tell him what he was doing, he made it clear to Mr Rowntree that I was not aware of this issue.
66. Chairman, I appreciate your indulgence, because that was a fairly lengthy presentation. I understand that there are requests for a special meeting of the Assembly on Monday to discuss these matters. I say to you now that I welcome that. I welcome the opportunity in the Chamber as, indeed, I welcome the opportunity in this Committee today to set the record straight. There were errors in the programme last night. There were omissions in the programme last night, and it was largely based around insinuation, innuendo and misrepresentation.
67. The opportunity will be there on Monday in the Assembly to deal with the matter even more fully than I have dealt with it today and to put the record straight. It will show very clearly that I, my permanent secretary and, indeed, my special adviser have worked at all times to ensure that the people of Northern Ireland get value for money and that Housing Executive tenants are given the best possible accommodation and are not required to live in cold, damp houses.
68. In taking this forward, where there is wrong, I will root it out. That is why we had the ASM report. It was not commissioned by the Housing Executive. I commissioned it. We brought in the same company that looked at Red Sky and asked it to go over all the other companies and look at them. That report hardly got a mention in the programme last night because, as I said in the Chamber, it would have vindicated all that I had said and done.
69. **The Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister, for a comprehensive presentation and at such short notice. No doubt, we will have more opportunities in the Chamber and elsewhere to deal with this issue. As I said, the Committee has already agreed to conduct an inquiry into this matter.
70. I think you would acknowledge, Minister, that since I became Chair of the Committee and you were appointed Minister, at no time have I endeavoured to use my position to score political points against you or your party on any matter, notwithstanding the differences that we have on policy issues or whatever else. I want to make that clear.
71. **Mr McCausland:** I am happy to concur with that. A good relationship between the Department, the Committee and me is hugely important.
72. **The Chairperson:** We will look at a wide range of issues. However, I have to put it to you, Minister, that when I met you,

- as you will recall, in your office at the height of the Red Sky saga, as I will call it, I made my view clear that any equivocation or attempt by you as a Minister to suggest that we accept that there are problems around Red Sky but that we leave it in place while we investigate other organisations was a fundamentally wrong position to adopt.
73. Red Sky was deemed by the Housing Executive to be in serious breach of a range of contractual arrangements that had to be terminated immediately, and any equivocation on that was a fundamentally wrong decision for you to adopt. I publicly supported your stated claim that you wanted to investigate all other contracts thoroughly to make sure that any other wrongdoing was rooted out. However, I parted company with your view that you could, in a way, have some equivocation on Red Sky — in other words, leave it in place while the other investigation was taking place.
74. On the second issue that I raised with you, I may have used a term that was, I am sure, recorded because there was a wide range of people there. John Simmons, the Committee Clerk, was with me. You had a wide range of officials with you, up to the permanent secretary. I made clear my view that in the meeting you attended with three of your party colleague MLAs, they could, arguably, say that they were representing constituency interests but that, as the Minister, your position there was not tenable.
75. You were meeting the management of a company that was deemed by the Housing Executive to be in serious breach of contractual arrangements — the same individuals who were then trying to buy over the company and retain those Housing Executive contracts. Again, I made it clear that that was a fundamentally flawed position to adopt.
76. In a subsequent conversation with Will Haire in the corridor, I made it clear that the Minister was, in my view, on very thin ice in respect of that. I suggest that that is on the record, but I had that conversation also with Will Haire. Thankfully, the matter was resolved early the next morning when the issue was put to bed, because the determination around Red Sky was reconfirmed and the matter moved on.
77. I put it to you Minister that there are questions of judgement at least. You referred to those early in your presentation, so I am drawing those two issues to your attention.
78. One major area of responsibility that you have as Minister, which we dealt with before you came in, is the social housing reform programme. Given your central — indeed, pivotal — role in that issue, will you address the matter of confidence that people may or may not have in your stewardship of overseeing what may be the end of the Housing Executive? That may or may not be, because there is as yet no political agreement on what may happen. However, I am just making the point that there is now a huge issue of confidence around that. You know, because you made it clear, that social housing and the role of the Housing Executive is a hugely community sensitive issue. I would like you to address those issues but not necessarily now.
79. **Mr McCausland:** I am happy to respond to those. When I came into the Department, and this was all happening quickly immediately after I came into the Department, it seemed to me that because of the concerns that I had about not just Red Sky — and I was as concerned about Red Sky as anyone else because I saw examples of issues that emerged that were not good —
80. **The Chairperson:** Do you agree that, at that time, you were arguing to leave it in place and to conduct another investigation?
81. **Mr McCausland:** With respect, Chair; I am not in the business of defending Red Sky. I would not defend any of the companies, because these are widespread problems. The fact that it was not just response maintenance but planned maintenance, and different

- companies in some cases, shows how widespread the issues were.
82. It seems to have been something endemic. I do not know whether it occurs in other areas and in other sectors, but certainly within the construction industry, there seems to be a considerable number of companies with which there were problems.
83. I have no idea of the details of the thing, but I listened the other day to the Health Minister talking about an issue with a contract within health. I remember that when I sat on the Belfast Education and Library Board many years ago, there was a contractor who got paid for building a ramp outside a library, but when you went to look for it, you had an awful job finding the ramp because it did not exist. Those things seem to happen. It was quite a widespread problem.
84. By that point, Red Sky had effectively gone and was in the hands of the administrators. Therefore, it was not a case of keeping Red Sky in place; it was a case of keeping what was in administration going for a number of weeks to see whether there could be an open procurement process, which would have ensured some sort of continuity for the tenants, albeit with the limitations that we have talked about, and some continuity for the staff. In all of this, it is worth remembering the staff, which I will comment on again in a moment.
85. The meeting was held with people who were there, and it is clearly stated in the minutes that they were there as constituency representatives. I got legal advice on whether I should have the meeting or not. The legal advice was clear that the meeting could go ahead. I wanted to be sure because I knew that somebody was bound to ask a question, so I took legal advice, and that was the legal advice that I got.
86. We have talked about service to tenants, but as regards staff, I recently met some workers from a company that has gone into administration who were commenting on the fact that some of them were on to their third employer.
- They had moved from being employed by one company doing Housing Executive work to another company and then to a third company. The same workers were just TUPEd on again and again. That is very poor for staff. It damages morale. They do not know who they are working for. When you meet the trade unions, they are very clear that that is not a good situation to be in. So I have always had in my mind not just the service to tenants but some sort of consideration for those who work in the sector, even if they are moving from one employer to another.
87. As regards your point about housing reform, you are absolutely right that it is a big, crucial issue for Northern Ireland as we move forward.
88. I think that people should look honestly and openly at the facts. We will get them out. Some of the facts are being brought out today, and I welcome that. There will be an opportunity again, possibly on Monday in the Chamber, to address the thing more fully. You are probably saying, "How can he talk any more than he has talked already?" It is hard to say that when it is Michael Copeland laughing. If people look at the facts, I think it will become clear that this was much ado about nothing, to borrow a literary phrase.
89. The problem with the Housing Executive has been — and I said this in the Chamber — that every time you lift a stone, another issue comes out. So it was the windows, it was the contractors, it was the lack of insulation; and, in the past few days, more issues have been emerging. It is just becoming an ongoing situation. For some reason or other, for over 40 years, it did good work, but there were problems with the culture of the organisation. I think that the outcome of the social housing reform programme will be a better outcome for the tenants.
90. I was amazed, as I said, when I went over to England recently with the vice chair of the Housing Executive to look at good practice in Liverpool and Manchester. We saw the work that is being done there and how innovative

- it is, and it is just not happening here. I see a good future for housing in Northern Ireland, and I hope that any questions that people might have in their minds will be resolved the more we get all of the light on scrutinising those things, rather than the botched job we saw last night.
91. **The Chairperson:** Before bringing in other members, I should state for the record that as regards the meeting that was referred to with the Red Sky management — or rather the outgoing Red Sky management because it was going into administration — the administrators were not at that meeting. That is the position as we understand it. The meeting was with the people who had managed Red Sky and who were trying to buy over Red Sky. That is where the issue for you, as the Minister, was called into question.
92. **Mr McCausland:** That is why advice was taken. As I said, I am happy to meet anyone, no matter who they are, so long as they have something to contribute.
93. **Mr Campbell:** I raised this at the start of the meeting because of media interest this morning subsequent to the programme going out. Minister, did you volunteer to come today?
94. **Mr McCausland:** If I am right, at about 1.25 am, I texted the Chairman. I switched off my phone when I came in here, so I cannot find the text. I would have to switch it on again. The gist of it, as far as I can remember, was that following the programme, I would welcome an opportunity to meet the Committee. I think I said that there were errors and omissions in the programme and that clarification was needed, and that I would appreciate an opportunity to meet the Committee.
95. **Mr Campbell:** It is just that some sections of the media gave the impression that you had been sort of commandeered to the meeting, or that a demand had been made that you appear. That is fine. I thought that what you said was the case, but it is good to get it on the record.
96. **The Chairperson:** You might want to get all the record, but we can deal with that later on.
97. **Mr Campbell:** What I have just said is accurate.
98. **The Chairperson:** Yes.
99. **Mr Campbell:** What the Minister has said is also accurate, I take it?
100. **The Chairperson:** Yes, but as we discussed earlier, there was a sequence to that.
101. **Mr Campbell:** There may well have been, but what I have asked is accurate, and I have taken the answer as accurate. I hope that no one will challenge that.
102. **The Chairperson:** No, it is not challengeable. It is accurate but partial.
103. **Mr Campbell:** It is accurate.
104. **The Chairperson:** It is partial.
105. **Mr Campbell:** Accurate, Chairman.
106. **The Chairperson:** And partial.
107. **Mr Campbell:** Accurate, Chairman.
108. **The Chairperson:** We will move on.
109. **Mr Campbell:** Unless you want to call me to order, Chairman, when I am asking a series of questions?
110. **The Chairperson:** No. I told members to be fully rigorous in their job. That is what they are there to do.
111. **Mr Campbell:** Thank you. Minister, if I could ask —
112. **Mr McCausland:** I have my phone on now:
“Alex, after the Spotlight programme, I would be keen to meet the Social Development Committee later today at their weekly meeting. There are a number of issues to be clarified, a number of errors to be corrected and a number of omissions to be highlighted. Best wishes, Nelson McCausland.”
113. The response, which was quite right and appreciated, was:
“I think that that is the best thing to do. As you know, the meeting starts at 10.00 but if we agree a time for you to attend, that would be much appreciated and facilitated.”

114. And I said:
"Thanks, will confirm time in the morning."
115. **The Chairperson:** That is right.
116. **Mr Campbell:** The only point I am making, Minister, is that, this morning, an impression was created, not by anyone in this room, but by the BBC. Let us be clear: when I say the media, I mean that I heard a BBC report this morning that appeared to indicate that the Minister was being brought before this Committee, as opposed to having agreed to come to the Committee. That is a factual inaccuracy. It may be miniscule, but it is a factual inaccuracy.
117. **Mr McCausland:** I think that it is only one of a number of inaccuracies that the BBC has put out.
118. **Mr Campbell:** The other thing is that — and I am sure that you are aware of this — this same programme, 'Spotlight', three years ago, broadcast a special that was targeted at another DUP representative, who just happens to be the First Minister. Subsequent to that programme, there was a series of investigations by the police, as I understand it, the Parliamentary Ombudsman and others. The result of those, I understand, is that the thrust of that programme was not upheld. I hope that a similar rigour will be applied to this programme, which seems to have been targeted at you, Minister. However, that will come in if this Committee is going to investigate. I said before you came in, Minister, that I would welcome an investigation, but I would really welcome an investigation with those who were the purveyors of the information at the heart of it. I hope that they will not attempt to escape in the smoke.
119. I have a series of questions, Chairman. I will keep them brief because I understand that there is a timing difficulty.
120. Minister, can you tell us when, as far as the Department is concerned, Brian Rowntree, the former chairman, became aware of the extent of the issues surrounding his chairmanship, immediately before your statement to the Assembly, which, I think, took place on 10 June? Are you aware of when the chairman would have known that you were about to make a statement to the Assembly in which he was fairly central?
121. **Mr McCausland:** I just need to confirm the details of that.
122. **Ms Susan McCarty (Department for Social Development):** There were issues raised at an early stage before the Minister's statement in July by the permanent secretary relating to a review —
123. **Mr Campbell:** Do you mean June?
124. **Ms McCarty:** Sorry, it is the statement. Those issues related to the review by internal audit of the governance recommendations that had been put in place in 2010. Those issues had already been raised with Mr Rowntree. When the Minister was going to make his statement, Mr Rowntree had already chosen to resign, just before the Minister made his statement.
125. **Mr Campbell:** What I am trying to get at here is to discover at what point Mr Rowntree became aware of the very serious nature of the statement that the Minister was about to make. I am trying to get a rough idea of the time, within a day or a week, of when he became aware. I think that this is crucial to his part in the programme last night.
126. **Mr McCausland:** It was a couple of days.
127. **Ms McCarty:** Two or three days.
128. **Mr Campbell:** And the statement to the Assembly was made on 10 June?
129. **Mr McCausland:** That would be right.
130. **Mr Campbell:** So we can be fairly sure that, in or around the beginning of June, Mr Rowntree was aware of the very serious nature of the statement that you were about to make, in which he would be central?
131. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
132. **Mr Campbell:** The next thing, Minister is —

133. **Mr McCausland:** Just to get the record straight —
134. **Ms McCarty:** I think that we are getting the statements mixed up. You are talking about the statement made just recently?
135. **Mr Campbell:** No. I am talking about the statement that the Minister —
136. **Ms McCarty:** By the time he resigned?
137. **Mr Campbell:** Yes.
138. **Ms McCarty:** That is fine. I was just checking that.
139. **Mr Campbell:** Minister, last night's programme said that it had been in the making for about seven months. I heard a seven-month period mentioned. People had been questioned over that period. Can you recall when the Department became aware that 'Spotlight' was beginning the process of what emerged last night?
140. **Mr McCausland:** I am not sure of the first point at which the Department became aware last year. The first letter, the first correspondence, was dated November 2012. I should also say that I think that the BBC had been at this for a lot longer than that — a lot of digging was being done prior to that. A former employee of Red Sky, a tradesman who had moved on to another employer, came into my office at the end of last year or the beginning of this one, who had been door-stepped by someone from 'Spotlight'.
141. It was not just a case of simply going to people in the Department, or whatever, at a high level. This was a man who, I am not sure whether he is a tradesman or a labourer, worked in Red Sky. He came to me on a constituency issue. He said, "Oh, by the way, I had people at my door the other day from 'Spotlight'. They were asking questions. They asked me whether I knew anyone else who worked in the company that they should go and talk to. Did I know any other workers?" They were putting allegations to him. Clearly, this has been a huge fishing expedition, but not much of a catch at the end of it.
142. **Mr Campbell:** Minister, I want to try to zone in here on the central element of the programme, and that is why I asked the questions that I did.
143. The Red Sky situation emerged in 2011, and from what we saw last night, it was very clear, and you are confirming, that by November — possibly before that — this programme had been in the making for some time. The programme talked about seven months. Therefore, 'Spotlight' was concentrating on the allegations around Red Sky. You made the statement to the Assembly in June. My understanding is that the programme went out unannounced last night because I know that there was no advance knowledge or trailing until yesterday, which would certainly give the indication that it was in the making right up to the very end, to yesterday or at least to the past few days.
144. **Mr McCausland:** Indeed. Correspondence was received from them two days ago, on Monday of this week.
145. **Mr Campbell:** The point that I want to get to is this: there was seven months of investigation surrounding Red Sky. I presume that Mr Rowntree would not have done interviews with 'Spotlight' when he was in post?
146. **Mr McCausland:** I would assume not.
147. **Mr Campbell:** I would think that that would have been extremely unlikely. The interviews must have taken place between the beginning of June and yesterday. In that time, everyone — Mr Rowntree, 'Spotlight' and the wider world — was aware that the issue around Red Sky was not confined to Red Sky. That is the central point here.
148. Minister, you named a number of firms in the Chamber at the beginning of June, of which, obviously, the former chairman of the Housing Executive was aware. I presume that 'Spotlight' and everyone else was aware of them. Yet, those companies did not appear — it is not the case that they did not appear, they

- did not merit investigation, inclusion or reference in the programme in the five weeks after 'Spotlight' became aware that more than one company was involved.
149. That merits a very substantial series of questions that I know you cannot answer. However, some people, particularly the purveyors of the programme, will have to come to that desk to answer them.
150. Minister, you said that the chairman had been in post for nine years and you also mentioned the series of issues. Is it your belief that Mr Rowntree was aware of those issues for a considerable time before June 2013?
151. **Mr McCausland:** When he was still in post, he would have been aware, certainly, that the issues surrounding response maintenance involved more than one company. Those things were emerging when I went into the Department and, at that stage, even as I was going into the Department in 2011, it was clear that more than one company was involved.
152. The big issue of planned maintenance goes back to the time when he was in post.
153. The fact is that the Comptroller and Auditor General's reports on the Housing Executive's annual accounts, going back over a number of years back to the time when he was in post, have featured those issues about irregularities around contracts. The Comptroller and Auditor General has identified those issues again and again. That is the problem with all this. It is not simply that we commissioned ASM to do a report, or that there was an Auditor General's report or a PAC report. The Housing Executive's internal audit identified issues but nothing was done.
154. We are in a situation where you never know what you are going to find. Those things were happening when he was there but nothing was done about them. He should have been aware.
155. **Mr Campbell:** Minister, you are saying that it was clear that he was aware before it came to the point that he became aware that you were about to make a statement in the Assembly?
156. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
157. **Mr Campbell:** We have to presume that it was at that point or beyond it that interviews with him took place, as it would be unprecedented for a serving chairman of the Housing Executive to involve himself or herself in a series of interviews with an investigative programme without telling you?
158. **Mr McCausland:** That is correct.
159. **Mr Campbell:** It would have been unprecedented. The sequence of events that followed the beginning of June did not make any apparent change in the investigative trail of 'Spotlight'. It appears that the programme makers continued on the Red Sky pursuit and did not deal with the other companies.
160. I have one last question. You said towards the end that the permanent secretary had spoken to Mr Rowntree and that he alluded to that in the programme when he said that it was highly unusual. Given that Mr Rowntree alluded to the fact that the permanent secretary spoke to him, but did not go into detail about what it was that the permanent secretary spoke to him about, can the Committee and the wider public know the detail of what the permanent secretary spoke to the chairman about at the time that he did?
161. **Mr McCausland:** There are two points there. First, since June, the big story was — in fact, two things came out in the one day in statements. I referred to the publication of the ASM report on the website, and I also announced a further indication of an £18 million overpayment in regard to planned maintenance, which was about to be fully investigated. Work on that will be ongoing over the summer. About 13 weeks of work are involved in that. At the point when the programme was still well in the making, and certainly before they finished interviewing Brian Rowntree, it was known to 'Spotlight', all its staff, everybody in the Assembly — and, if they were reading and watching

- the news, anybody in Northern Ireland — that there was an £18 million issue. That got put aside because it did not, somehow, seem to fit the narrative that had been predetermined.
162. An internal audit report was prepared inside the Housing Executive, and that related to the issue of the stock transfer in Rinmore in Londonderry. ‘Spotlight’ referred to that, so it is on the record. That is the subject of the report. An internal audit report was carried out on certain aspects of that. Subsequently, information became clear, as it said in the programme, and he was sort of suggesting that, somehow or other, e-mails had been manufactured. Evidence emerged that raised questions about the validity of that internal audit report. Therefore, a second internal audit report was done, and the first one was withdrawn. It relates to matters around the Rinmore stock transfer. I am loath to go beyond that at this stage, but he himself — I am not breaking any confidence here — said that there were e-mails floating about that had not been on his computer. I am no technical expert, but it is stretching the imagination a bit to suggest that people were manufacturing those things.
163. **Mr Campbell:** I understand the reluctance to go into the detail of what may well be a continuing investigation, but is it reasonable for people to assume that if the permanent secretary of a Department rings a serving chairman of some nine years’ standing of an arm’s-length body that deals with public housing matters, he is not ringing to indicate that a ramp has not been fitted at the front door?
164. **Mr McCausland:** There is an issue of public confidence in that internal audit report. That report is a matter that ‘Spotlight’ was obviously aware of. I am not sure how it would have found out. The report has implications for Mr Rowntree, particularly because he is currently the chairman of the Civil Service Commission. He was previously chairman of the Housing Executive and is now chair of the Civil Service Commission, and the report potentially
- has implications for him in that role. That is why the matter has been referred to the Northern Ireland Office for its consideration.
165. **Mr Campbell:** I have one final wrap-up question, Chairman. That question will obviously hang in the air, because people will now ask what was the nature of the discussion and how serious was it, given that, as I say, it is inconceivable that it would be about a minuscule matter.
166. **Mr McCausland:** It is about personal probity and integrity.
167. **Mr Campbell:** Given that Mr Rowntree alluded to it during the interview — we do not know when the interview took place — one would imagine that an investigative journalistic team would have wanted to establish — provided that it was impartial, of course; that is a big proviso — the nature of that discussion. Was there an FOI request or any request from ‘Spotlight’ to uncover the nature of the discussion involving the person whom it interviewed, who volunteered the information and who had resigned from his position in early June? Was there any request?
168. **Mr McCausland:** There was no FOI request. There was a letter from ‘Spotlight’ that asked a number of questions about the issue, but there was no FOI request for the actual document. It was clear from the questioning that what it was getting at was that, even though the permanent secretary had spoken to Brian Rowntree about it, the question in its letter — I cannot remember the exact words, so this is a rough version; I will be happy to return with a more accurate version — was whether the Minister had initiated that or had been in some way involved in it. That was why it was so important that the permanent secretary was able to tell it very clearly that I had no knowledge. I found out about it only at a very late stage, in the past few days. I was surprised and shocked that such a thing could have happened that merited the sorts of questions that were being asked. I still have not seen the report.

169. **Mr Campbell:** Was the ‘Spotlight’ letter trying to interrogate your awareness of this —
170. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
171. **Mr Campbell:** — as opposed to the substance of the issue?
172. **Mr McCausland:** It did not ask for the content. It simply wanted to know whether I had initiated it.
173. **Mr Campbell:** Right.
174. **Mr McCausland:** I am sure that the member will draw his own conclusion from that.
175. **Mr Campbell:** I am sure that I will not be the only one.
176. **Mr McCausland:** Indeed.
177. **Mr Durkan:** Thank you, Minister, for volunteering to come here today and for going into such detail thus far, although there is a bit of a difference between putting things in context and possibly deflecting from the issue that you are here to discuss. You dismissed last night’s programme and its insinuations, allegations or revelations as “much ado about nothing”. The public perception, to borrow another literary phrase, might be that “something is rotten”.
178. **Mr McCausland:** I concur with that. There is something very rotten when £18 million is overpaid to contractors, according to the figures that were produced not by me but by the chairman of the Housing Executive. There is something very rotten when a number of people were, according to the programme last night, engaged in fraud. There is something very rotten when you have the sort of situation in which huge amounts of money are paid out for work that obviously had not been done by response maintenance contracts and where there were irregularities. It is also very rotten that people have to live in houses that are cold and damp because the work has not been done on them.
179. **Mr Durkan:** I think that we would all concur with that, Minister.
180. **Mr McCausland:** It is just a pity that it was left to me to identify that issue. There is also a bad sniff, at least, about the way in which ‘Spotlight’ operates.
181. **The Chairperson:** I suggest that, as we move on, we do not exchange literary gems. We are not in the Lyric Theatre; we are an Assembly Committee that is dealing with a very important matter. We should move on with the substance of the business at hand.
182. **Mr Durkan:** Chair, it was a fair enough point. The insinuations of political corruption at least, and possible criminality, need to be questioned. I welcome the fact that the Minister welcomes a recall of the Assembly and a Committee inquiry into these things. It is vital to restore public confidence — Minister, you used that term — in not just you but us as a Committee, the Assembly and democracy as a whole.
183. Chair, in your questioning of the Minister, you touched on the appropriateness, shall we say, of meeting companies about contracts with other organisations — and not just the appropriateness, but the legality of it. Minister, you informed us that you had sought legal advice. Can you go into more detail on that legal advice? Where was it from? What exactly was it based on? Was it from your special adviser? Questions were thrown up by last night’s programme about the role of SpAds in general — do SpAds require ministerial approval? Does a SpAd have a role in vetting information that comes out of a Department? I will wrap it up here to let the Minister back in.
184. **Mr McCausland:** I am happy to address those points. First, you used — very rightly — the word “insinuation”. There were no accusations, and there were no allegations because there could not be. There was no evidence. That is why the programme resorted to insinuation, implication and innuendo to try to create a case when there was not one. I appreciate that in choosing the word “insinuation”, you used exactly the right word.
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185. Secondly, you asked about legal advice. Legal advice is always sought from the Departmental Solicitor's Office. My special adviser is not a legal expert. He has many skills and a lot of expertise but he is not a legal expert. We seek advice on legal matters from DSO.
186. **Mr Durkan:** I recognise the skills of Stephen; he certainly could not be accused of complete incompetence, that is for sure.
187. **Mr McCausland:** I am glad that you recognise the quality of his work.
188. **Mr Durkan:** As I said, he could not be accused of complete incompetence.
189. On to the issue of the windows; you said that the programme-makers did not seem to understand the issue. It is fair to say that the majority of us on the Committee did not really understand the process that we went through over the windows, and we discussed it almost ad infinitum in Committee meetings. Savings of £15 million have been mentioned, and, of course, it is a Minister's duty to look to achieve savings; it is the duty of all of us. However, £9.6 million or £9.5 million of those savings was based on the redecoration grants, and by the admission of the Housing Executive and departmental officials, it was later established that the existing reversible whinge, or reversible hinge, windows — us Derry ones are always whinging [*Laughter.*] — could still be fitted without the subsequent need for redecoration grants. So, one week, I thought we had established that the £9.6 million was almost mythical, but then, a week later, the officials came back to insist that it was not. They seemed to be doing a bit of toing and froing.
190. Minister, you said that there is a myth out there about work being stopped. Now, during the week, with some other Assembly Members, I met a delegation or deputation of contractors who had been working on the double-glazing programme, and I do not think that it is a myth to them that they are having to lay people off. It is not the fear of redundancy now, it is the reality of redundancy, and I wonder whether you can expand on that. The contractors were here the other day, and I know that it was at short notice and you were not able to meet them.
191. **Mr McCausland:** This is an issue between that delegation and the Housing Executive. You said that there has been a lot of discussion about these issues. You can have a lot of conversation and discussion about something, but it does not necessarily always shed the most light on it. The redecoration grants issue is not a minor thing. That was a major change, and it was a good change and the right change. I just do not understand why it did not happen a lot sooner.
192. I have dealt with the issue about the hinges. Why would you fit to a bungalow an expensive hinge that, as I understand it, is very much needed for high-rise flats, and so on? You need reversible hinges in certain circumstances, but I cannot see the justification for fitting them to a bungalow. I find this point that I made particularly interesting: I have never fully understood why you would specify a hinge that is only available from one supplier. It seems strange.
193. **Finally, the point about the lack of work or otherwise:** I did say that 8,600 windows were fitted last year and that 9,000 will be fitted this year. We are on target for that, and I fail to understand what the difficulty is. I may not understand it, but if we are fitting 9,000 windows, someone has to manufacture 9,000 windows.
194. **Mr Durkan:** Do we know how many have been done so far out of that 9,000?
195. **Mr McCausland:** We are now at the beginning of July, so we are only a couple of months into the year. The figures for this year are not yet available, but the target this year is 9,000, and we will get that done OK. That means that if there was work for a year with 8,600, why is there not work for a year with 9,000? That is a matter between those contractors or suppliers and the Housing

- Executive. I spoke to one of your party colleagues to say that that was the right thing to do: to contact the senior folk in the Housing Executive and deal directly with them.
196. **Mr Durkan:** Finally, Minister, you criticised ‘Spotlight’ for leaving bits out, and I am pretty sure that it did leave quite a bit out. You referred particularly to the ASM report. You described the ASM report as having small amounts redacted. Having looked at it, I thought that there was more taken out than was left in. What was the actual cost of that report?
197. **Mr McCausland:** The whole thing runs to 169 pages. I do not have all 169 here, but I have a number of them — the key ones. There are the pages of that report — the key bits; it is all there. In that, there is one page where some figures are redacted — one page out of 20-odd pages. Sorry, I apologise: on two pages, out of about 20-odd pages, some figures have been redacted. Therefore, when you say that most of it was redacted, that is totally untrue. I am happy to show you, and you can check how many pages out of the 20 were redacted. You will obviously then conclude that you were wrong.
198. **Mr Durkan:** I will. I will retract that.
199. **Mr McCausland:** Oh, right. As long as you are not redacting it; as long as you are just retracting it.
200. **Mr Durkan:** The copy that I originally got sight of had a lot more redacted than that.
201. **Mr McCausland:** You asked about the cost of the ASM report. That is a matter that would be commercial confidence, and we do not disclose that minor point. However, since it was the same company that did the piece of work on Red Sky, it was right and proper to use exactly the same people and the same methodology for the other companies. I am sure that you would agree with me that it would have been totally remiss of me not to have carried out that investigation. If it was right to carry it out in the case of one company, it was right to carry it out in the case of the others. The content of the report confirms that we were right to carry it out. I understand that you have already asked Assembly questions about the cost, and the answer, in those cases, was that it was a matter of commercial confidence, so it is still a matter of commercial confidence. In the scheme of things, we are talking about £18 million here and £15 million there. It is a shame that we have to do that work.
202. **Mr Durkan:** The £18 million is based on the extrapolation of figures.
203. **Mr McCausland:** Oh yes. If it comes back at £16 million or whatever, it is big money.
204. **Mr Durkan:** Yes, without a doubt.
205. **Mr McCausland:** Big money in anybody’s sense.
206. **The Chairperson:** A number of members want to speak. You are all noted.
207. **Mr Brady:** Thank you for the presentation, Minister. During your presentation, you referred a number of times to issues that were the responsibility of the Housing Executive only. Would you not accept that, as you are Social Development Minister, housing is a major part of your portfolio and, therefore, you are ultimately responsible?
208. I know that you said that you made a statement to the Assembly about other contractors, but last night’s programme obviously focused on Red Sky. Looking at it, some of it was quite bizarre — disappearing tower blocks and people being paid for stuff like that. It seems to me that what it highlighted, amongst many other things, was the lack of engagement between the Department and the Housing Executive on a day-to-day, week-to-week and month-to-month basis. The inference seems to be — I do not think that you have denied it today — that the Housing Executive was almost left to get on with this, I think you said, “systemic and endemic” failure. You mentioned that during your statement.

209. I have just a couple of other questions on the particular issues around what Red Sky was not doing. You mentioned cold and damp houses. There were examples last night of ceilings collapsing two or three times and nothing being done about it. It seems that Red Sky was particularly guilty of not doing stuff; it was certainly alleged to be guilty of not doing stuff.
210. In the programme itself, a lot of it seems to come down to — you mentioned your special adviser and the conversation that he had with one of your councillors — credibility, particularly in relation to one of your councillors, because she made particular statements about what was said, etc. That seemed to be a major issue in the programme. In relation to the other companies, obviously you have said that investigations are going on, and presumably that will continue over this 13-week period.
211. I have just a couple of other issues. Do you agree — I suppose that this is a loaded question, in a sense — that the relationship between you as Minister and Mr Rowntree was fairly fraught over the period when he was chair? Obviously, as you say, he had been chair for quite a while prior to you taking up office. It certainly came across that, on a personal basis, there was a fraught relationship.
212. On a number of occasions, you mentioned the importance of double glazing, redecoration and all that. In my experience, redecoration has been an issue for many, many years, although it used to be less of an issue when the Housing Executive had direct labour. However, it was decided that contractors should be brought in and direct labour done away with, particularly in my constituency in the southern region, because at least people could identify who was supposed to be doing the work. A lot of people were driving up in wee red vans, taking details and then disappearing, and you could never find out who it was.
213. On the issue of double glazing, have you met any double-glazing companies about these issues recently, even, for instance, this week?
214. **Mr McCausland:** You covered a range of issues there, and I hope that I get them all. If I miss any, I will be happy to come back to it.
215. You talked about disappearing tower blocks, and you are right there.
216. **Mr Brady:** I thought that maybe that American magician was a consultant for Red Sky. Apparently, he used to make the Empire State Building disappear.
217. **Mr McCausland:** That is one possible explanation. It is very clear that I am not in the business of defending any company because when I look across a number of companies, I see that there are issues. Yes, there are issues about overpayments, double payments — a whole range of issues. I freely acknowledge that that is the case. Those things were going on in my predecessor's time. This goes back a number of years. I hope that we are in a better place, or at least that we are getting to a better place than where we were.
218. You touched on a key issue there about the relationship between the Department and the Housing Executive. Of course, there are operational matters that need to be left to the Housing Executive. It has its own board, its own chief executive and its own chair. The chair is the person I appoint and through whom I have that relationship with the Housing Executive. Yes, there needs to be a good relationship between the Minister and the chair. It was also, I thought, clear from the programme last night that maybe the relationship between the previous chair and some senior Housing Executive officials was not great either.
219. **What I can say to you is this:** since we have looked at these things more closely, we have new accountability measures. I know that there was a presentation to the Committee, maybe even last week, on the new accountability measures. I have a monthly meeting with the new chair of

- the Housing Executive. He only came into the post in November, and is doing an excellent job. The new vice chair has brought a wealth of practical and academic expertise to the whole realm of housing and, I think, will be a real asset to the organisation moving forward. I have regular meetings once a month where you get an update — not just the regular quarterly meetings that there might have been before. It is now on a monthly basis. I think that that is a good thing, because we are in a time of change. We have real challenges, and we need to get all these issues sorted out. That relationship is, therefore, hugely important.
220. I welcome the fact that you acknowledge — in fact, you raised the point — that the issue of redecoration grants has been around for many, many years. That is part of my problem. In the Housing Executive over the years, things were done just because that was the way that it had always been done, so we will just do more of the same. There was not the willingness to be innovative, not just in practical issues such as this but even in some of the additional services that are delivered by the Housing Executive. There could have been a lot more innovation. It was more a case of more of the same, and that is why I highlighted the issue of insulation of properties. That issue has been around since 1950, so for 70 years. For the entire 40 years of the Housing Executive, that issue has been there, but nothing gets done about that. That is why I was so disappointed that, under the previous chair, there was little change happening. We are now getting change and real delivery.
221. You also highlighted the very important issue of subcontractors. There are some contractors who get Housing Executive contracts for maintenance who have very few subcontractors. There are others where the vast majority of their work is done by subcontractors and who have a very small core staff. Is that a good situation? I certainly have asked questions about that. Is it a good situation where you are almost entirely
- reliant on subcontractors, who, as you said, drive up in a wee red van, and you do not know who it is or whatever?
222. You asked about the meetings with double-glazing companies this week. No, I have not met any this week, and I explained a moment ago about the companies that were up at Stormont the other day. I spoke to Patsy McGlone in the corridor, and he asked me about it. I said that, as things are, the best thing is for you to go and see the chief executive in the Housing Executive directly, because the information that I am getting is that we are on target to do the work. The work is there. Whatever the reason for it not filtering down, that has to be sorted out quickly between the two.
223. **Mr Brady:** I will finish off with one question. Thanks for your answers. You mentioned the much more in-depth meetings with the chair of the Housing Executive, and much more detail. Does it take a crisis to promote these meetings? I go back to what seemed to me to be a fairly huge disengagement between your Department and the Housing Executive. You are saying that those meetings have been taking place since the new chairperson has come in, but, surely, that should have been normal protocol for two such huge organisations as the Housing Executive and the Department, which, to use that hackneyed phrase, are inextricably linked. Why were those meetings not held on a much more regular and in-depth basis? It just seems that there was kind of an ad hoc arrangement.
224. **Mr McCausland:** It was not ad hoc. In the past, as with most arm's-length bodies, the most regular engagement was between the permanent secretary, as the accounting officer, and the chair of the organisation. We now have an arrangement that, at those monthly meetings, the chair is there and the permanent secretary is also there. That is unusual. It is not normal practice, but the chair appreciates it and I appreciate it. Every month, as he comes in, there is progress to report. In the past, we were not seeing that progress. There was a

- lack of alacrity and a lack of movement. You could well have been in the situation of holding meetings where there was nothing to report.
225. **Mr Brady:** Could that not have been addressed much sooner?
226. **Mr McCausland:** A culture — an ethos — had developed in the Housing Executive, and bear in mind that the previous chair was there for nine years. That chair was there under Alex Attwood and Margaret Ritchie and their predecessors under direct rule. That chair had been there for quite a long time.
227. **Mr Brady:** Well, they should have been doing that as well.
228. **Mr McCausland:** That is a point that I concede, readily. The issue is that an ethos had developed, and, sometimes, cultural change in organisations can be slow. It is not as if it was exclusively an issue with the chairman. There were also issues about people at a senior level within the organisation. There was a range of problems, and there was not much chance of things going well with that situation.
229. **Mr Copeland:** I will be as brief as I can, Minister. I, too, thank you for your attendance here this morning and explanation thus far. At the time that the meeting was held between you, your departmental officials, some DUP MLAs with a constituency interest and those who had previously been associated with Red Sky, Red Sky was under the control of BDO, I think it was, which was acting as administrator. Presumably, BDO would have had responsibility for the assets, liabilities and contingent liabilities pertaining to Red Sky. At that time, had the people who attended that meeting with you, your departmental officials and colleagues, and who had previously been involved with Red Sky, become incorporated as Totalis or were they acting as private individuals? Did Totalis exist as a corporate entity?
230. **Mr McCausland:** If you look carefully at the minutes of that meeting, which are on public record, and the information that was passed on, you will see that it is quite clear that the two gentlemen were there as former directors or officials with Red Sky. There was no mention of Totalis or any other company; absolutely none.
231. **Mr Copeland:** My question was: did Totalis actually exist as a corporate entity?
232. **Mr McCausland:** I would not know. It was never mentioned; it was never raised; it was never talked about. I was not aware of Totalis at that time.
233. **Mr Copeland:** OK, sir; thank you. What is your interpretation of the legal responsibilities of an elected representative who finds himself a political appointee to a board such as for the Housing Executive, the Fire Service, or anything else?
234. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, the first part of your question is in relation to people —
235. **Mr Copeland:** If a councillor, or someone, is appointed by virtue of their elected position to another position on something such as the Housing Executive board, are there any particular legal responsibilities that go with that appointment that govern their behaviour?
236. **Mr McCausland:** As I indicated earlier, there are guidelines for people who serve on public bodies. To the core of what, I think, you are referring to; the conversation between the special adviser and the individual, in the case of the Housing Executive, was a single, short telephone conversation that lasted six, seven or eight minutes. It was providing a context — I keep using the word context — for what was being dealt with, because it was already becoming clear to us that this was a much more widespread issue, which is something we have covered already.
237. **Mr Copeland:** I understand that.
238. **Mr McCausland:** That had not seemed to figure in the thinking. It proved to be impossible to do this in the end, but I liked the idea of going for an

- open procurement process because my concern was this: why do you take a contract away from a company that has behaved improperly and give it to another company that might behave equally improperly?
239. **Mr Copeland:** It was not so much the context of the telephone call; it was the principles within which your councillor would have been expected to operate within the Housing Executive.
240. **Mr McCausland:** I am sure that the member has sat on public bodies and will be aware of the principles and guidance for members of such bodies.
241. **Mr Copeland:** Have you any knowledge of the number of investigations into alleged misappropriation or mismanagement of contracts leading to overpayments that were launched by the previous chair of the Housing Executive during his final years?
242. **Mr McCausland:** He was there for nine years. I do not have knowledge of a number; I would not know the number.
243. **Mr Copeland:** OK. Lastly, with your forbearance Chair, I will ask about windows, particularly. To be honest with you, as you know, I spent a large part of my early life manufacturing windows, and I know a little bit about them. The savings that were put to the Committee were couched in such a way that they were almost entirely due to the change in hinge type. As it went on, it became apparent that they were not. I accept that you were advised of a potential saving of £9.6 million. My belief is that any notion that you can replace any windows in the absence of damaging the property to such a degree that it would require remuneration to redecorate is misplaced. Windows are generally placed from the inside or the outside. In Northern Ireland and Scotland, they are always done from the inside, because of our inclement weather conditions. The new system means that you make the window so small it just goes into the original hole; you fill the gap with foam; and then you bolt it to the reveals. The reveals are where the difficulty arises with redecoration grants, because if you make a window bigger and plaster up to it, that is awkward. They are proposing to nogging, or cut a piece out of, the reveal to put in a fixing. The difficulty is that in most cases, the reveals are boast, and as soon as you put a chisel anywhere near one, it will land at your feet. So the notion that you can do that and say to people that there will be no redecoration grants is flawed. I am not suggesting for one minute that you are misleading us, but I am suggesting that the information that you have been given, upon which you have based your judgements, is not correct.
244. **Mr McCausland:** First, the information that I gave you is from the Housing Executive. The people in the Housing Executive are the professionals. Unlike you, I have no experience in manufacturing, fitting or anything else with windows.
245. **Mr Copeland:** I am sure you are none the poorer for that.
246. **Mr McCausland:** That may well be the case.
247. I am totally reliant on the Housing Executive for information in that area. This was an operational issue, and we said, "Look at it." The Housing Executive came back with its independent professional view. The people who work there are housing professionals, which is why they are in the Housing Executive. If they come back with a view, I am not in a position to challenge it or to say that it is right, wrong or whatever. I accept that view.
248. **Mr Copeland:** That is why we challenged it in here.
249. **Mr McCausland:** You obviously have a background in glazing.
250. **Mr Copeland:** Construction.
251. **Mr McCausland:** Construction. Most members have limited experience in that area, so they are coming at the issue with a similar level of knowledge and expertise to me.

252. As regards the companies that were fitting windows, I was very concerned about the quality of the workmanship. Somebody who was watching the programme last night from south Belfast took a sudden urge to send me an e-mail around midnight, lamenting the situation that they had experienced when having windows fitting in their property. I went out with officials from my Department to see schemes in a number of estates, and the windows were not being fitted so much as being butchered. You could put your hands round some of them, and even when the work was finished they were not right. Bear in mind that those windows are being fitted for however long windows are expected to last: 10, 15, 20 years. Therefore, this is not a quick thing where you might say, "Well, they will be round next year to paint over it." This is something that will be around for a period of time.
253. A lot of the things that I have raised in the Department regarding housing, whether it is the insulation, the windows or whatever, has been driven by personal experience of being in housing estates and seeing at first hand what people have been given and saying, "That is not good enough." I would not want it for my house, so should we be subjecting people to something substandard?
254. I suspect that, in some cases, the people fitting the windows had no experience or expertise in the field. They might well have been trained in some other aspect of the building trade — they might well have been plasterers or something else — but they were given the job of fitting windows. You get a better standard if you have someone who has experience doing the job.
255. **Mr Copeland:** I would not doubt it.
256. Minister, in your closing remarks, you asked why anyone would use a window hinge that was only available from a particular company. That question is quite justifiable, but the truth is that the window hinge in question has a 25-year guarantee, it has never been known to fail and it was selected by a previous Housing Executive procurement process as the very best available. When I asked the Housing Executive to see the trail for that process, it took it months to get me the paperwork to vindicate the decision.
257. The other essential thing, and this is rooted in knowledge of the construction industry, is that the biggest and most costly mistake in window installation is when you get a handle wrong. If you have a house with eight windows and they are top-hinged, you have eight windows of different sizes. If you have left- and right-hand hinges, you will have 16 variants, which are what create the difficulties and cost the money. The Housing Executive did not even include the differences in the cost of the additional handles that would be required. So, I got the impression that we are being, rightly or wrongly, steered towards a particular conclusion. I may be right or wrong on that.
258. **Mr McCausland:** You made a very important point that I agree with entirely. The decision on hinges, and so on, was a Housing Executive decision. It looked at the specifications and made the decision, not me. I would be the last person in the world to make that sort of technical decision. We rely on the experts and they get paid as they do by the Housing Executive — and why they are employed — because they are supposed to bring professional expertise and that was their professional expert opinion. You may take a different view on that.
259. **Mr Copeland:** As is my right.
260. **Mr McCausland:** As is your right.
261. **Mrs Cochrane:** I thank the Minister for coming along. It is useful to get more background on some of the issues that were raised last night. Following on from some of the earlier comments, the focus was very much on Red Sky and, as you said, not very much was said about the ASM report.
262. I would like you to clarify a couple of points. You wrote in a letter to Naomi Long in May 2011 that the full ASM report had not been provided to

- Red Sky at that point and that that decision was made by the Housing Executive because the report provided an independent professional review of a range of issues concerning the management of contracts and it would not have been appropriate to disclose all the documentation. You went on to write that it would not be appropriate for Red Sky to have access to some of that information, especially as internal disciplinary action was under way.
263. The further report that looked at everything was the one that you very much wanted to make public. Are you confident now that everything in both those reports that was in the public interest is in the public domain and that action has been taken to rectify the issues that were raised?
264. **Mr McCausland:** The key thing for me going forward is that we get the systems right. I have a much higher level of confidence that we are getting the right direction since the arrival of the new chair and vice-chair in November. We still have a long way to go. All of us are only too well aware of what happened with one contracting firm, Garrivan and O'Rourke, the other week. MDC also went into liquidation, so two contractors went into liquidation in recent weeks.
265. I met some Garrivan and O'Rourke workers who were on, I think, their third contract employer. That is not good for workers but it is also not good for tenants because there is always a build-up of work. In one case, there were 1,000 jobs undone in a particular area because of the changeover from one contractor to another. That meant that in that hiatus, that interim period between one and the other, only essential repairs were being done — a serious electrical or water fault was dealt with but if the plaster was falling off your wall, you just had to wait. That is not good for tenants and it is not good for workers.
266. A piece of work needs to be done to look more extensively at contracts. That is why I was happy to talk recently to people from Great Britain about how that is done in GB. Trends are emerging
- not only nationally but internationally in regard to this because these issues are not unique to Northern Ireland. I spoke to officials there and said again to the Housing Executive that we need to see whether we can learn from good practice elsewhere and do contracts a bit differently.
267. At the moment, people tender for a contract. The Housing Executive produces charges for fitting a tap or repairing a plug. We estimate that, for example, 1,000 taps and 1,5000 plugs will be fitted over the course of a contract, so a tender document is put in. The Housing Executive will have a fair idea of what it will cost to do the work. However, companies are coming in at 10%, 20% and even 30% under that figure. It is no wonder that some companies go to the wall when they undercut by 30%.
268. It is very hard; these are complicated things. In the past number of months I have been out to talk to the trade unions and to talk to employers and contractors who do not have any Housing Executive contracts at the moment. As I was chatting to them about how contracts work and so on, one of them said that if he was to tender for one of those and get it, that he would have real problems. He said that he could undercut by 5% and make a profit, that he could do it well and get a profit if it is 5%. If it was 10%, he said that he could wash his face and break even; that he will have work for staff but he would not make anything on it, but he was shaking his head and saying that he did not know how to do it when you get down to 15%, 20%, 25% or 30%. What is happening is that the price system is just driving down to the bottom. The whole structure drives prices down; it is cut-throat. People are then looking for work, getting work at tender figures that are unrealistic and the Housing Executive signs that off. It may challenge them, but it is an issue that I certainly want to see a bit further on.
269. I met recently with the Construction Employers Federation about contracts and the issue of pricing of tenders. It

- was raised at that meeting along with procurement and contract issues. This is about more than just company A, B, C or D, this is about how we do this across the whole sector.
270. You asked earlier about the ASM report; the decision to publish the report I commissioned. The Housing Executive's publication of its ASM report on Red Sky was its decision. I made my decision about the report that I commissioned. I think it is good to get the information out there. These are big issues and big amounts of money and lots of people are affected: 90,000 tenants. We need to make sure that people out there, politicians, elected representatives, whatever, and the media understand what we are dealing with.
271. **Mr Douglas:** Thank you, Minister and Susan for coming today. Unlike the Chair, I had not spoken to you before this meeting and I certainly have not had any texts from you that I know of. I have a number of questions. First, Belfast City Council also had contracts with Red Sky and I assume with some of those other contractors as well. Are you aware of any issues or similar issues pertaining to those contracts?
272. **Mr McCausland:** I am not aware. There may be, but I am not aware of them.
273. **Mr Douglas:** I thought that there may have been a report somewhere that investigated another company or another organisation such as Belfast City Council.
274. Minister, you mentioned this morning that you would regularly meet with companies, and you gave us a list of those companies. Is this a regular practice with Ministers in Stormont? Certainly, the programme tried to show last night that there was some sort of irregularity about that. I imagine that that would happen right across the United Kingdom in other Administrations.
275. **Mr McCausland:** That is common practice and it is good practice to listen to people and to meet with them. That happens on a reasonably regular basis, not only here but in the Republic and across the UK; that is normal practice. If people have an idea, a concept of something that will ensure a better service for tenants, I am happy to listen, just in the same way as when I was in DCAL. I got representations all the time from artists and arts organisations, and I did not turn them away and say we will not talk to you. You talk to people; that is good. It is good to talk.
276. **Mr Douglas:** I saw someone say on Twitter this morning that the DUP was fixated with Red Sky. You stated clearly this morning that you were lobbied and people wrote to you through other political parties in east Belfast, which I support because of the very fact that there was the potential to lose over 400 jobs in east Belfast. We lost quite a number of those jobs over the period of a couple of years, but again, is that the sort of practice that happens with other Ministers as well; politicians lobbying you and bringing community groups or businesses to you?
277. **Mr McCausland:** My experience is limited to DCAL and DSD, and it is common practice for people to bring organisations to me, whether they be arts organisations when I was in DCAL — and they are commercial organisations — or people raising issues of concern in regard to their constituents. I would be surprised and disappointed if we did not have representation from local MLAs. The letter that Judith quoted from was in response to a letter from Naomi Long in east Belfast; that is normal. I have had representation. The point that I have made again and again is that it is good practice that people look after the interests of their constituents. It would be a surprise if they did not; that would be a dereliction of their duty.
278. **Mr Douglas:** There were also the recent revelations of the Housing Executive's £18 million overspend. 'Spotlight'-type programmes often undermine public confidence. How can we, as the Assembly per se, restore that public confidence? Do you think that recalling

- the Assembly on Monday will help to restore confidence?
279. **Mr McCausland:** The use of the word “fixated” is interesting. I think that it is ‘Spotlight’ that has a fixation with Red Sky. I have emphasised that the £18 million figure is an estimate. It may go up, it may go down, and some of it may be negotiated, but it is significant. One of the key things is getting accurate information out there. So often in today’s world we get garbled versions of stories in the media, and I think that last night’s programme was garbled. I like good clear, accurate information.
280. I just checked my watch, and we have been here almost two-and-a-half hours. So, we have gone into it in some depth. That has given us the opportunity to look at it thoroughly, which is the right thing to do. It is about good, accurate information. While it is a shame that it has to be done, I welcome the opportunity to set the record straight in the Assembly on Monday. It is good to have been able to do that in front of the Committee here today; that is the right place to start. We will then take these issues out on to the Floor of the Assembly, and I will be more than happy to respond. I may not get as much time as I have had today through the Chair’s generosity, but I will avail myself of that opportunity.
281. **Mr Douglas:** Looking at it coldly, is there anything that we can learn from last night’s ‘Spotlight’ programme? Obviously, a lot of things were rehearsed last night. Looking back at the whole process, is there anything that you would do differently as the Minister?
282. **Mr McCausland:** Are there things that we can learn from it? As I said earlier, as there has already been the Public Accounts Committee report and the Audit Office report, virtually everything was already in the public domain. There was nothing new other than one or two minor points from years ago that precede my time as Minister. I was not aware of them, and I will be interested in getting the relevant people to follow up on them. There was not much new information learned. It perhaps gave a better insight into some individuals. When people go onto a programme like that and speak, you often learn quite a bit about them. I found it interesting to listen to the former chairman in that regard.
283. I suppose that, if we were all to look at life, we might all do certain things somewhat differently. However, I am quite content with the way in which I handled this issue and all the other issues. Those have been very difficult and really challenging issues. I was hit with those issues immediately on coming into the Department. I did not really have time to get bedded in — I was straight into it. Housing and welfare reform have dominated my life for the last couple of years. I am happy and content that, on all occasions going right back to the starting point, I have acted with the commitment to ensure value for money for the taxpayer, good quality service for the tenants and good opportunity for the workers. I have also always ensured that I have done everything with propriety and probity and that there has been nothing untoward. I can stand over that, and I do so this afternoon.
284. **The Chairperson:** As no other members have indicated that they wish to speak, I thank the Minister and Susan for spending this amount of time here and fielding a whole range of questions. We have covered a wide range of issues. As you know, the Committee has agreed to initiate an inquiry subject to agreement on the terms of reference and all the relevant legalities. We will discuss that with you in due course. Obviously, this issue will run. To answer your question, Sammy, one way of re-establishing any lost public confidence, whatever that might be, is for the Committee to be seen to be doing its job effectively; that is where this has to be located. I just want to give everyone the assurance that I have made no judgement. We will deal exclusively with the evidence. As was suggested earlier, I hope that the terms of reference will allow our scope to be as wide as is necessary and

give us as much access as possible to persons and papers. The more access we have, the closer we can get to the truth in all these matters. The evidence will speak for itself.

285. As I said at the outset of the meeting, members should be mindful of the language that they use with regard to allegations and accusations. The evidence will speak for itself in due course.
286. Again, I thank you, Minister and Susan, for attending.

3 October 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

287. **The Chairperson:** The Committee has, last week and this morning, been dealing with the terms of reference for the inquiry agreed by the Committee into allegations made in the ‘Spotlight’ programme of 3 July 2013. The Committee has had some discussion on that, and members have the draft terms of reference. Are members content to endorse the terms of reference as presented?
288. **Mr Wilson:** Can I ask for one change to them? The first point, in keeping with the law, says that the Committee investigates issues relating to the Department for Social Development (DSD), so can the last line read “action for the DSD Ministers where appropriate”, while putting it on the record that that does not stop us looking at anyone else’s actions?
289. **Mr Allister:** I object to that. That would restrict the Committee unduly in dealing with the allegations that were made in the ‘Spotlight’ programme. Of course, the Committee cannot go outside the bailiwick of DSD’s responsibilities, but there was an allegation that a Minister from outside DSD had influence on decision-making, so I do not think that we should restrict ourselves and not examine where the evidence leads on that. Whether it substantiates or refutes the allegations in the ‘Spotlight’ programme remains to be seen. I support the terms of reference as drafted.
290. **The Chairperson:** OK. I will take a formal proposal for the adoption of the terms of reference as tabled, and then I will take an amendment, probably from you, Sammy. Do we have a formal proposition to adopt the terms of reference as tabled?
291. **Mr Allister:** Yes. I will do that.
292. **The Chairperson:** Sammy, did you want to propose an amendment to that?
293. **Mr Wilson:** Yes. We should specify the actions of the DSD Ministers, making it clear, of course, that that does not stop us investigating the role of any other individuals.
294. **Mr Campbell:** I second that, and I will just add that that does not place restrictions on the course of the inquiry.
295. **The Chairperson:** OK. Can we have a show of hands for those in favour of the amendment?
- Ayes 3; Noes 6.*
- AYES**
- Mr Campbell, Mr Clarke, Mr Wilson.*
- NOES**
- Mr Allister, Mr Brady, Mr Copeland, Mr Dickson, Mr F McCann, Mr Maskey.*
296. **The Chairperson:** The amendment falls. Can we have an indication of those in favour of the terms of reference as tabled?
- Ayes 6; Noes 3.*
- AYES**
- Mr Allister, Mr Brady, Mr Copeland, Mr Dickson, Mr F McCann, Mr Maskey.*
- NOES**
- Mr Campbell, Mr Clarke, Mr Wilson.*
297. **The Chairperson:** OK. The terms of reference have been adopted.

298. For the record, the Committee has had some consideration of the matter and will move forward. We expect to have the further legal advice that the Committee sought next week. We will then have a discussion on the methodology of the inquiry, the time frame that the Committee envisages and the time that it wishes to allocate to such an inquiry. We want to make it clear — I certainly want to make it very clear — that it is members' intention to agree finally the methodology in the next week or so and then move on to the inquiry. It is also the Committee's intention to conduct an inquiry on an absolutely professional and fair basis. We will follow the evidence as presented. That is all that we intend to say on that today.

299. I thank members for their deliberations on the matter. Hopefully we will get the inquiry under way strictly on the basis of the legal terms of reference to the Committee and the terms of reference that we adopted this morning, and then we can run the inquiry on a professional and fair basis.

14 November 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Jim McKeag	<i>Managing Director, Turkington Holdings Limited</i>
Mr Ian Young	<i>Former Divisional Manager, Turkington Holdings Limited</i>

300. **The Chairperson:** I formally welcome everyone to the Committee. This is the first session of the Committee's inquiry. I remind everyone to switch off electronic devices, please, and I ask members to declare any interest relevant to the inquiry.
301. **Mr Allister:** I declare that, in my former professional life, I represented Turkington's in some matters, primarily in relation to planning issues. I do not see any relevance to this issue, but I want to declare that. I also declare that, in 2004, when I was the DUP candidate in the European election, Turkington's supplied the party with vans for use in the election. Also, I believe that, when I was an MEP, I invited Turkington's to a business breakfast.
302. **The Chairperson:** Have any other members anything to declare? No. Jim, we will take note of that and be aware of it. Thank you for declaring that interest.
303. I would like to deal with a couple of items, the first of which is the question of procedural fairness. It is important

that I outline that. Members are aware that, in an inquiry of this nature, we have to be cognisant of how we, collectively as a Committee, conduct the inquiry. We have already taken a range of advice on procedural and legal matters pertinent to the remit of the Committee and to the terms of reference of the inquiry. We have done that to ensure that the integrity of the Committee is not undermined and that the risk of challenge to any findings that the Committee might make is minimised. It is also important to give due regard to how we treat witnesses and the evidence submitted to us. Procedural fairness is, therefore, key to how we conduct the inquiry. I will endeavour, as Chair, to ensure that the inquiry is conducted in an absolutely professional fashion. I have no doubt that all members are like-minded. The Committee Clerk has drafted a brief note on the issue, which was considered by Legal Services. I refer members to the briefing on procedural fairness, which is a ready reckoner to ensure procedural fairness in the process. Are members happy to endorse and adopt the paper before them? It encapsulates all of the advice that has been tabled and debated here.

304. **Mr Campbell:** A thought struck me after Jim's declaration of interest. It is up to individuals, but is each of us required to go through any business breakfasts that we may have held to establish whether those who attended included any representative or chief executive of the companies that applied or were considered for a contract under consideration in this inquiry?

305. **The Chairperson:** At all stages, we will take advice on this. My understanding is that members will declare any interest that they believe to be relevant and pertinent. I think that we have already considered, when getting legal advice on the matter, that, as public

- representatives, we engage with a wide range of people, companies and constituents on a variety of levels. The key thing here is whether we think that any of that could prejudice or leave anyone compromised in any shape, fashion or form or create that perception? Largely, members will have to make up their own mind. If they are in doubt, we can take advice.
306. The Committee Clerk has just reminded me that, if members are declaring interests, as has happened today, we can seek, as a further safeguard, the view of the Committee on Standards and Privileges, if they want to. Are members happy with that approach? Are members happy to endorse the briefing on procedural fairness in the inquiry?
307. **Mr Wilson:** I am not too sure how extensive that is, but, as Minister, I attended breakfasts and dinners at which people, some of whom will probably give evidence before the Committee, will have been present, but I could not even tell you the dates.
308. **The Chairperson:** As I said, members will be aware if they have been in a position that they think they need to declare.
309. If members are happy, we will move on. Members have adopted the briefing paper. On the back of that, it is important to say that the Committee considered the legal status of any such inquiry and our rights and ability to hold it. We are satisfied, from all the legal advice, that we have the statutory authority to do so. We have reliance on section 44, for example. The Committee has also decided that, although it has the authority to require people giving evidence to *[Inaudible.]* or make a declaration, it has, in the first instance, relied on the integrity of everybody presenting evidence. Of course, the Committee can at any stage revert to requiring people to give evidence under oath or by way of a declaration. I state that for the record.
310. I invite Ian Young and Jim McKeag to the table. You are very welcome, gentlemen.
- lan, you are here in your capacity as a former divisional manager of Turkington Holdings Limited.
311. **Mr Ian Young (Former divisional manager, J H Turkington):** That is quite right.
312. **The Chairperson:** Jim, you are the current managing director of Turkington Holdings Limited.
313. **Mr Jim McKeag (Managing director, J H Turkington):** That is right.
314. **The Chairperson:** You will be aware that the 'Spotlight' programme of 3 July 2013 made a number of allegations against the Minister, one of which was that he misled the Committee on the review of double-glazing specifications. Central to our consideration of this issue is a meeting that was held on 16 April 2012 to discuss double-glazing specifications and the Minister's subsequent referral to that meeting in a letter to me as Chair of the Committee. The Committee is not inquiring into the specifications or anything of that nature; it is not about what the specifications were or whether they were good specifications or wrong specifications. That is not the purpose of the inquiry in any way. The Committee has asked you here today because, as we understand it, you both attended the meeting of 16 April 2012. Therefore, we hope that you can provide some insight that will help the Committee to determine whether the Minister misled the Committee. You have provided a joint submission to the Committee, which has been very useful, so thank you for that. I ask one or both of you to brief the Committee on that submission, after which I will open the floor to members' questions. The floor is yours, gentlemen.
315. **Mr McKeag:** Thanks very much for inviting us to the Committee this afternoon. I am the managing director of Turkington Holdings, which includes various companies in the business. I have been with the business for 28 years, and I am a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Building.
316. **Mr Young:** I worked at Turkington's for 17 years as divisional manager. I

am currently the general manager of Polyframe. I was the chairman of the Northern Ireland Glass and Glazing Federation for 2005-06.

317. **Mr McKeag:** Turkington Holdings comprises a number of trading companies. It was set up in 1951 by Trevor Turkington's father and is based in Craigavon. The company employs 120 direct and indirect staff and has an annual turnover of £20 million. The group operates across Northern Ireland and across various sectors of the industry, acting as main contractor and developer through our construction division and providing specialist subcontracting and supply expertise through our window, curtain walling and pre-cast divisions. Over the past 30 years, depending on where the company was working, we have held a wide range of meetings with public representatives from all political parties. Meetings with public representatives were infrequent, but they were mainly with those involved in the Department for Regional Development (DRD) and the Department of the Environment (DOE). Over the years, I have personally met Ministers Attwood, Poots, Ritchie and Wilson.
318. Between 2001 and August 2011, Turkington's had not undertaken any work for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive directly or through a main contractor. Turkington's did not apply for the Egan contract in 2006-07, which was a combined contract for windows, kitchens and bathrooms. The company did not feel that it was appropriate at that time. In May/June 2011, Turkington's was contacted by Mascott Construction to see whether the company would be interested in undertaking a supply and installation window subcontract for some of its sites. Mascott had previously bought windows on a supply-only basis, but, on that occasion, it felt that the supply and installation route would be more beneficial. Turkington's was successful in being awarded a site and started the contract in August 2011. Further sites were awarded later in the year and on into 2012 — all for Mascott Construction. It was during the execution of those contracts that Turkington's started to identify a range of issues that, we believed, were worth bringing to the attention of the main contractor and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.
319. The first issue was a health and safety matter relating to the Housing Executive's requirement for windows to be factory-glazed and then fitted on site. That led to a substantial increase in weight, which caused issues with manual handling at the factory and during installation on site. It was likely to lead to potential claims in the future. It was also a breach of the health and safety manual handling specification.
320. The second issue was the method of installation. The Housing Executive process required, first, that all the reveals had to be cut back; windows were installed; and then the reveals were replastered. That practice was increasing the time to complete houses because of the wet trades involved. It was, therefore, more costly for the Housing Executive, and it increased the disruption to tenants, including the time spent in tenants' properties. Redecoration grants were also being afforded to tenants because of the disruption to the houses.
321. Turkington's had initial discussions with Mascott about these issues, as it was the main contractor and should have taken them to the Housing Executive. It was agreed, because of the specialist nature of the issues, that we would raise them directly with the Housing Executive. Consequently, a meeting was arranged with David Adamson, who deals with procurement and specification at the Housing Executive, in late 2011. During the meeting, we discussed our concerns, and he said that he would come back to us. We were keen to resolve the pre-glazing issue quickly in order to minimise the potential impact on employees and protect against any breach of health and safety. Turkington's heard nothing from Mr Adamson, despite numerous follow-up e-mails. As it appeared that we were not receiving a timely response from the

- Housing Executive, Turkington's decided to try to raise the issue with the Minister responsible, Nelson McCausland. An approach was made to the Minister's special adviser, Stephen Brimstone, in the first instance, and a meeting was secured with him in January 2012. Mr Brimstone advised that we contact the Minister to request a meeting to discuss the issues. Therefore, on 2 February, Mr Young wrote a letter to the Minister requesting a meeting on behalf of Turkington's, with the intention of discussing these concerns to highlight the potential savings to the public purse if the window insulation process were reviewed. The letter is attached as appendix A.
322. Turkington's received a response from the Department for Social Development in March 2012, advising that a meeting had been arranged for 16 April. Mr Young and I attended the meeting on behalf of Turkington's with the Minister. Also in attendance were representatives of the Housing Executive and the Department for Social Development. The meeting focused on two issues, the first of which was the simple health and safety issue of pre-glazing glass. It was agreed at that meeting that, because Turkington's was supplying and installing, we could install the glass on site. The second issue focused on our perception that there appeared to be substantial costs being unnecessarily incurred by the public purse. Turkington's is a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation, and we comply with the standards set by the federation. These standards include installation guidelines. We explained that, if the windows were installed to the federation guidelines, this would not necessitate the reveals being removed, thereby avoiding the need for wet trades in tenants' homes. This would give an industry-recognised standard of installation at reduced cost and save disruption to tenants' property. We presented a spreadsheet, which is attached at appendix B, demonstrating that the decreased installation costs plus avoidance of having to pay the redecoration grant could save the Housing Executive between £20 million and £30 million as it completed its building programme. The Minister seemed impressed by the scale of the savings.
323. Some time after the meeting, the Housing Executive made an amendment to the specification for window installation that reflected our suggestion. It was our view that this change in the criteria would not only provide greater value for money for the Housing Executive but would encourage Turkington's and other contractors who met the Glass and Glazing Federation standards to tender for the new contract. A subsequent tender was issued. We tendered for it but were unsuccessful. Our proposed changes were incorporated into the existing Egan contract and the new tender contract.
324. Turkington's sought the meeting with the Minister after failing to secure a response from the Housing Executive. There was no material gain to the company arising from this meeting. In seeking the meeting, we were prompted by our first-hand experience as a subcontractor of the health and safety issues and our analysis that the contract would be delivered to the same standard but using a different process that would avoid considerable waste to public funds.
325. **The Chairperson:** Thank you.
326. Ian, may I ask you a question for formal clarification? I understand that the letter came from you, but we need to establish whether the request for the meeting was made on behalf of Turkington's.
327. **Mr Young:** Absolutely, yes.
328. **The Chairperson:** It was not on behalf of anybody else.
329. **Mr Young:** No.
330. **The Chairperson:** Your attendance at the meeting on 16 April was as a representative of Turkington's. Is that correct?
331. **Mr Young:** Yes.

332. **The Chairperson:** You were not there representing anybody else.
333. **Mr Young:** No.
334. **Mr Allister:** The Chairman has just drawn your attention to this. The letter asking for the meeting was quite explicit that it was for Turkington's.
335. **Mr Young:** Absolutely.
336. **Mr Allister:** You are quite clear that the meeting was with Turkington's. Any relevance of the Glass and Glazing Federation was simply in the context that you live by its guidance.
337. **Mr Young:** Its standards, yes.
338. **Mr Allister:** Just as you live by British standards on other things. So there was no basis on which anyone could rationally think that it was a meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
339. **Mr Young:** No.
340. **Mr McKeag:** The words "Glass and Glazing Federation" come up several times. We told the meeting that we were members of it, and, secondly, that Ian is a past chairman of the Northern Ireland branch and, thirdly, that the specification changes that we were calling for were in line with the federation's specifications.
341. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but at no point did you hold yourself out as representing, being there on behalf of or speaking on behalf of it.
342. **Mr McKeag:** Absolutely not.
343. **Mr Allister:** The meeting came about by virtue of a letter of 2 February, which followed a meeting with the Minister's special adviser. How did you know to contact the special adviser?
344. **Mr McKeag:** The only other contact the company had with Nelson McCausland was way back in 2009, when he was sports Minister. That was to do with something at Nutts Corner. Trevor Turkington went through Mr Brimstone to arrange that meeting with Mr McCausland, so he had his contact details from 2009. That is why we contacted him.
345. **Mr Allister:** Why was the letter cc'd to the Finance Minister?
346. **Mr McKeag:** As documented in the press and in anything I have seen or read, there were substantial savings of £20 million to £30 million to be made. It was a decision on our part to copy the letter to the Finance Minister because of the significant sums involved.
347. **Mr Allister:** Was it cc'd to him as Finance Minister or as MP for East Antrim?
348. **Mr McKeag:** As Finance Minister.
349. **Mr Allister:** The cc simply says, "Sammy Wilson MP". Where was it sent?
350. **Mr McKeag:** I cannot remember where it was sent.
351. **Mr Allister:** Did Turkington's have particular contact with Mr Wilson?
352. **Mr McKeag:** As I said in my briefing, we have had various contacts with various Ministers. I had met Mr Wilson before when he was, I think, planning Minister, but we have also met Ministers from other parties, as you know.
353. **Mr Allister:** Who was taking minutes of the meeting?
354. **Mr McKeag:** I do not know whether she was the Minister's PA or whatever — I do not know the lady — but there was a lady there taking minutes. I do not know her name.
355. **Mr Allister:** Did you take any minutes?
356. **Mr Young:** No.
357. **Mr McKeag:** We have never seen any minutes.
358. **Mr Allister:** They were never circulated to you.
359. **Mr Young:** No.
360. **Mr Allister:** It turns out that the minutes were headed "Meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation." If you had seen that, what would you have said?

361. **Mr McKeag:** We would have written back saying that there had been a misunderstanding. It could not have been a misunderstanding: we knew who we were, and we would not misrepresent ourselves in any shape or form.
362. **Mr Young:** Even at the start of the meeting, I had to give a brief explanation of who Turkington's was.
363. **Mr McKeag:** A history of the company and background.
364. **Mr Allister:** You have identified the two issues that, you say, were raised: the health and safety issue and the method of installation. Was the issue of the hinge type not also raised?
365. **Mr McKeag:** No, not at our meeting.
366. **Mr Allister:** Not at your meeting.
367. **Mr McKeag:** No.
368. **Mr Allister:** On three occasions, the minutes, which you say that you have not seen, refer to the hotel-type hinges costing five times as much as the industry standard installation.
369. **Mr McKeag:** The Housing Executive was at the meeting. I do not know whether the Minister was quizzing the Housing Executive about hinges. We did not bring the hinge issue —
370. **Mr Allister:** That was in your presence. It was a single meeting attended by all the participants at all times.
371. **Mr McKeag:** Ian and I never spoke about hinges.
372. **Mr Allister:** Did you hear hinges being discussed?
373. **Mr Young:** I cannot remember. We started off by talking about the glazing and the method of installation. In the minutes, the Housing Executive then went on to —
374. **Mr McKeag:** I think that the conversation might have opened up, but —
375. **Mr Allister:** Do you remember hinges being discussed?
376. **Mr McKeag:** No, I do not. That is not to say that they were not.
377. **Mr Allister:** Do you know the issue with hotel-type reversible hinges and casement-type hinges?
378. **Mr McKeag:** Ian knows about specification.
379. **Mr Young:** It was just a different specification.
380. **Mr Allister:** You know about that issue. Did Turkington have any interest in that?
381. **Mr Young:** No.
382. **Mr Allister:** Was Turkington in a position to manufacture the casement hinges but not the reversible hinges?
383. **Mr Young:** It could do both.
384. **Mr Allister:** You could do both at that time.
385. **Mr Young:** At that time, we made only casement windows
386. **Mr Allister:** At that time.
387. **Mr Young:** We had access to reversible windows.
388. **Mr McKeag:** We could buy them.
389. **Mr Allister:** You could buy them, but you could not manufacture them
390. **Mr Young:** At that time, we were actually making reversible windows.
391. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but not the hinges.
392. **Mr Young:** We would not make hinges.
393. **Mr Allister:** You were making reversible hinges.
394. **Mr Young:** Yes.
395. **Mr Allister:** Polyframe, which you are now involved with, is into reversible hinges. Is that right?
396. **Mr Young:** Polyframe makes every type of window, including casement windows, reversible windows and vertical sliding windows.

397. **Mr Allister:** You are saying quite clearly to us that you never heard hinges discussed at that meeting.
398. **Mr McKeag:** No, I could not say that. I have no recollection; I cannot say that they were not discussed. If they were discussed, we certainly did not bring it up, but I do not remember it being discussed. I think that it is fair to say that that is not to say that they were not discussed.
399. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
400. **Mr Campbell:** Your presentation mentioned savings and your attempts to get to the Housing Executive. You said that numerous e-mails were sent, but the Housing Executive did not come back to you. You said that the decreased installation cost plus the avoidance of having to pay a redecoration grant meant that the Housing Executive could save between £20 million and £30 million. Subsequent to that, Turkington's was not successful. Is that right?
401. **Mr McKeag:** That is right.
402. **Mr Campbell:** Obviously, you know what you would have bidding for in going for that contract, but do you have any idea, on an industry-wide basis, how much might have been saved at that time, without knowing what the successful contract was for?
403. **Mr McKeag:** That specification change was industry-wide; it was not just for Turkington's. When we started the dialogue, there was talk of 50,000 homes. That figure changed: it went down to 40,000 and then 30,000. I do not know what the correct figure is, but based on 50,000 homes, the savings would have been £20 million to £30 million throughout the country, not just for Turkington's.
404. **Mr Young:** At the time of the meeting, I thought that there were 50,000 homes still to be done. That is how I worked out the cost of £32 million or whatever. At the meeting, it turned out that there were only 40,000 homes left to be done. That is why the figure was reduced pro rata for the number of homes.
405. **Mr McKeag:** It is a big multiplier.
406. **Mr Campbell:** What I am trying to get at is that, whatever the number of homes was at the end, you had had a meeting as Turkington's. Whatever anyone else thought the meeting was, you are clear that you were there as Turkington's.
407. **Mr McKeag:** Absolutely.
408. **Mr Campbell:** That is fine. We will have to ask the Minister what his impression was.
409. You raised the issue of potential savings of between £20 million and £30 million based on the figure of 50,000 homes. A lesser figure, pro rata, would mean a lesser saving. Is it your understanding that the savings that you had itemised at the meeting with the Minister would have been reflected in subsequent contracts?
410. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
411. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, gentlemen, this is going into the issue of savings or specifications, which this Committee is not inquiring into. The gentlemen were advised of what the subject of this session would be, as were the other witnesses. We are not discussing or dealing with specifications and whether they were right or wrong, appropriate or over-expensive. That is not the purpose of this inquiry, so there is no point in asking the two gentlemen to explain whether there would have been savings made, whether greater, less or other. That is not their remit, and it is not in the remit of the inquiry.
412. **Mr Campbell:** I understand that, but savings were accrued as a result, even if it is outside the remit of the inquiry.
413. The meeting was almost two years ago, in February 2012. Do you recall roughly how long the meeting lasted?
414. **Mr McKeag:** I would say about 45 minutes to an hour.
415. **Mr Young:** Yes, about 45 minutes.
416. **Mr Campbell:** You said that you had had meetings with other Ministers from various parties. One of the previous

- questions was about minute taking. Did you take minutes? I do not know whether anybody else took minutes, but you did not take minutes at any of those meetings.
417. **Mr McKeag:** I would have had bullet points in case I forgot any points that I wanted to make. Once the meeting was over, I would destroy them; I would not keep them.
418. **Mr Campbell:** OK.
419. **Mr Copeland:** Somewhere in the back of my mind is Fusion21. Were you at the same meeting as the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21, or were those separate entities?
420. **Mr McKeag:** We were not at any meeting with Fusion21.
421. **Mr Copeland:** You were not at any meeting and had no knowledge of Fusion21 contacting the Minister.
422. **Mr McKeag:** No. To be honest with you, I do not know what that means.
423. **Mr Copeland:** I think that it is another trade group of some description.
424. I am trying to get it right in my own mind. You saw the Minister and you said, "We can save you money". Obviously, any Minister is interested in saving money; he would fail in his duty were he not. If there were 50,000 units, based on your estimate, the sum was many millions of pounds. As the meeting progressed, did the potential savings decline, because there was some uncertainty about the number of units involved? Was the Minister quite clear in his mind about what the actual potential savings were as opposed to a figure extrapolated against 50,000 units, or did that come later?
425. **Mr Young:** We covered the glazing and the health and safety issues pretty quickly; we then talked about the second issue. He wrote down the figures as we went along. He totted up the value himself.
426. **Mr McKeag:** We went over it a few times. It was such a huge sum of money that it was difficult to believe at the start. It caught his attention very quickly. We put the numbers to him two or three times just to make it sink in that this could be the saving.
427. **Mr Copeland:** At that time, did you have a direct contractual relationship with the Housing Executive or the installer?
428. **Mr McKeag:** Just with Mascott Construction, the main contractor.
429. **Mr Copeland:** And it was present at the meeting as well.
430. **Mr McKeag:** No, but I told Mascot. I was very careful. We had a good contractual relationship with Mascott that I did not want to damage, because we were getting business from it. I told Mascott afterwards that we had been at the meeting and the reason why we had been at it. It was Mascott that suggested that we contact the Housing Executive directly because of the specialist nature of what we were talking about.
431. **Mr Copeland:** Even though you had no direct contractual relationship with the Housing Executive.
432. **Mr McKeag:** That is normal.
433. **Mr Copeland:** I understand that.
434. **Mr McKeag:** If things get technical, I, as a contractor, would tell my subcontractors to deal directly.
435. **Mr Copeland:** So you went and you saw the Minister. Did you identify the breakdown and the way in which any potential savings could be achieved? I understand that the Housing Executive had a particularly good record in specifying — some would say "overspecifying" — the quality of goods that it supplied because it has an issue with long-term maintenance. Its existing window system — the one that it was using at the time — proved to be quite successful. There had been very little call back and very little difficulty in installing the windows, except in some high-rise areas. That had been arrived at by a process. It was established and accepted that that is the Housing Executive's standard. You were essentially saying that, by altering the standard and making tweaks,

- substantial savings could be made. Northern Ireland has a distinctively different method of installing windows —
436. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Michael. I want to be fair to everybody. In fairness, Gregory respected the guidance when asking the last question. This is not about savings or specifications; this is about the meeting — who attended the meeting, the purpose of the meeting, who asked for the meeting and why the meeting was described as one thing as opposed to another. That is the salient and only relevant point to this inquiry.
437. **Mr Copeland:** I understand. I was trying to develop the tack that the meeting took.
438. **Mr McKeag:** To answer your question, the specification was good for its day, but all specifications move on. There was a reason for that specification: the windows were secured into the reveal. With modern technology, you do not do that. As I say, the specification had moved on. The Housing Executive is under a lot of pressure, as you know —
439. **Mr Copeland:** This is my point: how did you quantify to the Minister what the potential savings were?
440. **The Chairperson:** Michael, can you get to a point relevant to the purpose of the meeting?
441. **Mr McKeag:** All the work around the reveal was omitted; that is where the saving was. The housing grant — the grant to the tenant — was the biggest saving of all.
442. **Mr Copeland:** The Minister was in no doubt at that time that the biggest potential savings were in the redecoration grant.
443. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
444. **Mr Copeland:** Did you produce any evidence to him?
445. **Mr McKeag:** Appendix B —
446. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Michael. Sorry, Jim. I know that you are trying to respond faithfully to members' questions, and I understand that that puts you in a difficult position. I suggest that this is a relatively easy issue to get to the nub of. Michael started his question by asking whether Fusion21 was at the meeting. That is relevant because, in the documentation that we have, a letter had been drafted that included Fusion21 and the Glass and Glazing Federation at the meeting.
447. **Mr McKeag:** The Glass and Glazing Federation might have been at the meeting with Fusion21, but we certainly were not.
448. **The Chairperson:** The initial letter that had been drafted referred to a meeting between Turkington's and the Minister. That letter was subsequently changed and includes Fusion21 and the Glass and Glazing Federation. You are obviously surprised at that; you have no control over that. You have no explanation of how that letter was changed to reflect —
449. **Mr McKeag:** We have not seen the letter.
450. **Mr Young:** We do not know who Fusion21 is.
451. **The Chairperson:** That is fair enough. You did not write the letter. I appreciate that.
452. **Mr Clarke:** Taking you back to the meeting, Jim asked you about the minute taker. Can we be clear about who took the minutes?
453. **Mr McKeag:** I do not know the name of the person.
454. **Mr Clarke:** So can we assume that it is fair to say that it was neither the Minister nor the special adviser?
455. **Mr Young:** I cannot honestly say who took the minutes.
456. **Mr McKeag:** There was a girl there who I thought was taking the minutes.
457. **Mr Clarke:** Can I draw your attention to the letter in which you requested the meeting? You are clear in your knowledge about Turkington's, but I draw your attention to the last paragraph of the letter, which says:

- "We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation."*
458. Given that the minute taker would have had knowledge of the meeting and who was coming to it, do you agree that there could be confusion, given the fact that you made representation in your correspondence that you were also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
459. **Mr McKeag:** We are, but we were not representing it. That was clear.
460. **Mr Clarke:** No. The point that I make is that you went to the length of emphasising in your correspondence requesting the meeting that you were active members of the federation. Do you accept that someone could construe from that that your representation could also have included the Glass and Glazing Federation?
461. **Mr McKeag:** I do not see how they could.
462. **Mr Clarke:** What was the purpose of putting the Glass and Glazing Federation in the letter if you were merely making your representations on behalf of Turkington's?
463. **Mr McKeag:** If we were to write that letter today, it would be a completely different letter. We wrote the letter requesting a meeting. We wanted to put that in it because we worked to the standards of the Glass and Glazing Federation, which is a recognised body. I suppose that you could say that it was the kudos of the company.
464. **Mr Clarke:** That is a fair enough point. You have made a fair point that you would write it differently today and might not include that, which could draw us all to the conclusion that there could have been confusion by your admission of that in the letter in the first place.
465. **Mr McKeag:** As I said, the Glass and Glazing Federation phrase came up three times during the meeting. Whether people construed that in whatever way, I have no idea.
466. **Mr Clarke:** I take you back to your response. You said that you may construct the letter differently. This is where I am trying to tie this down. You have said that it came up during discussions, but, primarily, it came up on your request for a meeting, first and foremost, and, on your admission, you have just said that, if you were framing the letter, you would frame it differently today. Would you frame it differently today because you made reference to it and there has been confusion afterwards?
467. **Mr McKeag:** We would rephrase it because I am sitting here today, to be honest with you. *[Laughter.]* If I am going to write a letter and you do not know me from Adam, I will tell you who I am. I am trying to let you know that we are not a fly-by-night organisation; we are a member of a recognised organisation that fits windows to a recognised national standard. That is why it is in there. If I were to write a letter today, I still think that we would say that we were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation because that gives you a certain kudos, I would have thought.
468. **The Chairperson:** Being a member of the federation does not make you a bad person. *[Laughter.]*
469. **Mr McKeag:** Thank you; that is a more eloquent way of saying it.
470. **The Chairperson:** It is important to establish that. People would normally, I presume, refer to their bona fides.
471. **Mr Allister:** Could anything have been said at the meeting with the special adviser in January to suggest that you were a spokesman for the Glass and Glazing Federation?
472. **Mr McKeag:** I was not at the meeting.
473. **Mr Allister:** You were not at it.
474. **Mr Young:** Trevor and I were at it. We were there on behalf of Turkington's.
475. **Mr Allister:** It was equally clear at that meeting that you were just Turkington's?
476. **Mr Young:** Yes.

477. **Mr Brady:** This is a simple enough question: at the meeting on 16 April did you suggest or imply at any point that you represented the Glass and Glazing Federation?
478. **Mr Young:** No.
479. **Mr Brady:** So, if minutes were being taken and you did not mention it, it should not have been included in the minutes, presumably. Before or after the meeting, did you at any time contact the Glass and Glazing Federation?
480. **Mr Young:** No.
481. **Mr Brady:** Did you feel the need to do so?
482. **Mr McKeag:** No. We knew their standards.
483. **Mr Brady:** Essentially, what you are saying and have said all along is that you were there as Turkington Holdings and not to represent anyone else.
484. **Mr McKeag:** No.
485. **Mr Brady:** So it would be difficult to see how anything else could be inferred.
486. **Mr Dickson:** Who is the current chair of the Glass and Glazing Federation, and which employer or company are they involved with? At the time, who would it have been, had it not been you?
487. **Mr McKeag:** Are you asking who the chairman was at the time of the meeting?
488. **Mr Dickson:** Yes.
489. **Mr Young:** At the time of the meeting, it was Michael Ravey from Glas Seal.
490. **Mr Dickson:** They were not involved in any of these contracts.
491. **Mr McKeag:** No.
492. **Mr Dickson:** The minutes of the meeting describe you as
“Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation”
and
- “Ian Young, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation”.*
493. Yet the first line of the minute reads:
“Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE”
494. Further on in the minute, it mentions
“the representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation”.
495. Are you concerned about the confusion in the minutes?
496. **Mr Young:** We did not get a copy of the minutes. Had we got a copy, we would have gone back and said that we were there on Turkington’s business.
497. **Mr McKeag:** We could not misrepresent ourselves. We had no authority to be there on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Had we wanted to, we would have contacted the Glass and Glazing Federation.
498. **Mr Dickson:** My colleague, Mr Clarke, was trying, perhaps, to suggest that there was no reference to Turkington Holdings at the meeting. However, you were referred to, because you and Ian said that your company was Turkington Holdings.
499. **Mr McKeag:** At the start of the meeting, I did a bit of a presentation on who we were and where we came from, because people there would not have known us or the history of the business.
500. **Mr Dickson:** Have you any idea then why, when the Minister wrote to the Chair of the Committee, he said:
“I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”?
501. **Mr McKeag:** No.
502. **Mr Dickson:** I appreciate the Chair’s guidance with regard to hinges and the nature of the contract, but what motivated you to wish to speak to the Housing Executive about this?

503. **Mr McKeag:** The first part of the two items. We were contravening health and safety legislation.
504. **Mr Dickson:** That I understand, but why does that require a meeting with a Minister or even a government special adviser? Surely, with an organisation the size of the Housing Executive, you have a good working relationship with their health and safety people.
505. **Mr McKeag:** We have not worked with them. As I said in my briefing, we had not worked with them for a considerable time. The jobs were live, so these things were happening live.
506. **Mr Dickson:** Why did you not, for example, contact the Health and Safety Executive?
507. **Mr McKeag:** We took the initiative and did not do what the Housing Executive asked. Health and Safety Executive rules would be more important than Housing Executive rules, as far as lifting or manual handling is concerned.
508. **Mr Dickson:** Yes, but you or perhaps the trades union that you recognise could have gone directly to the Health and Safety Executive and made a formal complaint. Then the work would have stopped immediately, would it not?
509. **Mr McKeag:** I think it is more important to try to work with people than to go down that route.
510. **Mr Dickson:** How long did it take to get the meeting with the Minister? What time elapsed between recognising that you had a health and safety issue and getting the meeting with the Minister?
511. **Mr Young:** As Jim said, we were laying the ground, so we took the initiative. When you pair the cast and the frame together, it is a very heavy item.
512. **Mr Dickson:** I understand that, so —
513. **Mr Young:** We said that we would not send an e-mail to Mascott to say that we would bring these to sites separately. That still needed to be ratified by somebody to say —
514. **Mr McKeag:** We took the initiative to stop it and do it properly.
515. **Mr Dickson:** So you did stop.
516. **Mr McKeag:** Yes, and, at the same time, we tried to get the thing changed.
517. **Mr Dickson:** How long was it from the time that you stopped until you met the Minister?
518. **Mr Young:** I think that we stopped at about the end of January sometime. The meeting with the Minister was in April.
519. **Mr Dickson:** OK. So it took from January to April to draw the Minister's attention to a serious health and safety breach and, in the meantime, Housing Executive tenants were not getting an appropriate service.
520. **Mr McKeag:** They were getting —
521. **Mr Dickson:** The planned delivery of windows and frames was not happening.
522. **Mr Young:** They were still getting them —
523. **Mr McKeag:** There was no stop in the programme.
524. **Mr Dickson:** However, they were getting them separately, were they?
525. **Mr McKeag:** No.
526. **Mr Young:** The specification would have said that they had to be factory-glazed.
527. **Mr Dickson:** Yes, so you continued with that.
528. **Mr Young:** No, we did not, but you can still take them to site and install them there.
529. **Mr McKeag:** We brought the window and glass separately at the same time.
530. **Mr Young:** Yes, but it did not stop the —
531. **Mr Dickson:** Do you put them together on site and put them in the house?
532. **Mr Young:** It is quite a big difference.
533. **Mr Dickson:** Well, Mascott did, not you.
534. **Mr Young:** No, we did.
535. **Mr McKeag:** We fitted the windows.

536. **Mr Dickson:** You fitted the windows, OK. I am interested to know the time frame between your raising the issue with the Health and Safety Executive and meeting the Minister. However, I am more interested to know what motivated you in relation to the second point, which was to say that there was a more cost-effective way of doing this. What was the motivation behind that?
537. **Mr McKeag:** Well, apart from the huge savings for everyone involved, it made the job faster and cheaper for the Housing Executive. No wet trades were involved and no dirty work in taking off reveals; no plasterers were brought in to people's houses. It made the installation quicker.
538. **Mr Dickson:** And was there no difference to the value in the contract to you?
539. **Mr McKeag:** Any saving would have gone to the Housing Executive.
540. **Mr Young:** The value would be less.
541. **Mr McKeag:** The value is less, but the Housing Executive got that value. We were not getting the same price by creating a saving; we were getting paid for what we did.
542. **Mr Dickson:** How long had the methodology that you proposed to the Minister been standard practice outside the Housing Executive contract?
543. **Mr Young:** In the Glass and Glazing Federation or UK-wide, I do not know exactly, but it has been there for a long time.
544. **Mr Dickson:** Had there been a long gap since your previous contract to supply windows in this manner to the Housing Executive?
545. **Mr Young:** We had not worked for the Housing Executive as a main contractor or subcontractor for 11 years.
546. **Mr McKeag:** I think we said that in a briefing.
547. **Mr Young:** The last one was a newbuild contract, so taking out windows did not apply.
548. **Mr Dickson:** It did not apply, OK.
549. **Mr F McCann:** I have just two points to make. Thanks, gentlemen, for your presentation. After the meeting, did you report to anyone at Turkington Holdings about what had occurred at the meeting? If you did, who did you speak to and what did you speak about?
550. **Mr McKeag:** Did we report back?
551. **Mr F McCann:** Yes.
552. **Mr McKeag:** I spoke to Mascott after the meeting.
553. **Mr F McCann:** What about?
554. **Mr McKeag:** Just to say that they had immediately taken on board the health and safety issue and had gone away to contemplate the savings. No direct decision was made at the meeting to do with the savings. We just reported that it was ongoing.
555. **Mr F McCann:** You did not speak to anyone else in Turkington Holdings about what had occurred at the meeting.
556. **Mr McKeag:** I would have reported to my boss, Trevor Turkington.
557. **Mr F McCann:** What was the discussion about?
558. **Mr McKeag:** Just that we reported at the meeting, that we got the health and safety issue resolved and that they were going to report on the savings. That is all that we could report.
559. **Mr F McCann:** The letter that you signed, Ian, states that the scheme *"promises great potential, if executed properly. But we urge caution that if this scheme is not handled properly, a great opportunity could be lost"*.
560. What does that mean?
561. **Mr McKeag:** I assume that it meant that, unless they incorporated the specification changes, they would not get the benefit of the savings.
562. **Mr F McCann:** I do not want to go into the savings, but the vast majority of the

- savings were in the way of redecoration grants.
563. **Mr McKeag:** Yes, that is right.
564. **Mr F McCann:** Therefore there was no big change in what was being offered; it was just that the savings —
565. **Mr McKeag:** The installation of the windows would have been faster and cheaper, and the savings would have gone to the Housing Executive.
566. **Mr Young:** The redecoration grant was probably given out because of the mess that a plasterer makes.
567. **Mr McKeag:** The tenant would have had to redecorate — wallpaper and paint.
568. **Mr F McCann:** I have been in a lot of houses before and after, and there was still a mess. However, I do not want to go into that.
569. **Mr McKeag:** Yes, but it would be greatly reduced.
570. **Mr Copeland:** I want to clear something in my mind. You were a subcontractor with Mascott. Did Mascott fit the windows, or did you supply and fit them?
571. **Mr Young:** We supplied and fitted them.
572. **Mr McKeag:** Mascott previously bought windows and fitted them itself. That is all right if you are doing a house, but doing 400 houses is a specialist job, and it came to us to supply and fix.
573. **Mr Copeland:** Right. I presume that you had other strings to your bow and I accept that, with most double glazing, a frame is sent out and the glazing is then fitted. Your production line was set up to manufacture windows and glazing units separately and bring them together on site subsequently, as opposed to sending out window frames with the sealed units in them. Is that correct?
574. **Mr Young:** We always buy glass in; we never manufacture glass. Turkington's only makes windows.
575. **Mr McKeag:** The manufacturing process did not change; we manufacture the windows as normal, and they are put together. You either glaze it and take it out or you set the glazing with it and take it out and it is glazed on site.
576. **Mr Copeland:** Across all the contracts that you have, how many required frames and glazing units to be put together in one piece before they were sent out?
577. **Mr McKeag:** Do you mean factory-glazed?
578. **Mr Copeland:** Factory-glazed.
579. **Mr Young:** At the start, they had to be factory-glazed, but we changed it.
580. **Mr Copeland:** In general.
581. **Mr Young:** We always install glass on site.
582. **Mr McKeag:** We never factory-glaze.
583. **Mr Young:** We put the window in, bolt it to the frame and then glaze it.
584. **Mr Copeland:** I do not mean this disrespectfully, but, in some respects, you were saying, "This is the way that we do it. This is the best way to do it. You should change your specification, even though it might have been arrived at at the end of a process".
585. **Mr McKeag:** No. Essentially, it was a breach of health and safety legislation on manual handling.
586. **Mr Copeland:** Right. And none of the other people who supplied windows or frames here or in the UK or the Housing Executive raised that. Essentially, what we are saying is that the Housing Executive specification —
587. **The Chairperson:** Michael, we are getting into stuff that is not the remit of this afternoon's session. We will move on.
588. **Mr Wilson:** I want to put this all in context. You sought a meeting simply because you had been unsuccessful in getting any satisfactory response from the Housing Executive despite how many requests?
589. **Mr McKeag:** There were follow-up e-mails.
590. **Mr Young:** There was a meeting and then follow-up e-mails.

591. **Mr McKeag:** How many e-mails?
592. **Mr Young:** At least two.
593. **Mr Wilson:** The main point of the meeting and one of the reasons why you copied me into that letter was that you wanted to identify savings to the Minister.
594. **Mr McKeag:** There were two issues: the health and safety issue and the savings.
595. **Mr Wilson:** Regardless of how the meeting was described, its outcome was that substantial savings were made to the public purse.
596. **Mr McKeag:** Yes. Both in the existing contract and in a new contract that has just been let.
597. **Mr Wilson:** Your company did not benefit from it. So, however the meeting was described, it was not and could not be construed in any way as hiding some advantage for Turkington's.
598. **Mr McKeag:** You have heard what we had to say today. I do not think that anyone around this table could construe that it was beneficial to Turkington's. I do not see how you could do that.
599. **The Chairperson:** I want to summarise this.
600. **Mr Campbell:** Chairman, could I ask just one —
601. **Mr Dickson:** I want to make a brief point. Mr Wilson made the point that the letter invited the Minister and him to a meeting about substantial savings.
602. **Mr Wilson:** I was not invited to any meeting.
603. **Mr Dickson:** Sorry, I know that you were not invited to a meeting. The letter refers —
604. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, folks, one wee second, please. Make all comments through the Chair and ask the Chair to let you speak. Another member was about to speak when you intervened.
605. **Mr Campbell:** I have one question about the Glass and Glazing Federation.
- You said that you met the Minister when he was at DCAL a number of years previously. Is that right? Minister McCausland?
606. **Mr McKeag:** No, I did not: Trevor Turkington met him in 2009.
607. **Mr Campbell:** The company did, and that was how you had the contact details for his special adviser.
608. **Mr McKeag:** That is right.
609. **Mr Campbell:** There was then a meeting or conversation to set up the meeting that we have the minute of. Was that a telephone conversation or a meeting?
610. **Mr McKeag:** My PA would have contacted Mr Brimstone to arrange a meeting for Trevor and Ian with the Minister. I was not at the meeting.
611. **Mr Campbell:** At that meeting, would you have referred to the fact that Turkington's was a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
612. **Mr Young:** We probably did. We probably said that we were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation and that we installed to its standards.
613. **Mr McKeag:** We think that that is something to be proud of.
614. **Mr Campbell:** Yes. I can see why. However, it was your recollection that that was mentioned at the meeting.
615. **Mr Young:** It probably was. We were there on business for Turkington's.
616. **Mr Campbell:** I understand that. You have been explicit about that. However, the Glass and Glazing Federation membership was mentioned in the set-up meeting, if you like, for the meeting with the Minister and then came up several times during the meeting. That is what you said earlier.
617. **Mr McKeag:** Yes, that is right.
618. **Mr Campbell:** OK.
619. **Mr Dickson:** Apologies, Chair. If the letter that you are referring to is the letter from your company dated 2

- February, which is cc'd to Sammy, I do not see anything in it that says that substantial savings could be made or any reference to the costs or value of the contract. It is simply a general *[Inaudible.]* to congratulate the Executive on its foresight in tackling fuel poverty. It offers your services and suggests that specialist glazing manufacturers and installers could assist the Department in undertaking a major programme of work.
620. **Mr Clarke:** Find the fourth paragraph.
621. **Mr Dickson:** In particular, it promises “great potential if executed properly” but urges:
- “caution...if the scheme is not handled properly”.*
622. None of that tells me that that there are millions of pounds to be saved.
623. **Mr McKeag:** In the meeting we mentioned that substantial savings could be made. I assume that Mr Brimstone notified the Minister of that.
624. **Mr Dickson:** Do you not think that the letter might have made reference to the meeting with Mr Brimstone?
625. **Mr McKeag:** As I said, if we were to write the letter again, maybe we would write it differently. However, we wrote it the way that we wrote it when we wrote it. We could all say that it could have been written better.
626. **Mr Dickson:** I am not suggesting that the letter could have been written better. I am suggesting that it seems odd that there is no reference to something like “further to our meeting with Mr Brimstone, when we set out potential savings”.
627. **Mr Clarke:** Perhaps to help Mr Dickson, paragraph 4 of the letter states:
- “This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.”*
628. Rather than having meetings with Ministers, do we want to spell out every last detail when requests are made? That is explicit enough. It says:
- “ a great opportunity could be lost”.*
629. It has been explained today that there were £20 million pounds worth of reasons why this opportunity could have been lost if they had not had the meeting.
630. **Mr Dickson:** It does not say what the lost opportunity was.
631. **Mr Allister:** I think that we should give these two gentlemen the opportunity to comment on this. They have said that they met the Housing Executive in late 2011 and then their e-mails were ignored. In its written submission — we will hear its oral evidence later — the Housing Executive told us that there was a meeting between Turkington’s and its policy and standards team on 13 March 2012, just a month before the meeting with the Minister. You have not mentioned that meeting. Was there such a meeting?
632. **Mr Young:** I cannot recall.
633. **Mr Allister:** You have been explicit that there were no meetings after November and that e-mails were ignored, yet the Housing Executive will tell us that it met you on 13 March, and you cannot remember.
634. **Mr McKeag:** If it was on 13 March, it would have been after we requested a meeting with the Minister.
635. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but before you met him.
636. **Mr McKeag:** If that meeting happened, you can understand why.
637. **Mr Allister:** I am asking you whether that meeting happened.
638. **Mr Young:** I honestly cannot recall. I will have to get back to you on that.
639. **Mr McKeag:** How many times did you meet Mr Adamson?
640. **Mr Young:** Once.
641. **Mr McKeag:** He is the specifications man.

642. **Mr Young:** Yes.
643. **Mr McKeag:** You met him in late 2011.
644. **Mr Young:** Yes.
645. **Mr McKeag:** We met the specifications person once in late 2011.
646. **Mr Allister:** The Housing Executive will tell us that you met its policy and standards team. I do not know who that is, obviously.
647. **Mr McKeag:** I certainly did not meet them. Did you?
648. **Mr Young:** We met only one person.
649. **Mr Allister:** Finally —
650. **Mr McKeag:** You have site teams, site supervisors and site contracts managers. Perhaps they had some dialogue that we are not aware of, but there was certainly no meeting at our level.
651. **Mr Allister:** Nothing was reported to you about such a meeting.
652. **Mr Young:** In March 2011?
653. **Mr Allister:** 2012.
654. **Mr McKeag:** In other words, after we had requested a meeting and before we met Mr Adamson again.
655. **Mr Young:** There might have been a meeting in the offices of Turkington.
656. **Mr Allister:** I did not specify where the meeting was.
657. **Mr Young:** With his team. That was to do with a contract and getting a sample passed for a contract. I think that Mr Adamson was there.
658. **Mr Allister:** The Housing Executive is going to tell us:
“We”
— the executive —
“were aware that they”
— Turkington’s —
had some ideas about how double glazing could be fitted more economically, a meeting having previously taken place between representatives of Turkington Holdings and
our Policy and Standards Team (13th March 2012).”
659. You seem to have a blank about that meeting.
660. **Mr Young:** We met Mr Adamson on his own prior to that. That may have been a meeting to do with the contract and getting a window passed for a certain contract.
661. **Mr Allister:** Was there a meeting or was there not in March?
662. **Mr Young:** I could not tell you when it was. There was a meeting, yes. There were —
663. **Mr Allister:** So you are now saying that there was a meeting.
664. **Mr Young:** There were four people from the Housing Executive at it.
665. **Mr Allister:** You now remember the number at it. This is a meeting that you could not remember a few minutes ago.
666. **Mr McKeag:** It was a meeting that had nothing to do with what we are here to talk about; it was a meeting to do with getting a sample house prepared for approval. Is that correct?
667. **Mr Young:** That is right, yes.
668. **Mr Allister:** According to the Housing Executive, it was aware of your ideas about fitting things more economically because of the meeting on 13 March.
669. **Mr McKeag:** It was told about it on 11 November.
670. **Mr Allister:** Sorry, did the meeting of 13 March deal with how you could do the job more economically?
671. **Mr Young:** It was to do with getting a window passed for a contract.
672. **Mr Allister:** Would that be how you would do the job more economically?
673. **Mr Young:** It may have come up, but I do not honestly remember. It was more to do with getting a contract pass for a site.
674. **Mr Allister:** No doubt we will hear from the Housing Executive about that

- meeting, but I thought that you should have the opportunity to comment.
675. Finally, are you putting it on the record emphatically that Turkington Holdings had nothing to gain from a hinge change?
676. **Mr Young:** Absolutely no.
677. **Mr Allister:** Absolutely no.
678. **Mr Young:** No.
679. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
680. **Mr Wilson:** Just so that we can be clear about the meeting in March, when you requested the meeting with the Minister — you asked for the meeting with the Minister in January, you were finally told in February that the meeting could be granted but not until April 3 — you had had no response from the Housing Executive. Hence — in fact, I think that you have made it clear in your earlier evidence — had a meeting been granted by the Housing Executive or had there been a response from the Housing Executive at an earlier date, you would not have needed to go near the Minister.
681. **Mr Young:** Correct.
682. **Mr McKeag:** Yes. I will just emphasise again that we were live on site, and that makes a big difference to people responding.
683. **The Chairperson:** Obviously, we will pursue that with other people who will present evidence to the Committee, not least this afternoon, because it flows on that, if there was any discussion — you acknowledge that there was a meeting — would the upshot of that not have led to the Minister or other senior officials? However, that is something that we will take up with others, and we may have to return to you if you say, in fairness, that you were not clear on all the detail of that meeting. So, we may have to return to that.
684. I want to encapsulate some of this. First, I am trying to summarise the evidence so far. It was very clear that the meeting that was held on 16 April was requested by Turkington's and by Turkington's alone, representing only Turkington's.
685. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
686. **The Chairperson:** That is fair enough. The meeting did not refer to representing anybody else, whatever organisations you might be members of. It did not refer to anybody else, nor did it suggest that it represented anybody else. You have no explanation of how the meeting was subsequently characterised as being a meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21.
687. **Mr McKeag:** We never saw a minute of that meeting.
688. **The Chairperson:** You did not receive any minutes of that. OK. You are saying that there was no discussion by you at that meeting on the 16th about getting the contracts or lobbying for work or anything of that nature.
689. **Mr McKeag:** No, none whatsoever.
690. **The Chairperson:** OK. That is fair enough.
691. No other members have indicated that they wish to speak. I want to give you gentlemen an opportunity. Is there anything else that you want to put on the record this afternoon, or are you happy enough that you have covered the issues? I just want to give you a fair opportunity.
692. **Mr McKeag:** I think that we have covered everything. However, I reiterate that we had concerns, we tried to get them resolved at a lower level, and they were not resolved. We were live on site, which makes a big difference to people's response times. We took it further, and that is why we are here today. In all of this, particularly in the press, what has been lost is the substantial savings that have been derived because Turkington's took that initiative. Indeed, you could say that we have been lambasted in the press over it. It is unfair.
693. **The Chairperson:** OK. Fair enough. So, you are happy enough, at least for now, that you have put your case on the table. I thank you, Jim and Ian, for your presence this afternoon.
694. **Mr McKeag:** Thank you.

14 November 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Michael Sands *Deputy Director Housing, Department for Social Development*
 Mr Declan Allen *Head of Procurement, NIHE*
 Dr John McPeake *Chief Executive, NIHE*

695. **The Chairperson:** I call Michael Sands from the Department for Social Development (DSD) and John McPeake and Declan Allen from the Housing Executive. Thank you very much, gentlemen, for attending the inquiry. I remind you that the importance of your attendance here this afternoon is that you all attended the meeting on 16 April, which we have referred to. As you will have heard from the previous session, we will not stray into the whole area of specifications or savings and so on, albeit that they are all very important issues in their own right. That is not the purpose of this inquiry. We are specifically interested in the issues that we have covered, which are the purpose of the meeting, who called it and how it was subsequently described. The gentlemen who have just given evidence are very clear that, at no stage, did they indicate that they represented anybody other than Turkington's and have no explanation whatsoever for that meeting being defined as anything else. There were drafts characterising the meeting, but those drafts were changed. So, we

are looking to see what light you can shine on that and how we ended up with a meeting with one contractor being described to the Committee in writing, through me, as something entirely different. Are you happy enough? When you are asked to be here, you are made aware exactly of the topic that you are expected to cover.

696. **Mr Michael Sands (Department for Social Development):** The Committee asked four questions specifically. I will address them in the order in which they were asked.

697. The first question was about their understanding of which organisation or organisations they were meeting on 16 April 2012. I personally was aware that the Minister had received a letter dated 2 February 2012 from Ian Young, the general manager of Turkington Holdings, in connection with the Programme for Government (PFG) target to install double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015 and that a meeting was to be arranged. I was further advised that the meeting was arranged for 16 April 2012 and that Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings would attend the meeting and that John McPeake, chief executive of the Housing Executive, would also attend.

698. The second question was about what they understood the meeting to be about. I understood that the meeting was related to the Programme for Government target to install double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015. The draft Programme for Government 2011-15 was published for consultation on 17 November 2011. The Minister had also issued a press release on 17 November 2011 advising of his Department's PFG priorities, which included double glazing for all Housing Executive properties.

699. Mr Young had advised in his letter that he felt that the specialist glazing

- manufacturers and installers could assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. He advised in his letter that this particular scheme promised great potential if executed properly but urged caution in that, if the scheme was not handled properly, a great opportunity could be lost. Mr Young stated that Turkington Holdings had been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as a manufacturer and installer in large replacement contracts and was an active member of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). He advised that, with its experience, expertise and active role in the national standards body, it had a lot to offer the Department and the Housing Executive and would see value in a meeting to discuss that in greater detail.
700. The third question related to their role in attending. I attended the meeting as the appropriate official from housing division in the Department for Social Development. My role was to listen to the discussion and, if necessary or relevant, take forward any actions that the Minister may require from his departmental officials.
701. The fourth question was about any other information that was relevant to the issue. Immediately following the meeting, I asked the division's housing advisory unit's professional staff to research the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines and compare those guidelines against the current, at that time, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) specification for window replacements, as, at that meeting, we had been advised that there were potential savings if those guidelines were followed. My housing advisory unit subsequently confirmed that, if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were applied, there was the potential for considerable savings largely due to the fact that there would no longer be a requirement to pay redecoration grants to tenants. That resulted in estimated savings of £15.1 million.
702. **The Chairperson:** Michael, you stated in your letter that:
- "Mr Young had advised in his letter that he felt the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers could assist the Department".*
703. Why did you write that? That is not what the Turkington letter actually says. Why did you explain it in that fashion? You read it out a moment ago:
- "Mr Young had advised in his letter that he felt that the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers could assist the Department".*
704. That is not what the letter said. The letter refers to them being members of that, but it does not use the words that you used.
705. **Mr Sands:** I probably paraphrased the letter, but the letter did state:
- "With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail."*
706. **The Chairperson:** OK. I have a question before I bring in other members. I will bring in Sammy in a minute. Michael, the letter that you drafted to the Committee regarding the meeting on 16 April shows that it was your understanding throughout the meeting and in any discussions after the meeting with the Minister and others, right up until changes were made to the draft, which was your draft, that Mr Ian Young and Jim McKeag were there as executives of Turkington Holdings and not as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Is that correct? Was it your understanding that they were exclusively representatives of Turkington's?
707. **Mr Sands:** Yes, they were representing Turkington's, but they were also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
708. **The Chairperson:** That is a different thing entirely.
709. **Mr Sands:** They introduced themselves at the meeting as being from Turkington's.

710. **The Chairperson:** They have made it very clear here that, at no time, did they give any indication that they were representing anybody else. In your draft, you refer to them as Turkington representatives, and that draft subsequently changed.
711. **Mr Sands:** Yes, my draft referred to them as coming from Turkington's.
712. **The Chairperson:** Can you understand or explain why that draft was changed to represent somebody else? That is your draft, so where did your draft go and how did it get changed?
713. **Mr Sands:** My draft was prepared for the Minister. I subsequently received an e-mail from the private office stating that the Minister wished that reference to Turkington's to be changed to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
714. **The Chairperson:** Who in the private office made that request?
715. **Mr Sands:** I have a copy of the e-mail. It came simply from the private office. It is an official within it, one of the girls who worked in the private office.
716. **The Chairperson:** Is there a name on that?
717. **Mr Sands:** A girl called Fiona Lundy.
718. **Mr Wilson:** From the very outset, Michael, there was no attempt in the correspondence that you received from the private office — the request from the Minister — to indicate that this was other than a request from Turkington's.
719. **Mr Sands:** Absolutely, it was Turkington's all the way.
720. **Mr Wilson:** What significance would you have attached, however, to the fact that Turkington's was a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation? You mentioned it in your response.
721. **Mr Sands:** I went back to the original letter, dated 2 February, in which they stated that they were active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
722. **Mr Wilson:** I take it that, without that reference, the significance of anything that they would have said at a meeting would not have been regarded as being as significant as talking to people who were actually members of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
723. **Mr Sands:** No, it would have been regarded as the comments of a supplier almost — a manufacturer — and not national standards, which, in fact, is what the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were.
724. **Mr Wilson:** But, the fact that they mentioned in their letter that they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation and that they mentioned, during the meeting, that the federation standards would have been complied with and money would still have been saved would have been quite significant in any aspect of this meeting.
725. **Mr Sands:** That is correct.
726. **The Chairperson:** Before I bring Jim in, Michael, I want to address this important issue. Were you not surprised to receive that request to change the characterisation of the meeting? It also included Fusion21. In the previous evidence session, Fusion21 did not enter. It is not mentioned in any of the correspondence from Turkington's, for example, requesting the meeting. Were you not surprised that you were asked through the private office by the Minister, as you stated, to change your draft to include the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21? Would you not have sought to correct that?
727. **Mr Sands:** You are absolutely right, Chair: it was a draft that I prepared. My role as a civil servant is to advise the Minister and to draft submissions, letters etc for him. At the end of the day, it is his responsibility to accept my draft or change it in a particular way. In this instance, he asked for it to be changed to the Glass and Glazing Federation. Because the reference had been made in the original letter, I did not have a great deal of difficulty with that.
728. **The Chairperson:** Fusion21 was not addressed in the earlier letter and it was not at the meeting, so did you not feel

- that you needed to correct that as it was factually incorrect?
729. **Mr Sands:** I knew that he had a meeting with Fusion21. I was not involved with that meeting, so what his reference was to —
730. **The Chairperson:** Your draft letter was in response to the meeting of 16 April, not any other meeting. I am trying to clarify that for the record.
731. **Mr Sands:** That is why I referred to it as Turkington's, purely Turkington's.
732. **The Chairperson:** I appreciate that. You have stated that you were asked through the private office, and your understanding is that the Minister subsequently got another draft or a new version of the letter that included not only the Glass and Glazing Federation but Fusion21, which had at no time been mentioned prior to that.
733. **Mr Sands:** That is correct.
734. **The Chairperson:** OK. That is fair enough.
735. **Mr Allister:** Would you read us the e-mail from Fiona Lundy?
736. **The Chairperson:** We will have a copy of that for all members.
737. **Mr Sands:**
"The Minister has seen and read your submission of 18/05/2012 and has requested that the letter to Alex Maskey be amended. See attached letter with amendments. Para 3 - remove Turkington Holdings Ltd and replace with 'Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation'. Also, Fusion 21".
738. **Mr Allister:** So, that was an express instruction from the Minister.
739. **Mr Sands:** Through the private office.
740. **Mr Allister:** You knew, from being present at the meeting, that that was importing an inaccuracy into the letter.
741. **Mr Sands:** I go back to the actual letter, which states that Turkington's was an active member of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
742. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but that was not what the letter was now going to say.
743. **Mr Sands:** As I said, I prepare drafts in relation to providing information to the Minister. If he decides to change them, it is his responsibility.
744. **Mr Allister:** So, there are no circumstances in which you would say, "Minister, you must've confused something. That is inaccurate. Fusion21, for example, has nothing to do with this". You would just let him make an error, if it was an error.
745. **Mr Sands:** Fusion21, as I said, I was not involved in at all. He asked that that be put in.
746. **Mr Allister:** Would you let him make a mistake if it was a mistake?
747. **Mr Sands:** I knew that he had met Fusion21, so it was not a mistake.
748. **Mr Allister:** Would you let him change a letter to make it inaccurate about the meeting that you were at and pass no comment?
749. **Mr Sands:** If I thought that it was inaccurate, I would go back to him, but, in that instance, they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
750. **Mr Allister:** That is not what the letter said. The letter said that he met representatives of —
751. **Mr Sands:** His terminology. If he wishes to refer to them as representatives rather than members, I —
752. **Mr Allister:** I think that you started your evidence by telling us that you were quite clear that you had been at no meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
753. **Mr Sands:** It was with Turkington's.
754. **Mr Allister:** Yes. So, the Minister took it upon himself to expressly change that to give a quite different impression in respect of a meeting that you were at — namely, a meeting with Turkington's — to imply that it was a meeting with a representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation and another body, Fusion21.

755. **Mr Sands:** As Turkington's have described, there was no gain or advantage to be gained from Turkington's as far as that meeting was concerned. As far as I —
756. **Mr Allister:** Sorry, what does that have to do with the question I asked you?
757. **Mr Sands:** — was concerned, to refer to them as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation or members of the Glass and Glazing Federation did not mean a great deal to me because the original letter referred to them as active members.
758. **Mr Allister:** What has it to do with answering my question to tell us whether there was a gain for Turkington's?
759. **Mr Sands:** Turkington's referred to it earlier. I thought that I would repeat that.
760. **Mr Allister:** Mr Sands, I am simply asking you how it came about. OK, he is the Minister and you are but the civil servant, but he changes a letter that you had accurately drafted to give an inaccurate representation, and you simply acquiesce in that.
761. **Mr Sands:** Yes I did.
762. **Mr Allister:** What about the minutes? Who took the minutes at the meeting?
763. **Mr Sands:** Reference has been made several times to these minutes. The minutes, in my understanding of a meeting, would be circulated to those present so that, in fact, there was an accurate record kept of that meeting. To be quite honest, I am not sure by whom this note or aide-memoire, however it might be referred to, was taken.
764. **Mr Allister:** Well, it is headed. Should we not regard it as a minute, then?
765. **Mr Sands:** I do not think so. I think that it is an aide-memoire. As I say, a minute would be circulated to members of the actual group.
766. **Mr Allister:** Who wrote it?
767. **Mr Sands:** Sorry.
768. **Mr Allister:** Did you write it?
769. **Mr Sands:** No, I did not.
770. **Mr Allister:** Do you know who wrote it?
771. **Mr Sands:** No.
772. **Mr Allister:** By a process of elimination, have you a view on who wrote it?
773. **Mr Sands:** I would suggest that it may have been a member of the private office.
774. **Mr Allister:** Is that a lady named Barbara McConaghie?
775. **Mr Sands:** Possibly. I do not know.
776. **Mr Allister:** You have never checked that.
777. **Mr Sands:** No.
778. **Mr Allister:** You could check that.
779. **Mr Sands:** I would have to go back and do some research.
780. **Mr Allister:** So, when the Minister has an official meeting with someone, is there not an official minute kept?
781. **Mr Sands:** Not necessarily. It depends entirely on what the meeting is about. In this instance, there was no official note-taker.
782. **Mr Allister:** Someone obviously wrote down something. Did you see people writing at the meeting?
783. **Mr Sands:** Several people were writing various things, Mr Allister.
784. **Mr Allister:** Did you see Barbara McConaghie taking notes?
785. **Mr Sands:** From what I remember, she was sitting over to my right-hand side. She could have been.
786. **Mr Allister:** "She could have been": that is as far as you can put it.
787. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
788. **Mr Allister:** When, then, did you first see, if we can call it a minute, this minute?

789. **Mr Sands:** When it was requested under freedom of information at the end of August, I believe.
790. **Mr Allister:** The end of August. So, do you know when it was written up?
791. **Mr Sands:** No. Again, there is no date on it.
792. **Mr Allister:** No, indeed. As for the content, when you read it, what did you think?
793. **Mr Sands:** The content referred to the discussion that took place at the meeting, which was around the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines.
794. **Mr Allister:** I am sorry, let us start with the very heading: "Meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation — 16 April". Jim McKeag and Ian Young were listed as the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. You knew straight off that those were inaccuracies.
795. **Mr Sands:** They were from Turkington's, Turkington Holdings.
796. **Mr Allister:** Sorry, it says:
"Meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation".
797. Jim McKeag was listed as a representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Ian Young the same.
798. **Mr Sands:** As I said, I did not see these until August when they were released under a freedom of information request. They were not circulated after the meeting.
799. **Mr Allister:** So they were not circulated. This minute — forgive me if I call it wrong — talks about hinges on a number of occasions. Do you recall hinges being discussed at the meeting?
800. **Mr Sands:** I do.
801. **Mr Allister:** Who raised the issue of hinges?
802. **Mr Sands:** I believe that it was Dr McPeake.
803. **Mr Allister:** Dr McPeake. Was there much discussion about that?
804. **Mr Sands:** As far as I can remember, there was discussion around the different types of hinge. I am not a technical person in any particular way, but there was a reference to casement hinges or hotel-type hinges.
805. **Mr Allister:** Was there any participation by Turkington's in that that you recall?
806. **Mr Sands:** Not that I recall.
807. **Mr Allister:** How long did the meeting last?
808. **Mr Sands:** Thirty or 45 minutes. Normally, the Minister would schedule meetings for 30 minutes.
809. **Mr Allister:** So you are thinking that it was 30 minutes.
810. **Mr Sands:** Thirty minutes or slightly more than that.
811. **Mr Allister:** Let us move on to the follow-up, then. Fill in the blanks between the meeting and the drafting of the letter that was then changed by the Minister.
812. **Mr Sands:** I thought that I had already described that to the Chairman. I drafted the letter, which was sent to the Minister for his issue. The minute, which I have referred to and read out, came down from the private office. I changed that to reflect the Minister's wishes, and it went back up to the private office for issue.
813. **Mr Allister:** So, in the intervening month or thereabouts, what had been going on?
814. **Mr Sands:** Sorry, you need to be more specific.
815. **Mr Allister:** I think that the meeting was on 16 April and the letter that you were drafting was around 18 May.
816. **Mr Sands:** It was in response to a request from the Chairman of this Committee for information.

817. **Mr Allister:** So, you had had no involvement with the issue in the meantime.
818. **Mr Sands:** Well, nothing further had really happened at that stage. Dr McPeake will explain to you that they were already looking at specification. They probably were, but I was not involved.
819. **Mr Allister:** Had you had further contact from the Department's housing unit with the Housing Executive?
820. **Mr Sands:** The Department's housing advisory unit responded to me in relation to my request for it to look at the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. It responded to me and confirmed that, in fact, there was scope for substantial savings.
821. **Mr Allister:** I want to go back to the minute. Was the minute shared with the Housing Executive?
822. **Mr Sands:** I cannot answer that, because, as I said, I was not even aware of it until the freedom of information request came in at the end of August. There is no circulation list on it; it is not signed by anybody; and it is not dated.
823. **Mr Allister:** Is that unusual?
824. **Mr Sands:** It is, yes.
825. **Mr Allister:** Dating it would tell us when it was written. Thank you.
826. **Mr Brady:** Without labouring the point, I will follow on from what Mr Allister was asking. You were at the meeting. Had you not been at the meeting, presumably you might have asked for more information. Essentially, you are saying that you acquiesced to the request to change the draft, but you knew that Fusion21 was not at the meeting.
827. **Mr Sands:** The reference is to "and Fusion 21", so the meeting with Fusion21 was after the meeting with Turkington's.
828. **Mr Brady:** That is not clear from the letter that was sent to the Committee.
- It implies that Fusion21 was at the meeting.
829. You talked about an aide-memoire. Maybe minutes are not always kept of meetings with the Minister, yet we have had meetings with the Minister most recently that you were at and there was somebody there taking what I might describe as copious notes. It seems as though a fairly accurate record is kept for the Minister's purposes and certainly for the Minister's office of any meeting with him. That includes the length or whatever. That has been the case with all the meetings that I have been to with the Minister. Somebody has been there who writes a lot. So, if you had felt that there was an inaccuracy, would you have questioned that, or did you acquiesce and say that that was what the Minister wanted, even if it was inaccurate?
830. **Mr Sands:** If a proper note of a meeting had been circulated for comment, I would have seen it. That is the opportunity to make any changes to a properly recorded minute of a meeting, but we were not given that opportunity.
831. **Mr Brady:** You did not see the aide-memoire or what might be considered as minutes for this meeting.
832. **Mr Sands:** Not until some time around the end of August.
833. **Mr Brady:** But you were prepared to change the letter at the request of the Minister without necessarily knowing whether it was accurate.
834. **Mr Sands:** As I said, I supply a draft to him. It is up to him to agree what he finally wishes to issue.
835. **Mr Brady:** It is almost a 'Yes, Minister' kind of situation. I am not being facetious when I say that.
836. **Mr Sands:** No, if the Minister requests that, I have to acquiesce to what he wants —
837. **Mr Brady:** I do make the point. I was not being facetious.
838. **Mr Sands:** I understand.

839. **Mr Brady:** It just sounds like that kind of situation. Thank you.
840. **Mr F McCann:** I find it strange that a Minister would go to a meeting with anyone — a meeting as important as the one with Turkington's — of which a minute was not kept. Mickey is right: at a recent meeting, there seemed to be an extensive minute being taken. I take it that, after every meeting, the minutes are typed up and put about for people to look at and a copy is filed. What happened in this case?
841. **Mr Sands:** That would not be the case all the time, Mr McCann. It is the responsibility of the private office if it is going to record a note or whatever of a particular meeting. In this case, it did not happen.
842. **Mr F McCann:** You were at the meeting. I think that you said that you believed that there was somebody taking notes at the meeting. So, you would think that, just for the point of accuracy of what happened at the meeting, they would be typed up afterwards and people who were present at the meeting would be given copies of what had been said. You would also file a copy of the notes taken so that, should occasions such as this occur, you have something to refer to.
843. **Mr Sands:** I would have expected so, yes, but that did not happen.
844. **Mr Campbell:** I want to establish the context of how the meeting came about and how it was described. The Chairman in his introduction, others when asking questions and, indeed, the witnesses that we had from Turkington's previously were very clear that the meeting was sought by them as Turkington. They were absolutely clear on that, but we are now talking in a post-'Spotlight' programme context, during the inquiry and the subsequent media intensity around the whole issue. I want to take you back 18 months. I am always suspicious of people who expect there to be a clear, laser-like memory. I can hardly remember what I did last week, never mind 18 months ago. However, going back 18 months, I presume that it was a meeting in the midst of a number of meetings on a range of issues. Is that correct?
845. **Mr Sands:** Yes. I could be with the Minister two or three times a day on different issues.
846. **Mr Campbell:** OK. I will try to get the Glass and Glazing Federation issue dealt with. I was a Minister twice, and I have been an MP for 12 years and an MLA for 15 years. I cannot recall people ever coming to see me, saying what they were coming to see me as, but then being very explicit about who they were not coming to see me as. Did that happen on this occasion, to your knowledge?
847. **Mr Sands:** No. They introduced themselves as coming from Turkington.
848. **Mr Campbell:** I do not want to lead the questioning here, but was it "We are here from Turkington's and want to make it absolutely clear, in case there is any doubt, that we are not here from the Glass and Glazing Federation"?
849. **Mr Sands:** No, they did not say that.
850. **Mr Campbell:** You have never had anybody come to you and say that, so we are clear about that. Therefore, when people talk about explicitly ruling out the Glass and Glazing Federation, can we assume that they mean that they requested a meeting as Turkington, full stop?
851. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
852. **Mr Campbell:** OK, that is good. I am glad to hear that. We heard from the Turkington witnesses that, when the meeting was being set up through a special adviser, whom Mr Turkington had got to know through the Minister's previous participation in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), they mentioned at that stage that they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. In fact, they wore it as a badge of honour, as you would if you were a member. As the Chairman said, it does not automatically make you a bad person if you are a member of the

- Glass and Glazing Federation. It seems to have been mentioned then. It was mentioned in a letter. I can understand why somebody who wears membership as a badge of honour would indicate that both in the preliminary meeting and at the meeting, but do you have an explanation as to why the change was sought? Is it your view that there was a misunderstanding?
853. **Mr Sands:** I am afraid, with all due respect, that only the Minister can answer that question.
854. **Mr Campbell:** OK. However, you are clear that Turkington representatives came as representatives of Turkington's but were wearing that — as I described it — badge of honour as members of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
855. **Mr Sands:** Absolutely, because all that we discussed at the meeting were the glass and glazing guidelines.
856. **Mr Campbell:** Were those mentioned throughout the meeting, or just periodically?
857. **Mr Sands:** They were mentioned throughout the meeting. There was a description of how the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines differed from the method at the time of Housing Executive installation requirements.
858. **Mr Copeland:** Thanks, Michael. This must be difficult in some respects. You were aware when you were at the meeting that you were speaking to representatives of a company that did not have a contractual connection with the Housing Executive but had a subcontractor connection with someone who did.
859. **Mr Sands:** I was not even aware of that at that time.
860. **Mr Copeland:** Were you aware at that stage that the Housing Executive had apparently been merrily breaching health and safety regulations by utilising the method that it had been?
861. **Mr Sands:** No. I would not have been aware of the actual installation requirements of the Housing Executive.
- That is purely an operational matter for it.
862. **Mr Copeland:** Did you, at any time throughout the time frame that we are looking at, have any communications at all with the Minister's special adviser, and would you, in the normal course of your work, have contact with the Minister's special adviser?
863. **Mr Sands:** Daily.
864. **Mr Copeland:** Did you ever discuss with the special adviser the possible difficulties that the Minister might get into because of the change between your initial draft, which I think was accurate, and his final letter that was sent out?
865. **Mr Sands:** No.
866. **Mr Copeland:** It was never mentioned.
867. **Mr Sands:** No.
868. **The Chairperson:** I will be clear with you, Michael. You are satisfied, from what you have said so far, that the meeting referred to was with Turkington.
869. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
870. **The Chairperson:** And that, although the representatives from Turkington's would have understandably referred to themselves as members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, at no time did they claim to be representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
871. **Mr Sands:** No. I go back to the original letter, which described them as "active members".
872. **The Chairperson:** At no time, from your understanding of the meeting, was Fusion21 at the meeting.
873. **Mr Sands:** No, absolutely not.
874. **The Chairperson:** The draft letter that has been presented in evidence, which was written by you, referred to Turkington's as being at the meeting, and you were requested by the Minister, through his private office, to amend it to refer to the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21.

875. **Mr Sands:** My letter states:
- “My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21”.*
876. That does not tie it down to a specific date.
877. **The Chairperson:** That was about a “meeting”. I will put this to you Michael: are you satisfied that the meeting that you attended on 16 April was asked for by Turkington’s and was attended by Turkington’s representing Turkington’s?
878. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
879. **The Chairperson:** And it did not represent anybody else.
880. **Mr Sands:** No.
881. **The Chairperson:** And there was nobody else in that meeting. Fusion21 was not there.
882. **Mr Sands:** Apart from the Housing Executive. There were no other companies there.
883. **The Chairperson:** You are very clear in your evidence thus far that your draft of the letter accurately reflected that and that you were requested via the private office by an e-mail from a named individual, on the direction of the Minister, to amend it, which you then did.
884. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
885. **The Chairperson:** But that is not an accurate reflection of the meeting, because Fusion21 was not at it.
886. **Mr Sands:** It was not. The letter does not state a specific date. It states that I had meetings with Fusion21, which is correct.
887. **Mr Clarke:** Although it seems that the Chair is trying to tie you down to a specific point, is it fair to say that you could broaden that also? I do not think that anyone is not acknowledging the fact that everyone is aware that they were from Turkington. Even this minute or aide-memoire — whatever you want to call it — refers to Turkington’s as well as the Glass and Glazing Federation. Given the evidence that you have just given, do you accept that they represented the view of the Glass and Glazing Federation when they were at that, on the basis of the reference to the industry standards?
888. **Mr Sands:** They referenced and represented the guidelines of the Glass and Glazing Federation, yes.
889. **Mr Wilson:** The fact that they talked about the federation guidelines and about being members would have been as significant as any part of the meeting, especially in discussing the kinds of issues that you were discussing.
890. **Mr Sands:** Yes, the significance is around the evidence that they were bringing to the Minister and to that meeting that there were savings to be made if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed.
891. **Mr Wilson:** I want to put some balance to the questions that Jim asked, because he seemed to ignore it. He referred to the minute that you did not approve or were not asked to approve about the two people being representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Can you confirm, as the minute confirms almost immediately, that, when they were introduced to you, they were introduced as people from Turkington.
892. **Mr Sands:** Yes. That was the first time that I had met them. I did not know who they were.
893. **Mr Wilson:** There was no attempt to hide from officials who the people were.
894. **Mr Sands:** No, not at all.
895. **Mr Clarke:** Michael, if all of this were to happen again, would you give more or less weight to a double-glazing firm, which is just a double-glazing firm, or to a double-glazing firm that is a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation?

896. **Mr Sands:** I would give much greater weight to the member of the glazing firm that is also a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation, because it was the guidelines that we were discussing, not the role of Turkington.
897. **Mr Clarke:** Fair enough.
898. **Mr Copeland:** I have another small point, Michael. We have confirmed your understanding of the Fusion21 meeting. In the context, I presume that it was associated with the matters that were under discussion at the meeting at which Turkington's was represented. Have you any knowledge of what was discussed with Fusion21 [*Inaudible.*] several others? I presume that they may well have been Northern Ireland-based companies. Fusion21 appears to be in Merseyside.
899. **Mr Sands:** I believe that you have been supplied with information on those meetings.
900. **Mr Copeland:** Were similar issues discussed, broadly speaking?
901. **Mr Sands:** No, I think that Fusion21 was pushing procurement issues.
902. **Mr Copeland:** What would have been the relevance of including Fusion21 to the exclusion of the, presumably, Northern Ireland-based companies?
903. **Mr Sands:** As I said, Mr Copeland, I was not at the meeting, I was not involved in it and I have no opinion on it.
904. **Mr Brady:** I have a general question, Michael. You said that you go to many meetings — sometimes two or three a day — with the Minister and special adviser. In the normal course of events and under normal circumstances, do you expect minutes or an aide-memoire, whatever terminology is used, to reflect accurately what happened in meetings and who was present?
905. **Mr Sands:** Absolutely, because if a proper note is taken, in normal circumstances, it is circulated to those who were present so that they have an opportunity to comment on or correct anything in it.
906. **Mr Brady:** Would you expect an aide-memoire to be accurate as well?
907. **Mr Sands:** You would expect it to be, yes.
908. **Mr F McCann:** I do not know if I picked you up properly, Michael, but you said that you would give more credence to somebody who refers to the Glass and Glazing Federation than you would somebody who has 25 or 30 years' experience in the same thing. Would you not have to treat them on their respective merits?
909. **Mr Sands:** Yes, but an independent company coming in could be selling the role of that particular company to their advantage, but this company, as an active member of the Glass and Glazing Federation, was bringing in those guidelines that I had never heard of before.
910. **Mr F McCann:** Is everybody who installs windows, a subcontractor as well as a main contractor, a member of the federation? Even if not, people have to meet certain standards before they are accepted for tenders.
911. **Mr Sands:** I am sorry, but that is one for —
912. **Mr F McCann:** You mentioned that they would give more credit to somebody who says that he comes from —
913. **Mr Sands:** A professional organisation, yes.
914. **Mr F McCann:** That is interesting.
915. **The Chairperson:** Michael, you have said a couple of times that you did not suggest that the meeting that was referred to and included Fusion21, for example, was one meeting. I have to put it to you that it does say that in the next paragraph. It states:
"As a result of this meeting".
916. It seems to me that that is a very clear contradiction of what you have told the Committee.

917. **Mr Sands:** I had not noticed that, Chairman. I suggest that you are right and that that would contradict it.
918. **The Chairperson:** You are accepting that this letter, which you drafted and subsequently amended at the request of the Minister, reflects one meeting.
919. **Mr Sands:** I drafted it as one meeting with Turkington. It was subsequently changed at the request of the Minister to include that, and I inserted his request.
920. **The Chairperson:** However, two minutes ago, you gave evidence to say that it did not reflect that it was one meeting.
921. **Mr Sands:** I am sorry. I missed the first line of that.
922. **The Chairperson:** Do you not think that that is a very important omission? It is clearly one meeting. You drafted the letter, you amended the letter, and the letter clearly states:
“As a result of this meeting”.
923. That is a very important part of this discussion this afternoon.
924. **Mr Sands:** You are right.
925. **The Chairperson:** This goes to the heart of the specific question that we are dealing with today. Did that letter represent the meeting, or did it mislead the Committee?
926. **Mr Sands:** I can only state what I actually prepared. I prepared that draft on the basis of one meeting with Turkington’s, which is why it says “at this meeting”. It was subsequently changed at the request of the Minister to take out the reference to “Turkington Holdings Ltd” and to put in:
“representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21”.
927. **The Chairperson:** Do you now accept that the letter, which was sent to me on behalf of the Committee — that makes it all the more important — referred to a meeting that, as characterised in that letter, did not represent the meeting that you attended?
928. **Mr Sands:** It would have done. Yes.
929. **Mr Wilson:** Michael, do you accept that the use of:
“As a result of this meeting”
— means that the previous paragraph is divorced from that paragraph? The previous paragraph talks about not just Turkington’s and Fusion21 but a number of other firms. It is clear that a number of meetings are referred to in the previous paragraph, and the next paragraph does not suggest whether that meeting is with some of the other local firms, the Glass and Glazing Federation, Fusion21, all of them together or all of them separately. The Chairman is probably straining issues a little if he tries to lift paragraph 3 of that letter and say that what is contained in that paragraph refers to one meeting.
930. **Mr Allister:** With respect, the member could not be further from the accuracy of it. The previous paragraph refers to the Minister’s officials and himself having had:
“informal approaches and letters from a number of firms” —
not meetings; letters and informal approaches — and,
“along with the chief executive of the Housing Executive, I met with Turkington Holdings and Fusion21 to discuss double glazing ... As a result of this meeting”.
931. It really is; it flows.
932. **Mr Wilson:** No —
933. **Mr Allister:** There only was one meeting.
934. **The Chairperson:** One at a time and through the Chair.
935. **Mr Wilson:** With due respect, there is reference to:
“representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21”.
936. There is no indication that those were meetings of two people together. It could be interpreted as two people separately —

937. **Mr Allister:** Until you come to the next paragraph.
938. **Mr Wilson:** — or two people together. The request from the Chairman talked about the meeting with Turkington's: that is where the meeting — singular— comes in. You need to go back to the Chairman's original letter to see why a particular meeting was referred to. It is only then that you get the proper context for it.
939. **The Chairperson:** I want to take one member at a time. That was my reading of it, and I think that the people around the room have enough intelligence to understand grammar.
940. **Mr Wilson:** Let us read it in context with the letter that you wrote to the Minister. That may give us a totally different interpretation of the —
941. **The Chairperson:** What is very important is that the letter was addressed to the Committee, through me. That is the status of the letter. There is no other. That is an important point.
942. **Mr Wilson:** Michael, for the record and so that we always keep this in the right context, as a result of whatever "this meeting" referred to, whether it was a meeting of all the firms in Northern Ireland, Turkington's, representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation, Fusion21 and Santa Claus, there were £15.1 million of savings.
943. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
944. **The Chairperson:** To satisfy the Committee — this is an important evidence-gathering session — Michael, are you satisfied that that is not an accurate reflection of the meeting of 16 April? Do you accept that?
945. **Mr Sands:** As I said, I should have changed that second paragraph to read:
"as a result of the meeting on 16 April with Turkington".
946. **The Chairperson:** And you have no explanation of why, on reflection, you did not point that out to the Minister. You did the draft. Was that draft changed? If you did the draft, was that in your draft?
947. **Mr Sands:** Yes. The draft was changed.
948. **The Chairperson:** You wrote the letter as pertaining to a meeting, and the original draft referred to Turkington's in that meeting. You were subsequently asked to change that. Is that what you are telling the Committee?
949. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
950. **The Chairperson:** Do you accept that?
951. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
952. **Mr Clarke:** On that point, Michael, during the time that you have worked with Ministers, have they ever asked you to change drafts on any other occasions?
953. **Mr Sands:** Oh, yes. They are only drafts that I submit. At the end of the day, it is up to them to change them in whatever way they wish.
954. **Mr Clarke:** So that is not unusual.
955. **Mr Sands:** No, not at all.
956. **The Chairperson:** But they need to be accurate.
957. **Mr Clarke:** Chairman, you are putting words back into the mouth of the person who is giving evidence again.
958. **The Chairperson:** That is the purpose of the inquiry.
959. **Mr Wilson:** I want to put one last point to Michael. We will look at the letter in the context of the letter that the Chairman sent to the Minister. However, there is another way in which this could have happened. Quite frequently, when you change a draft in one paragraph, it has implications further down that are not always picked up. Your original letter referred to the meeting with Turkington's, and the next paragraph talks about a meeting. The Minister might, at a later stage, have said, "I want to change that. I did not just have a meeting with Turkington's; I also had a meeting with Fusion21. So, I stuck Fusion in but did not then pick up that, in the next paragraph of your original draft, you

- had only referred to the Turkington's meeting". That is possible as well.
960. **Mr Sands:** It is possible that that is what happened.
961. **The Chairperson:** In fairness, I do not think that Michael or anyone else can second-guess why somebody else made a change.
962. **Mr Sands:** As I said, you need to address that to the Minister.
963. **The Chairperson:** You gave a response on that earlier.
964. **Mr Allister:** On that point, you do the draft and send it to the Minister, and the Minister sends it back. Presumably, it is sent back to you because you were the original drafter and a cautious senior civil servant. You read the redraft, and you sign it off. Is that right?
965. **Mr Sands:** That would normally be the case, yes.
966. **Mr Allister:** So you would have read it, word for word, as redrafted by the Minister.
967. **Mr Sands:** All that he changed was one particular reference —
968. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but, if that changed the meaning of a subsequent paragraph —
969. **Mr Sands:** I missed that.
970. **Mr Allister:** — you would have been very alert to that.
971. **Mr Sands:** I should have been.
972. **Mr Allister:** Did you conclude that the Minister wanted to say that "this meeting", which he brings the letter to in a fourth paragraph, was, in fact, with the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21? You could not have missed the import of "this meeting".
973. **Mr Sands:** I did. I am sorry.
974. **Mr Allister:** You did. Was it not that you knew perfectly what the Minister was changing and thought, "He is the Minister. Let him do it"?
975. **Mr Sands:** As you said, I missed the import of the following paragraph. I had drafted it as "Turkington Holdings" for one meeting.
976. **Mr Allister:** Did you read it when it came back to you?
977. **Mr Sands:** I cannot remember whether I did or not. I had drafted it, but all that was changed was the name of a company. Nothing else was changed.
978. **Mr Allister:** No. It inserted a new body — Fusion21 — that had never been heard of before in this conversation. That was a totally new import. That must have made you sit up and see, yet you simply rubber-stamped it.
979. **Mr Sands:** The third paragraph of the letter referred more generally to what was going on, and it was only the third line before the end of that paragraph that referred to Turkington's. I knew that the meeting had taken place with Fusion21, but I should have changed the first four words of the next paragraph. I missed that.
980. **Mr Allister:** The Minister is, equally, an intelligent man, who would have known the import of talking about "this meeting". Is that right?
981. **Mr Sands:** That is up to the Minister to answer, not me.
982. **Mr Allister:** Given your work with the Minister, would you not be surprised if he missed that detail?
983. **Mr Sands:** That is really for the Minister to answer. All I did was change the draft that I had prepared, which referred to one meeting.
984. **Mr Allister:** Did you think that the letter to a Statutory Committee of the Assembly on a specific issue was important? Should every word not have been measured to make sure that it was right?
985. **Mr Sands:** It should.
986. **Mr Copeland:** Mr Wilson contended that £15.1 million had been saved, and you acquiesced. Is that £15.1 million that has been saved so far, or —

987. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Michael. That is not part of the substance of the inquiry.
988. **Mr Wilson:** I have seen letters go out, and sometimes gaffes in them are caught and sometimes they are not. The idea that, somehow or other, everything that leaves a Minister's office is 100% word perfect and, if it is not, you attach some sinister reason to that is a bit naive, quite frankly. Michael, you received a specific request from the Minister's office to change one particular sentence in a letter.
989. **Mr Sands:** Not even a sentence, just the reference to "Turkington Holdings".
990. **Mr Wilson:** It is quite possible that, having had such a specific request to change that reference, it was changed, somebody looked at it and they were perfectly satisfied with it. The fact that there are implications further on in the letter could easily be overlooked. Is that not the case?
991. **Mr Sands:** It is. Yes.
992. **The Chairperson:** Before I move on to other colleagues, are you saying, Michael, that, notwithstanding all the public attention and Assembly debate in the Chamber and at Committee level, it is only this afternoon that you accept, on reading that letter, which you drafted, that it is an inaccurate reflection of the meeting? I put it to you that that is a glaring omission from a senior official.
993. **Mr Sands:** I missed that reference. With the change that was effected in changing "Turkington Holdings" to refer to two other companies, I missed the reference in the next paragraph:
"As a result of this meeting".
994. **The Chairperson:** Do you accept that, when you read that letter now, it tells me that the meeting, which is in the previous paragraph —
995. **Mr Sands:** Yes.
996. **The Chairperson:** Do you accept that that does not reflect the meeting?
997. **Mr Sands:** It does not reflect the meeting because Fusion21 was not at that meeting.
998. **The Chairperson:** If members are happy enough, we will move on to John and Declan.
999. In your submission, John, I think you state that, around the end of 2011, you contacted the Glass and Glazing Federation in London to seek a meeting to discuss how you might construct a procurement process around the double glazing issue. You were advised that there was no representative of the federation in Northern Ireland. That is in the submission.
1000. **Dr John McPeake (Northern Ireland Housing Executive):** Our head of procurement made that contact.
1001. **The Chairperson:** So you were aware at the end of 2011 that there were no representatives of the federation here. Is that right? The minutes that were provided of the meeting of 16 April refer to "representatives" of the industry.
1002. **Mr Declan Allen (Northern Ireland Housing Executive):** Chairman, can I correct that? I contacted the Glass and Glazing Federation in London with the specific purpose of trying to find somebody in Northern Ireland to have a conversation about our forthcoming double glazing procurement. It did not provide me with any details of any members. That is not to say that there were not any members —
1003. **The Chairperson:** I am not talking about members; I am talking about representatives.
1004. **Mr Allen:** — of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1005. **The Chairperson:** I am talking about representatives, not members.
1006. **Mr Allen:** Sorry.
1007. **The Chairperson:** You were advised that there were no representatives. When the minutes of the meeting of 16 April were circulated, which refer to "representatives" of the Glass and

- Glazing Federation, did that not lead you to say, "Oops. That is not correct"?
1008. **Dr McPeake:** I saw that note only after we were summoned to appear before the Committee. The Department circulated its briefing materials, and that was included in them. I saw that note of the meeting just in the past couple of weeks.
1009. **The Chairperson:** Recently.
1010. **Dr McPeake:** Yes. We were not consulted about that, and we did not see it.
1011. **The Chairperson:** So you were at the meeting of 16 April and did not have any account of it afterwards. Were there no minutes reflecting the meeting?
1012. **Dr McPeake:** No minutes were taken, as far as I am aware. My colleague Mr Allen made a personal note of some issues, but we did not see the particular document that you referred to until recently.
1013. **Mr Allister:** Chairman, should we not have the witnesses read their submission into the record? We have not heard Dr McPeake and Mr Allen's evidence.
1014. **The Chairperson:** I was just going to ask them to do that, but I wanted to make that first point for clarification.
1015. **Dr McPeake:** The Committee asked three very specific questions and then requested additional supplementary information. I will make a brief comment on each and let the written record stand as well.
1016. The first issue was the organisations that attended that meeting. On 16 April 2012, together with Declan Allen, my head of procurement, and a management trainee who was shadowing me for that week, I attended a meeting that the Minister hosted at his offices in Parliament Buildings. My diary entry for that meeting reads:
- "Meeting with Minister McCausland and Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Turkington Holdings, to discuss double glazing in NIHE houses".*
1017. To be totally accurate, the word "double" is spelled incorrectly in my diary entry.
1018. The Housing Executive was initially advised of that meeting via e-mail to our general information department on 28 February 2012, and we were advised that the Minister had agreed to meet Ian Young of Turkington Holdings. We were advised that the Minister's special political adviser had suggested that I be invited to attend that meeting. So, that e-mail was, in effect, an advance warning of a meeting that was yet to be scheduled. Subsequently, my personal assistant received a telephone call, which she believes was from the private office, and the detail of the diary entry was how it was described to her when that telephone call was made. I requested that Declan Allen, my head of procurement, accompany me to the meeting because of his earlier involvement in meetings with industry representatives about the ongoing work that we were doing on the double glazing specification.
1019. The Committee asked a second question about our understanding of the purpose of the meeting. All that I can say is that we were not advised of any specific purpose beyond discussing the double glazing of Housing Executive houses. We were not asked to provide a briefing in advance, which, occasionally, we are, and we did not receive any specific request for preparation from the Department or the Minister's office. At the time, Turkington Holdings was a subcontractor working on Housing Executive contracts on behalf of Mascott. We were aware that it had some ideas about how double glazing could be fitted more economically, and, as the Committee commented, there had been a meeting at our headquarters with our policy and standards side on 13 March 2012. I just checked my notes on that, and they show that the Turkington's representative was an individual called Cary Hyndman. I am advised by David Adamson, who was at that meeting, that the revised or different approach to fitting was among the things that were discussed. Equally, in going to the

- meeting, we were acutely aware of the wider Programme for Government target to double-glaze all housing Executive stock by the end of the CSR period, and we were actively working on producing a dedicated double glazing framework contract to do that.
1020. The third question that you asked me to comment on concerned our role in attending the meeting. In broad terms, we understood that our role would be to listen to the contractors' suggestions and to take part in any discussions that arose. Representatives from Turkington Holdings commented on the then current approach of the Housing Executive's contractors to fit windows, and they compared that with the alternative approach that they used based on the Glass and Glazing Federation standards. They were very aware of our approach, because they were working as a subcontractor at the time. The major difference between the two was the reduced requirement to remove and chip off the plaster in the window reveal, the result of which would be that you would need to pay a redecoration grant in far fewer cases.
1021. During the meeting, which lasted, I think, about 40 minutes, I explained that the Housing Executive was currently reviewing a number of aspects of our specification, including the types of windows, the frames, the glazing and the hinges. I explained in broad terms to all present what we were doing. I also commented that my technical staff were aware of the Glass and Glazing Federation's approach and that we were considering its potential. The matter had previously been drawn to our attention. My understanding of the situation is that Turkington Holdings raised nothing at that meeting that the Housing Executive was not already aware of or working on.
1022. I will not go through the detailed commentary on the timeline, which I have provided under the heading "other business", but I thought that it was important to say briefly, as additional background, that we have reviewed the specification for double glazing on a number of occasions. There was a fundamental review in 2006 and another in 2010.
1023. When we came to the meeting on 16 April, we were in the midst of another significant review. In particular, given the scale of the double glazing work that we were going to embark on, I had asked that we satisfied ourselves that we had future-proofed that specification as far as reasonably possible. A deal of work was being done at that time, particularly because of our concerns about the volumes and the opportunity that that procurement would bring.
1024. That is all that I propose to say as introductory comments. I am happy to take any questions that you may have.
1025. **Mr Copeland:** Thank you, John; you are very welcome. John, will you read the diary entry for me again, with or without the spelling mistake?
1026. **Dr McPeake:** I have fixed the spelling mistake in my text. It says:
- "Meeting with Minister McCausland and Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Turkington Holdings, to discuss double glazing in NIHE houses."*
1027. **Mr Copeland:** At that time, were you aware that there was a difficulty with health and safety with the then method?
1028. **Dr McPeake:** No, I personally was not aware of that.
1029. **Mr Copeland:** Was it known in the organisation?
1030. **Dr McPeake:** I honestly cannot say. However, given the earlier conversation, I have made a special note to check that.
1031. **Mr Copeland:** The weight that was given to that aspect strikes me as strange. It also strikes me as curious and strange that a body such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive could accept tenders based on something that was contrary to health and safety guidance.
1032. **Dr McPeake:** If I were to put a proportion on it, I would say that, at the meeting on 16 April, 85% of the conversation was about the Glass and Glazing Federation standard

- fitting method and our procurement. The health and safety issue that Turkington's mentioned was touched on in passing. That is why I say that I am not aware of the detail and that I want to double-check it when I go back to the office. However, the vast bulk of the conversation that day was on specification, and it focused particularly on the fitting method.
1033. **The Chairperson:** Thank you for that. Again, that is not the focus of today's meeting at all.
1034. Before I bring Jim in, I want to follow up on the initial point. John, you said that you subsequently received telephone confirmation of the date of the meeting and so on. That came from the private office and was received by your chief executive's PA. The detail of how the meeting was described has been discussed. How was the meeting described by the private office?
1035. **Dr McPeake:** As I said, my PA tells me that she typed into my diary precisely what she was told on the phone.
1036. **The Chairperson:** Did that come from the private office?
1037. **Dr McPeake:** She believes that it was the private office.
1038. **The Chairperson:** Does that lead you to believe that that is the private office's interpretation of the meeting with Turkington?
1039. **Dr McPeake:** That is how the meeting was described to us, Chair. I have not read anything into it other than that.
1040. **Mr Allister:** The first that you knew about the fact that there was going to be a meeting was in an e-mail on 28 February. Do you have that e-mail?
1041. **Dr McPeake:** No, I do not have it. We get about one million e-mails a month. The Housing Executive has a policy of purging e-mails after a period of time. I have seen a copy of it from the Department, and I am sure that we could get a copy. The essence of it is advance warning to our general information department.
1042. **Mr Allister:** Does Mr Sands have a copy?
1043. **Mr Sands:** I do not have it here.
1044. **Dr McPeake:** I am sure that we can get a copy from the Department.
1045. **Mr Allister:** What did you say is the general thrust of the e-mail?
1046. **Dr McPeake:** It is just giving us advance warning. It says in my commentary that the Minister had agreed to meet Ian Young and that the special political adviser had asked that I, too, be invited to attend. There was no reference to a date at that time. It was simply advance notice that an agreement had been reached to have a meeting. The details of the meeting came later by telephone.
1047. **Mr Allister:** Can you get us that e-mail?
1048. **Dr McPeake:** I believe so.
1049. **Mr Allister:** And you are very clear that the diary entry is exactly the product of what the private office said.
1050. **Dr McPeake:** That is simply what I have been told, Mr Allister. I cannot speak to that personally, because I did not take that phone call.
1051. **Mr Allister:** When did you first hear the suggestion that, in fact, the meeting that you had been at on 16 April was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1052. **Dr McPeake:** I believe that it was when the Minister made his statement in the Assembly. I cannot be precise about that.
1053. **Mr Allister:** Having been at that meeting, did that come as a surprise to you?
1054. **Dr McPeake:** Yes.
1055. **Mr Allister:** At that meeting, was there any hint or suggestion that the two gentlemen from Turkington's were representing anyone other than Turkington?
1056. **Dr McPeake:** No.

1057. **Mr Allister:** Do you understand how anyone at that meeting could have concluded otherwise?
1058. **Dr McPeake:** Other than the fact that there was extensive discussion about Glass and Glazing Federation standards and, indeed, that the Turkington representatives mentioned that they were members, I did not have the advantage of seeing the letter that Turkington's wrote to the Minister, so I would not have been aware of it. Others who were present at the meeting would have seen that letter.
1059. **Mr Allister:** But there was no representation made.
1060. **Dr McPeake:** They never purported to be representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. They mentioned that they were active members, but my understanding and, I believe, my colleague's understanding was that they were there purely as representatives of Turkington Holdings. The diary entry reflected my understanding of that.
1061. **Mr Allister:** Nothing that happened at the meeting changed that understanding.
1062. **Dr McPeake:** No.
1063. **Mr Allister:** Did you say that you had never seen what we have been referring to as the "minute" of the meeting?
1064. **Dr McPeake:** No. I saw it when the Department circulated the papers after we had been summoned here.
1065. **Mr Allister:** Were you surprised by it?
1066. **Dr McPeake:** It looks to me as though it is not a minute but just an observation. It is very incomplete as regards the discussion that happened on the day.
1067. **Mr Allister:** Did the heading "Meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation" surprise you?
1068. **Dr McPeake:** Yes. That is not how we would have described it. In a response to, for example, a BBC freedom of information request, we made it clear that we were meeting representatives from Turkington Holdings Limited. That was our understanding of it.
1069. **Mr Allister:** What discussion was there at the meeting about hinge types?
1070. **Dr McPeake:** I raised that in the context of the ongoing work that we were doing on the specification. We were looking really at three major things: the type of window frames; the glazing component; and the hinges. We had made changes to our hinge specification in, I believe, November 2011. So, I raised the discussion and made a number of observations in the context of what we were doing, but that was only part of a general comment on the revisions to the specification.
1071. **Mr Allister:** Was there any input from Turkington's on that?
1072. **Dr McPeake:** On the hinge issue, I do not recall any. Its major focus was on the fitting method and the Glass and Glazing Federation standards approach.
1073. **Mr Allister:** How unusual is it — maybe it is not at all, but you tell us — for somebody who is actively engaged as a subcontractor in a contract with the Housing Executive to meet with those at the highest level of the Housing Executive and with the Minister to discuss matters that are germane to the work that they are doing?
1074. **Dr McPeake:** We have rules on meeting contractors at certain stages of a process. My colleague from procurement may want to comment on this, but, as a general principle, once the procurement is live, we do not have discussions with the contractors. However, we had not gone to market; we were still in the process of thinking what the specification might be. Good commercial practice suggests that engagement with the industry is the norm. However, I do not recall having been to any previous meetings involving the Minister and a contractor. I do not want to be definitive on that; it is possible that there may have been others, but I do not recall any others at any time.

1075. **Mr Allister:** So, there would have been meetings with contractors, presumably at different levels and even at your level in the Housing Executive, but you can never recall a Minister being at one of them.
1076. **Dr McPeake:** I personally do not recall having direct meetings with a Minister and contractors being present. That does not mean to say that there were not any, Mr Allister. I would need to check my diary for that.
1077. **Mr Allister:** Maybe “summons” is too strong a word, but, in a sense, you were told to be at that meeting?
1078. **Dr McPeake:** I interpret it as an invitation. It was, as I understand it, a suggestion from the special adviser. When the Minister wants to see an official, the official would usually go.
1079. **Mr Allister:** But there was no briefing asked for. You were not asked to prepare anything in advance.
1080. **Dr McPeake:** No, we were not.
1081. **Mr Allister:** Is that unusual?
1082. **Dr McPeake:** It depends on the circumstances. Sometimes we would be given an indication that they want to discuss x, y and z, and we would come prepared, and other times that would not be the case. In this instance, we did not receive any specific requests from either the Minister or the Department.
1083. **Mr Allister:** So, the meeting takes place on 16 April, and, on 30 April, the Minister issues a direction to you. Is that right?
1084. **Dr McPeake:** He issued a letter to me requesting a number of things and, in fact, asking for a fundamental review of our specification. That, in truth, made me smile, because I had already told him that we were in the midst of a fundamental review of the specification.
1085. **Mr Allister:** Was he stalling any further roll-out?
1086. **Dr McPeake:** If you do not mind, I will refer to the letter, just to be clear about it. He indicated that until the review — that is, the review of the specification, which he described as a rigorous review — was complete, all further double-glazing installation should be held until the new contract provisions were in place.
1087. **Mr Allister:** Was that or was that not an operational decision for the Housing Executive?
1088. **Dr McPeake:** I think that that is a difficult question for me to answer. In a sense, we were already doing what the Minister asked us to do. We were in the midst of a fundamental review of the specification, and we wanted to get that procurement out to market as quickly as possible. It was perhaps unusual that he asked that we not do any further double glazing unless other orders for works had been placed.
1089. **Mr Allister:** I think that the Minister, and Mr Hoodless at a later stage, were anxious to say that decisions about these matters were operational.
1090. **Dr McPeake:** Yes, that position emerged at the end of the process.
1091. **Mr Allister:** There was not much sign of that at this point — on 30 April — was there?
1092. **Dr McPeake:** You can understand that position, but my interpretation of this, and I accept fully that people may interpret things differently, is that the Minister wrote to me on a couple of occasions and I responded over the period from 30 April until September. Essentially, all the queries that he had were about value for money, and he was seeking our confirmation that what we were proposing to do constituted value for money. I do not believe that that is an unreasonable suggestion.
1093. **Mr Allister:** No, I am not suggesting that it is. Did you have any meetings with Fusion21?
1094. **Dr McPeake:** Yes. I met representatives of Fusion21; I may have met them twice. Those were essentially fact-finding meetings. We had an introductory

- meeting originally and then a fact-finding meeting, and I had arranged for my head of procurement to visit its operation in Liverpool just to better understand how it was structured.
1095. **Mr Allister:** Can you put a time on that?
1096. **Dr McPeake:** I am afraid that I could not do it today, but I can say categorically that there was no representative from Fusion21 at the meeting on 16 April. We met Fusion21 separately, but double glazing was not the subject of those discussions.
1097. **Mr Allister:** Mr Allen, do you have any diary entry of the meeting.
1098. **Mr Allen:** It is quite similar to that of Mr McPeake. John invited me to attend that meeting with him on 16 April, and I typed it into my diary that I was going to meet Turkington's on 16 April.
1099. **Mr Clarke:** Where this review that has been in the midst is concerned, why, given that someone from industry can identify a £15 million saving, did your Department let it get so wrong in the first instance?
1100. **Mr Allen:** Sorry, get —
1101. **Mr Clarke:** In how the specifications had been drawn up.
1102. **Mr Allen:** I do not look after specifications, Mr Clarke. I am head of procurement; I deal with the commercial side of doing procurements and looking after commercial contract management, but I do not have any information on how our specifications are constructed or maintained.
1103. **Dr McPeake:** If you wish, I can offer a comment on that.
1104. **The Chairperson:** Again, this is really not the purpose of the inquiry today, Trevor.
1105. **Mr Clarke:** I knew that, I just wanted to see.
1106. **Dr McPeake:** how would you describe your relationship with the current Minister?
1107. **Dr McPeake:** My personal relationship, or —
1108. **Mr Clarke:** Your working relationship.
1109. **Dr McPeake:** I think that it is respectful.
1110. **Mr Clarke:** Are you not apprehensive about some of the decisions that he is currently making where the Housing Executive is concerned?
1111. **Dr McPeake:** Do you mean on the future of the Housing Executive? No. The Housing Executive supports the principle behind the social housing programme. It makes perfect sense to us. You might argue that the devil is in the detail, but the Minister has given a full commitment to engage with all the stakeholders on that.
1112. **Mr Clarke:** I am not really interested in the Minister's view on it; I am more interested in your view on what is happening in the Housing Executive, driven by the Minister.
1113. **Dr McPeake:** I support it. I think that it is the right thing to do, and we want to shape and influence the actual outcome.
1114. **Mr Clarke:** So, does that mean that you would not suggest that some of the Minister's decisions would cloud your recollection of what took place previously in these meetings?
1115. **Dr McPeake:** Absolutely not, no.
1116. **Mr Wilson:** This point seems to contradict some of the others, Mr McPeake, but you said that you were surprised when you heard that the meeting had been described as a meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Why would you be surprised, given that we already heard from Mr Sands, and as you mentioned, that, on a number of occasions during that meeting, federation standards and membership of the federation were referred to? Why would you be surprised that some reference should be made to the fact that these people were associated with the Glass and Glazing Federation?

1117. **Dr McPeake:** There are two reasons, really. Our diary entries were unequivocal; it was very clear, and I had the knowledge that my head of procurement had already spoken to the Glass and Glazing Federation in London, which told us that it had no representatives that we could speak to in Northern Ireland. So, that is why I thought it was surprising.
1118. **Mr Wilson:** That is not what you said. You said that you were surprised at the reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation, but you have already said to us in your evidence that the federation was mentioned on quite a few occasions during the meeting.
1119. **Dr McPeake:** Yes, but that was in the course of conversation during the meeting. It was also very clear in what I said that, when the Turkington representatives attended, they did not purport to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation. Indeed, I have now had sight of their letter, and they did not purport that in it either.
1120. **Mr Wilson:** That is not what you were surprised about. You were surprised, according to what you said earlier, that there was any reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation at all.
1121. **Dr McPeake:** No, that is absolutely not what I said.
1122. **Mr Wilson:** Right. That is good.
1123. **Dr McPeake:** I said that I was surprised that it had been described as a meeting with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1124. **Mr Wilson:** But you were not surprised that, in any record of the meeting, Turkington should be associated with the Glass and Glazing Federation, or, indeed, that, in any such record, there should be reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1125. **Dr McPeake:** No, not at all. I do not see that as a conflict.
1126. **Mr Wilson:** The second thing that you said was about the direction by the Minister — I noticed that, when you said it, it made you smile — and what he said about the review, because the review was already under way. You seemed to have some reason to disagree with his direction that further work stop. Why was that?
1127. **Dr McPeake:** We were concerned simply about the fact that we had the money to spend on the double glazing, we had contracts in place, and we had tenants who needed the work done. He had indicated to us that he wished the work to stop, bar the jobs for which works had been ordered. We took advice on that and found that not only were there job schemes — that may be a better description of them — where contractors had placed orders with their supply chain, but there were schemes on which we had briefed contractors, and that would be considered a formal order.
1128. Through an exchange of correspondence, we came to an agreement about that with the Minister and we were satisfied with that outcome. Towards the end of the year, when we completed — rather, to be technically correct, when we started — all those schemes and we still had the resource available to do others, I wrote to the Minister again and secured additional approval to go ahead with further schemes using the revised fitting method but with the current specifications.
1129. **Mr Wilson:** You really should not have been surprised that a Minister who had been made aware during those meetings of not thousands or hundreds of thousands, but millions of pounds of savings that the Housing Executive had clearly not identified — indeed, it seemed to be in no urgency to identify them, in so far as it had strung out a company that wanted to talk to it about those savings — would, at some stage, say, “Actually, maybe we should not be spending any more on those contracts until we see if those savings can be realised.”
1130. **Dr McPeake:** Well, you connected two different issues there. On the first, which is about the savings, we were absolutely committed to realising those savings. As

- a number of people have commented, our estimated figure was around £15 million. When we look at the detail of that, we think that about £9.5 million of it comes from not having to pay out redecoration grants and about £5.5 million comes through the procurement process. During May, we were able to introduce a number of test schemes using the new fitting method and satisfy ourselves that it was competent and that the work was of good quality.
1131. We introduced a new protocol for all schemes moving forward from 1 June. Our belief is that, at that point, we had achieved the savings and the fitting method, so allowing the existing contracts to continue and deliver the work would have delivered those savings. The only saving that remained to be achieved was the saving that would arise from changes to the specification in procurement. Our focus through the rest of that period was on trying to get to the market as quickly as we could. We had already achieved the saving on the redecoration grant by changing the fitting method with the introduction of the new protocol on 1 June.
1132. **Mr Wilson:** Maybe your answer says more about the way the Housing Executive deals with public money than about the Minister. The remaining savings that you are talking about through procurement probably amounted to £5 million or £6 million. Maybe the Housing Executive thinks that it is not worth delaying things to make those kinds of savings. However, that is a subject for another day.
1133. I just wanted to pick you up on the point that you were surprised — almost seemed a bit miffed — that the Minister had asked for these things to stop because the contracts were already out there. I would have thought that it was perfectly reasonable, after having meetings with organisations that the Housing Executive had dragged its heels on, that the Minister should ask for a cessation of contracts in order to make the kind of savings that were being proposed. Of course, at that stage,
- you would not have had the evidence that you are making savings on the redecoration grants either, would you?
1134. **One other thing:** the Minister was not meeting with the contractor, was he? He was meeting someone who, as was made quite clear, had identified that there could be savings that Housing Executive officials had refused or dragged their heels on. The Minister then decided to hear from him. It was not a meeting with contractors.
1135. **Dr McPeake:** No. Turkington is a contractor, but you are quite right, it is not a contractor of the Housing Executive. It is a subcontractor.
1136. **Mr Wilson:** So it would not be unusual. The Housing Executive or its officials would not take a dim view of a Minister meeting someone who, just because they happen to do some work in the public sector, finds the door shut in their face? It is not unusual for a Minister, regardless of the relationship between a firm and the public sector, to meet someone who has concerns about public expenditure.
1137. **Dr McPeake:** I accept that absolutely. We would regularly meet. I do not know the circumstances behind Turkington's points, made earlier, about e-mails sent at the back end of the previous year. I will certainly check that. I do not personally know about that, Mr Wilson. However, we were happy to attend the meeting and we did not see it as presenting a difficulty for us, commercially or in any other way. We were satisfied to do that.
1138. **The Chairperson:** You suggested earlier that it was surprising in that you cannot recall any other meeting similar to that with anyone else. You said that, subject to checking your diary to verify it. However, you did not believe that you had attended any other meeting between a single contractor and the Minister to discuss something.
1139. **Dr McPeake:** I do not believe so. We have certainly attended meetings with the Construction Employers Federation, with the Minister present, on a number

- of occasions. However, I want to be very clear that I cannot be definitive. I think that it was the only time, in the context of the double glazing procurement anyway, that we met a contractor with the Minister present. However, I have already acknowledged Mr Wilson's point that they were meeting with the specific set of proposals.
1140. **Mr Copeland:** Please stop me if I stray, Chair. During the previous evidence session with the two gentlemen, they used the phrase "live on site". It was, presumably, a live contract. One of you said subsequently that you would not meet contractors when a contract is live. Do you mean any contract or just the contract under discussion?
1141. **Dr McPeake:** No, just when we are in live procurement. You have to guard against the scenario that you go to the market in a procurement situation, and then potential bidders want to come in and discuss things with you in the midst of that. We do not do that. However, with the double glazing procurement, we were in the formative stages and working on the specification, so we did not see that as being inappropriate.
1142. **Mr Copeland:** We have heard a good deal about the Glass and Glazing Federation, which is, seemingly, held in great respect. Was it a surprise to you that that body did not have any representation in Northern Ireland?
1143. **Dr McPeake:** Truthfully, I did not give it too much thought. At the end of the day, my head of procurement, the director of housing and I met early in December and agreed that it would be appropriate, as we were working on the specification, to have a period of engagement with the industry. As part of that engagement, we sought to speak with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1144. **Mr Copeland:** Was that the Glass and Glazing Federation GB?
1145. **Dr McPeake:** In England, yes. I believe that it is the parent body that sets the standards.
1146. **Mr Copeland:** I am just curious about the relevance of that. If we are talking about UK-approved standards, there may well be difficulties with building control. Where there are not difficulties? Was it checked out that they concurred with building control requirements here?
1147. **Dr McPeake:** Our concern was to understand what the options were.
1148. **Mr Copeland:** I do not doubt you, sir — not for one moment.
1149. **Dr McPeake:** That is all the issue was. As part of our procurement process, we simply wanted to know whether there was a better way of doing it. It had been drawn to our attention by a number of different people that there were other ways of doing it. Our window installing programme has historically been done by general building contractors, not specialist window manufacturers and fitters. We sought to take advantage of that, but we were aware of many instances in which the fitting method was poor. Windows had just been stuck in with expanding foam and a burglar was able to come along with a Stanley knife and cut the window out. We wanted to be absolutely certain that, if we were going to change the fitting method specification, it would work well, it would be safe and secure for the tenant and that there would be a good thermal bond with the frame. The issue with the slip is that it can cover a multitude of sins.
1150. **Mr Clarke:** Dr McPeake, what weight would you have given to an argument from a window fitting company as opposed that of someone who was a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1151. **Dr McPeake:** It would not have influenced me one bit. My view —
1152. **Mr Clarke:** So you are saying that, if a father and son operation that fitted PVC windows managed to secure a meeting with the Minister, you would put as much weight on what they said as you would to representatives of a company that was a member of a recognised organisation with which you were already in contact?

1153. **Dr McPeake:** No, I am saying that I would give everyone equal hearing. I would consider the evidence as presented and form my own views.
1154. The point is that we were aware of the Glass and Glazing Federation and its specification in advance of the meeting at which Turkington's was present. The federation had already spoken to members of our policy and standards teams about the fitting method. The issue did not arise. We were aware that it had proposals, we thought that there was merit in them and we knew we needed to do something to look at the issue. It seemed to us to be perfectly consistent for them to come along so that we could listen to what they had to say and respond accordingly.
1155. **Mr Clarke:** When did you first make enquiries to the Glass and Glazing Federation about its proposals for the standard?
1156. **Dr McPeake:** I believe that it was the back end of the previous year when we made efforts to contact it. We had looked at the guidance that was available on its website and from other sources. We wanted to meet with a representative, but we were unable to do that.
1157. **Mr Clarke:** I think that you said earlier that it did not supply you with the names of its members. So it is not that you could not meet them; it is that the organisation did not supply you with the names of its members. Is that right?
1158. **Dr McPeake:** The federation told us that it has no representative. We asked whether there was a representative that we could speak to and were told that it had no representative in Northern Ireland.
1159. **Mr Clarke:** You are not resentful, then, of the company —
1160. **Dr McPeake:** Not at all.
1161. **Mr Clarke:** — given that it showed the savings that I believe your procurement people should have exposed, instead of depending on a window supplier.
1162. **Dr McPeake:** Well, I think you are working on the assumption that Turkington's was the only company that raised that issue with us. That was not the case. Through our own research, we were aware of the Glass and Glazing Federation before Turkington's met us in March. I have to say —
1163. **Mr Clarke:** So you were aware of it for some months before March, but you were quite happy to continue to waste public money even though you knew that there was another method that would save public money?
1164. **Dr McPeake:** No. We were doing the work as part of the ongoing review of the specification for the new procurement. I think the fundamental —
1165. **Mr Clarke:** But given that you knew there was another method that could have saved millions of pounds, would you not have thought it more useful to cease the programme to try to save public money so that the programme could be expanded to more people?
1166. **Dr McPeake:** Well, as I explained, we had to satisfy ourselves about the fitting method, which is why we went into the field with our contractors to do a number of test schemes. Our focus at the time was on the new procurement. The Minister's intervention required us to introduce the revised fitting method into the current contract, which I think was a sensible decision. I certainly supported that.
1167. **Mr Brady:** Mr Allen, you contacted the Glass and Glazing Federation in December 2011 and were told that it had no representatives here. Did it come as a surprise to you, then, when representatives of Turkington's said that they were members of, but were not there representing, the Glass and Glazing Federation at the meeting? Mr Young indicated that he was chair in 2005 and 2006, which meant that he had a fairly high profile in that organisation. Did it come as a surprise to find out that you were sitting with two people who were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation but were not there

- to represent it? That point has been made. Following on from that, would you have thought that those were people you could talk to because they were members of the federation, even though you had been told previously that it virtually did not exist here in the North?
1168. **Mr Allen:** The huge surprise for me was the previous evidence statement that the gentleman was the chairman of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I was trying to find somebody in Northern Ireland who we could bring into our offices and talk to about how we should put together a double glazing procurement process. The lady in London was at pains to get it through to me that there was nobody I could speak to, not even in GB, so I asked whether there were members in Northern Ireland who she could point me in the direction of. Obviously, because of the Data Protection Act, she could not give me those particular details. That was the end of the conversation.
1169. **Mr Brady:** If you will excuse the pun, it was not as transparent as it might have been in that situation.
1170. **Mr Allen:** Absolutely.
1171. **Mr F McCann:** I have a couple of points. A lot has been said about store being put in the Glass and Glazing Federation. I take it that there are quite a lot of standards right across Europe on the installation of windows. The point I am making is that you said that you would treat everyone equally if they had a background in glazing, so it is not down to just the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1172. **Dr McPeake:** Yes.
1173. **Mr F McCann:** We keep being asked that question. John, I think that you said you were surprised that you were asked to go to a meeting with a company and the Minister to discuss possible difficulties with contracts that were either out there at the time or might have been out there shortly afterwards.
1174. **Dr McPeake:** I do not believe I said that. Maybe I misspoke; I do not believe that I made that point. I simply said that
- we received notification of the meeting and that it was clear who it was with. I attended, and I asked my colleague from procurement to attend with me. I was not surprised by that. I think that I answered another question about whether it was usual or common. It was not particularly common, but that does not mean to say that there was anything wrong with it.
1175. **Mr F McCann:** Was it unusual?
1176. **Dr McPeake:** I am not a civil servant. I do not meet the Minister that often. I meet him formally twice a year in performance reviews for the organisation, and I might see him once every couple of months because of issues on the ground. It is not like the situation of a civil servant who may be with him every day, if not several times a day. It is hard for me to say whether it was usual or unusual because there is no pattern. The issues that come to me through the Minister's office tend to be quite specific or policy-related matters. I cannot really judge whether it was unusual.
1177. **Mr F McCann:** Sammy raised the whole question of savings. The vast bulk of the savings was in the form of depriving people of redecoration grants. Were any redecoration grants paid after the contract was awarded?
1178. **Dr McPeake:** Yes. I would not describe —
1179. **The Chairperson:** Sorry. We are straying completely from the terms of reference of the inquiry.
1180. **Mr F McCann:** Sammy raised the issue, so I asked the question.
1181. **The Chairperson:** It was not responded to because it is completely outside the terms of reference. Sorry, Fra.
1182. **Mr Wilson:** From what you have said, the Glass and Glazing Federation appears to be like some covert underground group. It will not let you know who its members are and it will not tell you who its representatives are. It does not even know whether it has representatives in England. I do not know how it gets

- its message over. The representatives from Turkington's never claimed to be representatives. Nevertheless, would you say that, if you were speaking to the chairman of an organisation in a particular area, you could be fairly sure that you are getting a representative view of that organisation?
1183. **Mr Allen:** Yes.
1184. **Dr McPeake:** One would assume so. I think that he may have said that he was chairman of the Northern Ireland branch.
1185. **Mr Allister:** In 2006?
1186. **Dr McPeake:** Yes. I do not think that we would have any doubt about the bona fides of Turkington's and its knowledge of the Glass and Glazing Federation standards.
1187. **The Chairperson:** Maybe Declan can answer this question. I do not know the status of the organisation, but I think that Fra touched on this question earlier: do all the organisations or contractors doing such work need to be members of that organisation, or is it optional?
1188. **Dr McPeake:** No, it is not a requirement.
1189. **The Chairperson:** In many industries, people have to be accredited. Do you have any idea, off hand, whether the majority of contractors doing that type of work are members of that association?
1190. **Dr McPeake:** I believe that it is a trade body for specialist window installers. Until recently, our double glazing work has been done by general contractors. I would have been surprised if any of them were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. In my view, the membership is irrelevant; it is the standard and the advice that it has produced on how to fit windows that is relevant. We can take advantage of that, and we have done so.
1191. **The Chairperson:** Again, I want to make it clear that the Turkington representatives made it very clear that they did not indicate at all that they represented any body other than their own company.
1192. **Mr Brady:** I want to raise a small point. John, you said that Mr Young might have mentioned the fact that he had been chair of the Glass and Glazing Federation. However, Declan said that he was surprised when he heard that today. You were at the same meeting. Perhaps you were just not paying attention.
1193. **Mr Allen:** It means that the chief executive's memory is better than mine.
1194. **Dr McPeake:** I meant that in the context of today. I do not believe that he indicated that he had been a former chair at the meeting. If he did, I did not pick up on that at the time.
1195. **Mr Brady:** I just wanted to get clarity on that. Thanks.
1196. **Dr McPeake:** As I said, I do not doubt Turkington's knowledge of the Glass and Glazing Federation standards.
1197. **The Chairperson:** Although it has been referenced a lot, nobody at the meeting of 16 April, which is what we are concerned about today, indicated that they were there to represent the federation. I think that Sammy was making the point that there has been a lot of talk about an organisation that has not presented itself here to anybody. No other members have indicated that they want to ask a question. Sorry, Stewart, my apologies.
1198. **Mr Dickson:** On how many occasions has the Minister or any previous Minister under whom you have operated issued you with a direct instruction?
1199. **Dr McPeake:** I think that this was the only occasion on which that happened.
1200. **Mr Dickson:** That is fine. Thank you.
1201. **The Chairperson:** OK. Michael, John and Declan, if there is nothing that you want to add, we will leave it for this afternoon. Thank you, gentlemen, for your participation.

21 November 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Giles Willson *Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs, Glass and Glazing Federation*

1202. **The Chairperson:** I welcome Giles Wilson, who is deputy chief executive of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). I remind members of the rule on procedural fairness. You have that as part of your documentation on the inquiry. Giles, you will be aware that there has been an issue about the role or non-role of the Glass and Glazing Federation. You kindly agreed to come to address that matter today. So, I think that you know what we are asking you to respond to. We have a rule on operational and procedural fairness, so we will give you an opportunity to present your case, and then members will ask questions if they need to.

1203. **Mr Giles Willson (Glass and Glazing Federation):** Thank you, Chairman and Committee, for giving me the opportunity to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation. We had picked up from our researches that GGF had been cited quite a few times in discussions, so we are pleased that we can come to answer any questions and explain exactly what the Glass and Glazing Federation is. Given some of the questions that have been asked and what has appeared, this is where some of the confusion has arisen.

1204. The Glass and Glazing Federation is a trade association. We have members who pay to be a member of the GGF, but, before they can come into membership, they have to meet certain criteria. They have to have three years' trading accounts, we have to have references and we inspect the company to make sure that it meets a certain standard. Once someone is in membership, they can use our logo and explain that they are a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Logos are often used on vehicles because of the type of work that those people do, which is replacing windows. I should explain that we cover the whole spectrum of the window industry, including glass manufacture, glass processing, window fabrication and installation. We cover the whole spectrum, and the supply chain can be quite complicated, as you are probably all aware. Members will use our logos, and it is a way for them to differentiate themselves from their competitors to show that they are an established organisation and that they comply with the federation's rules and regulations.

1205. One of the key points about the GGF is that members are individual companies and work in their own right. When someone is talking to the Glass and Glazing Federation or somebody representing the GGF, there would normally be somebody such as myself who is an officer of the federation or, at times, we will brief a member to represent us when it is felt prudent. They will have first been briefed by the committee. Under the governance and structure of the federation, we have a board, executives, specialist groups and regional groups. In Northern Ireland, we have a regional group, so anyone who trades in Northern Ireland can go to that group meeting. They each have a chairman of their own, they will be briefed and each group will have an officer who is the secretary for that group. However, to have a representative

- of the GGF for the view of the GGF, it will normally be an officer. It is fairly clear when a member is representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, because, apart from having a brief, there is the subtle difference that we pay their expenses to attend and represent the federation — they may incur travel costs — and it shows that they are representing not only their own personal business but the whole organisation. That is an overview of how the Glass and Glazing Federation operates and what our principles are.
1206. We are here to develop standards for the industry, and those industry standards often become British and international standards. The chief executive of the GGF, Nigel Rees, sends his apologies. He would have been here, but he is leading the UK delegation to China for an international standards committee meeting. That is the sort of work that we do in looking to expand standards and to raise the quality of our industry sector.
1207. So, that is an overview of how we operate and what we do. I welcome any questions so that I can give you clarification about how I can help with the inquiry.
1208. **The Chairperson:** Thank you, again, Giles, for taking the time to come over here. I know that you are based in London, so thank you for the travel time and so on.
1209. The people who were here last week from Turkington Holdings Ltd made it very clear that they were representing Turkington's. As you know from our correspondence with you, the issue has been raised by the Minister and there has been repeated reference to the fact that the meeting on 16 April was with representatives of your federation. Part of our terms of reference in our inquiry is to establish the accuracy of that, and that is specifically why we addressed you and invited you here.
1210. **Mr G Willson:** The BBC researcher asked us whether the meeting with the Minister was with GGF representatives.
- We keep records of our meetings and briefs, and we checked them. We did not have a representation. It was not a GGF meeting. It was not organised by us at all. None of the officers was aware of that meeting taking place and we would not be, if it was not a GGF meeting.
1211. **Mr S Wilson:** Who are your representatives in Northern Ireland?
1212. **Mr G Willson:** I can provide a list of all the members.
1213. **Mr S Wilson:** You said that you have regional groups and that there is an officer from that group who is regarded as your representative. Who is that in Northern Ireland?
1214. **Mr G Willson:** We have a regional secretary for Northern Ireland. The gentleman who has been looking after that is Mr Declan Moore. He has just resigned from the GGF, but that is not related to this incident at all. So, there is currently a vacancy, which we will cover by our internal staff. An officer will come over for anything with the members who are based here.
1215. **Mr Allister:** I have a couple of things. You are a trade association. Are you the sole trade association for the industry, or are there alternatives?
1216. **Mr G Willson:** There are alternative trade associations. The Glass and Glazing Federation represents all framing materials, but you tend to get other trade associations with specialisms, such as the British Woodworking Federation, which deals only with timber windows and timber products. There is also the Council for Aluminium in Building, which, as the name dictates, is for anything to do with aluminium but includes windows and curtain walling. There is also the Steel Window Association and the British Plastics Federation; they also deal with windows.
1217. **Mr Allister:** Can a company belong to multiple trade groups?
1218. **Mr G Willson:** Yes.

1219. **Mr Allister:** You said that, as a consequence of paying your fees and belonging to the federation, people can use the logo on vans etc. Can you use it on notepaper?
1220. **Mr G Willson:** Yes, you can use it on letterheads and business cards.
1221. **Mr Allister:** You have standards. What is the status of those standards?
1222. **Mr G Willson:** The standards that we produce cover a variety of issues including health and safety, the installation of windows —
1223. **Mr Allister:** Let us take the installation of windows.
1224. **Mr G Willson:** The standards are written by committee, which is our members. They are reviewed by a standards committee. We have a working group and a standards committee, but the standards are written by members for members. That is the GGF document that will be published.
1225. **Mr Allister:** Does that state how your members must install windows, or is it guidance? What is the status of it?
1226. **Mr G Willson:** It is guidance. There are certain things that they must do, such as comply with the code of conduct, but it depends on the name of the document. It is quite hard because there is a British standard called a code of practice, which means that, if you are installing a window or door, you must follow good practice. However, for every window or building, there will be a variety of scenarios, so you cannot specify a fixed method of installation. If you are making a new product on a production line, such as an insulated glass unit, it is easier to manufacture it in a consistent manner.
1227. **Mr Allister:** And you must manufacture it to a British standard.
1228. **Mr G Willson:** It could be a British or European standard.
1229. **Mr Allister:** Whereas your standard is a free-standing matter; it does not have the status of a British standard.
1230. **Mr G Willson:** It does not have the status of a British standard. The difference between a British standard and a GGF standard is that a British standard goes out to public inquiry for comment. I chair the British Standards Institution (BSI) committee for windows and doors. That is one of my roles. All the other trade associations and other representatives are on that group. It is a bigger group, and it goes out to public inquiry, so anybody can make a comment on the standards. In reality — many people around the table will appreciate this — a standard on the installation of windows and doors would normally get comments only from building control inspectors and representatives of manufacturers and trade associations. I have never seen a comment from a member of the general public, because it is very technical and specific document. It goes out for public comment, but it is a specialism.
1231. **Mr Allister:** Let us revert to the meeting of 16 April. You are quite clear that you knew nothing about it before it took place.
1232. **Mr G Willson:** Correct.
1233. **Mr Allister:** You were not represented at it.
1234. **Mr G Willson:** Correct.
1235. **Mr Allister:** Turkington's was not representing you.
1236. **Mr G Willson:** No.
1237. **Mr Allister:** If they had wanted to represent you, they would have required your authority.
1238. **Mr G Willson:** Correct.
1239. **Mr Allister:** And they did not seek that.
1240. **Mr G Willson:** Correct.
1241. **Mr Allister:** Have you any reason to think that they claimed to represent you?
1242. **Mr G Willson:** I would not have thought so. The company is a GGF member and has been with the GGF for a considerable time. It is aware of the rules, and it has even chaired the Northern Ireland region. They are

- familiar with the rules. If they had wanted to represent us, the procedure is not hard. They would have said, “We want to visit the Minister and have a meeting”. We would have either briefed them or said, as we have done before, “We need to have a regional meeting because, if it is a regional issue or is about a particular standard, it will go to the relevant committee to ensure that there is a correct briefing for them to represent us”.
1243. **Mr Allister:** You have a procedure. If the procedure is breached, would there be consequences for the member company?
1244. **Mr G Willson:** Yes. If a member does not follow procedure, no matter what the procedure is, it will be referred to our finance and membership committee. We refer everyone to committees. I would give a report on what had happened, and the committee would review it and decide on the most appropriate action.
1245. **Mr Allister:** Has there been any reference of Turkington’s over the meeting of 16 April 2012?
1246. **Mr G Willson:** I am sorry?
1247. **Mr Allister:** Has there been any reference or complaint in respect of Turkington’s claiming to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation at that meeting?
1248. **Mr G Willson:** No. It has been brought to the attention of the finance and membership committee because we are being asked about it as a result of this inquiry. That committee is aware that questions are being asked. The GGF has not received an official complaint from anybody to say that somebody was misrepresenting the GGF at that meeting.
1249. **Mr Allister:** You have no reason to think that Turkington’s claimed to be representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1250. **Mr G Willson:** Obviously, I was not at the meeting, so I could not say that definitely. So far, however, nobody has brought it up.
1251. **Mr Allister:** They have told us that they did not.
1252. **Mr G Willson:** I am aware of that. I have been given the transcripts. They said that they were not representing the GGF. To date, we have not heard anybody say that, apart from what the Minister has stated. We have not had a formal complaint that we were being misrepresented. That is what the complaint would be — that somebody was misrepresenting us.
1253. **Mr Allister:** The Minister has said several times that the meeting on that date was with the federation.
1254. **Mr G Willson:** Yes.
1255. **Mr Allister:** Have you any explanation for that?
1256. **Mr G Willson:** I could not answer why the Minister would say that. This is speculation, but I have not seen a Turkington letterhead so I do not know whether it uses the GGF logo.
1257. **Mr Allister:** May I show you the letter asking for the meeting?
1258. **The Chairperson:** I am sorry; in the interest of procedural fairness we cannot present witnesses with —
1259. **Mr Allister:** It is from our papers. It is one of the exhibits. It is the letter —
1260. **The Chairperson:** I am sorry, Jim. Remind us what page that is on.
1261. **Mr Clarke:** Number 10.
1262. **The Chairperson:** Thank you. I am sorry, Jim.
1263. **Mr G Willson:** The point that I was going to make is that members are allowed to use the GGF logo on their letterhead. I do not have a copy of the current Turkington letterhead or their correspondence, so I do not know whether they use it. We have members who use the logo and some who do not use it at all.

1264. **Mr Allister:** Chairman, I was going to ask Mr Willson to look at a copy of the letter from Turkington Holdings Ltd asking for the meeting with the Minister, which is the very meeting in question. It is the letter of 2 February. Can I do that?
1265. **The Chairperson:** OK. Yes.
1266. **Mr Allister:** That is a copy; it is not the original. Do you see any logo of the Glass and Glazing Federation on that?
1267. **Mr G Willson:** No.
1268. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
1269. At one stage, there was an assertion that Fusion21 was at that meeting. Who are Fusion21 in glass and glazing industry terms?
1270. **Mr G Willson:** Fusion21, I believe, is not a GGF member. It is, I believe, a systems house that serves the supply chain. It is a trade name for a profile system.
1271. **Mr Allister:** A profile system. Is it not a social economy organisation?
1272. **Mr G Willson:** I do not know a great deal about it. I have not researched Fusion21, so I cannot comment properly on it.
1273. **Mr Allister:** OK. Thank you very much.
1274. **Mr Dickson:** My question has been answered. It was about the logo on the paper.
1275. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you, Mr Willson. Just to reiterate: the associate members and members of your organisation are very clear about the rules and about how and when people can claim to represent your federation, so there could be no possible confusion.
1276. **Mr G Willson:** It should be clear, but it depends. Members will often give their name and say that they are from company x and are a member of the GGF. The person who receives that message understands that the person belongs to a membership organisation, but we are all members of all sorts of groups and associations that we do not represent.
1277. **Mrs D Kelly:** Many of my questions have been asked, but I want to be assured on one point. You said that there have been no complaints. Has Minister Nelson McCausland made a formal complaint to the federation to say that an organisation such as Turkington's or someone else has claimed to represent your federation when they obviously did not?
1278. **Mr G Willson:** We have not received a complaint such as that.
1279. **Mrs D Kelly:** OK. Thank you.
1280. **Mr Clarke:** I apologise for missing your opening remarks. How do you become a member of the GGF?
1281. **Mr G Willson:** We have an application form and process, and you have to fulfil certain criteria, one of which is that you need to provide three years of audited accounts, which is to show that you are an established business and that you have not phoenixed. You also have to provide trade references that we will check out to see your organisation's reputation. The GGF will also organise a visit to the company. We inspect how the organisation manufactures or installs its product and how it manages its business. We also check health and safety records to make sure that there is a health and safety policy in place and generally ensure that the organisation meets all the requirements of legislation, including European directives or anything applicable to the industry.
1282. **Mr Clarke:** Would it be safe to say that the majority of your members have a fairly large employee base?
1283. **Mr G Willson:** That is not always the case. We have larger companies; we have nationals. However, we also have some small companies that employ one or two people, but they tend to be very specialised organisations.
1284. **Mr Clarke:** I am basically trying to establish that no individual could apply to become a member of GGF just because they fit windows.

1285. **Mr G Willson:** No. You have to meet our criteria, and you would —
1286. **Mr Clarke:** So the process is fairly robust.
1287. **Mr G Willson:** Yes. You would also have to agree to follow our guidance and code, and we check that out.
1288. **Mr Clarke:** I was interested in your response to Jim — it may have been another member — when you said that it was appropriate for a member of your organisation to use your logo on their letterhead or business card. Do you accept that that could sometimes be misconstrued, in terms of the representation of that individual, if they forward that card to someone?
1289. **Mr G Willson:** No. We —
1290. **Mr Clarke:** Would you see it as the endorsement of the GGF in terms of their representation?
1291. **Mr G Willson:** No. It is like a lot of logos and letterheads that we all use. For example, the GGF has ISO 9000 registration through the BSI, and we use that on our letterheads. That does not mean that I represent the BSI; it shows that I meet the criteria and we have ISO 9000 registration through BSI. Likewise, many other organisations and professionals can be and are members of professional bodies whose logo they may use on their business cards. That does not mean that they represent that organisation. It is an endorsement, because a business card or letterhead will have the company name.
1292. **Mr Clarke:** May I hand you a copy of the letter that Jim handed you? The member asked you to look for a logo on it, but would you read the content of the letter? Do you accept that the letter makes it clear that Turkington's indicated its membership of the Glass and Glazing Federation, despite the letter not having the logo on it?
1293. **Mr G Willson:** Yes. The letter is quite clear. It says:
- "We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)."*
1294. **Mr Clarke:** If you received that letter, could you accept that they were coming with that organisation's representative view, given that they purport to bring forward their guidelines? Do you accept that there could be confusion caused by the admission of that in the letter?
1295. **Mr G Willson:** I am reading the letter, but it does not say that. With my knowledge of trade associations and membership, I would not have taken that on board. I cannot judge whether the person who received the letter thought that it was representing the GGF.
1296. **Mr Clarke:** Let us say that the person who received that letter has no background in the building trade or trade organisations. It is difficult to ask you this, given that you come from such a knowledgeable background, but, if you read that as a person with no knowledge of the industry or of trade organisations, could you see why an individual could come to the conclusion that those individuals represented the view of an organisation of which they were members?
1297. **Mr G Willson:** I really would find that quite hard. A meeting would have been arranged using the GGF letterhead, and we would have organised —
1298. **Mr Clarke:** That is you bringing your knowledge to bear. I am asking you to step outside your knowledge of your own organisation and look at it as someone who has no knowledge of the building industry or trade organisations whatsoever, in any shape or manner. Just look at how the letter is worded and the reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1299. **The Chairperson:** The question has been answered twice.
1300. **Mr G Willson:** I am happy to answer the question. You can analyse a sentence and the wording of a letter. There is a sentence that reads:
- "We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)."*
1301. That is one statement. The next sentence begins "With our experience".

- From that, I would have inferred that “our experience” is the experience of Turkington Holdings Ltd, but what you are asking is whether the phrase relates to the previous sentence. To what does “our” refer? Had it stated, “with GGF experience”, it would have been clear that they represented the GGF. From reading the letter, I would say that “with our experience” relates to the experience of the person sending the letter. As you look at it, that would mean the general manager of Turkington Holdings Ltd, not the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1302. It gets complicated. It goes on to mention:
“an active role within the National Standards Body (GGF)”
1303. That is not technically correct because we are not the national standards body, although that is neither here nor there. It then states:
“we feel that we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive”.
1304. I would expect that, when anyone has a meeting, regardless of the letter, if you are not clear about who is representing whom, that would be clarified in the opening remarks of a meeting when you are giving business cards and explaining whom you represent. A meeting may have been arranged, and it would have been then that that would have been clarified. In the numerous meetings that I attend to represent the GGF, either with a member or by myself, I explain who I am and whom I represent.
1305. **Mr Clarke:** You will accept the difficulty that we have in that there are no minutes of the meeting, so we do not know who they claimed to represent or whether there were further references to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1306. **Mr Allister:** With respect, there is a minute.
1307. **Mr Clarke:** No, there is not. There is an aide-memoire.
1308. **Mr Allister:** The Minister calls it a minute.
1309. **Mr Clarke:** A minute was not circulated.
1310. **The Chairperson:** All right, folks.
1311. **Mr G Willson:** That, again, is a difficulty because our members could arrange meetings with other members or a Minister. It is up to them how they arrange them. I have had meetings with the Housing Executive to talk about issues, but I will always make my own notes. I will make my own notes of today’s meeting, because I have to write a report that will go to my board to say that I have come here to answer questions. That is why we always encourage our members to stress that it is a GGF meeting; that is of far more power. People appreciate that, in meeting the GGF, it is not an individual company’s point of view. I cannot answer for individual members, but they appreciate that, even in the minutes of one of the meetings for the Northern Ireland region, with the GGF working together they have a far more powerful voice than as an individual company. An individual company could go to see a Minister, but, if they want to speak from the point of view of the GGF, they understand that that is a totally different issue.
1312. **The Chairperson:** In fairness, you are not in the mind of anyone who requested or attended a meeting.
1313. **Mr Brady:** Thank you very much for your presentation. Just to clarify the status of the minute, last week Mr Sands described it as an “aide-memoire”, so, obviously, some sort of record was kept of that meeting.
1314. I will not labour the point, but you made it very clear that, if people were to represent the GGF at a meeting, particularly with a Minister, they would have to have your imprimatur. In other words, they would have to go through the procedures, which, you have said, are strict, including a briefing etc.
1315. **Mr G Willson:** Yes.
1316. **Mr Brady:** As a federation, do you have an accreditation system? You mentioned three years’ audited accounts and so

on, and I presume that there are high standards. Do you have an accreditation process that members adhere to or have to go through to be able to use the logo and say that they are members of the federation?

1317. **Mr G Willson:** There is a membership application process to be followed, and there are different stages to be gone through. People can be on hold until they meet the criteria. If a company does not meet the criteria for membership, we have a promotional programme, which means that it can have some of the benefits of membership but cannot claim to be a member until its staff are trained and educated to come up to our standard. That is often because they do not have sufficient trading accounts or are unable to demonstrate sufficient quality to meet our standards. We have a programme that they would go on.
1318. **Mr Brady:** So it is a form of accreditation through which, finally, they will be accepted into the federation.
1319. **Mr G Willson:** Yes. As I mentioned, the Glass and Glazing Federation has ISO 9000 registration, which includes the membership process. We get independently audited to ensure that, as an application is processed, we meet all those stages.
1320. **The Chairperson:** Thank you. No other members have indicated that they want to ask a question. Thank you, Mr Willson, for travelling here today and presenting your evidence. You have been very helpful. We wish you a safe journey home.

12 December 2013

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann

Witnesses:

Mr Nelson McCausland *Minister for Social
 Development*

1321. **The Chairperson:** The Minister is here this morning and has provided the Committee with a briefing. I invite you to speak to that briefing.
1322. **Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am happy to be here today and to cooperate with any aspect of the inquiry, not just in this phase, but also in the next two phases.
1323. The Committee invited me here today to hear oral evidence in respect of strand two of the Committee's terms of reference and asked that that evidence should contain details of my knowledge of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and the drafting of the letter of 24 May 2012 to the Chairman of the Committee, which was in reply to the Chairman's letter to me dated 16 May 2012 in relation to the review of the specification for the double-glazing programme.
1324. I will begin with the meeting on 16 April 2012. That meeting was arranged to discuss the Programme for Government target to have all Housing Executive homes double-glazed by March 2015. This was a subject close to my heart, because, within a short time of coming into office, I quickly recognised that, while the previous focus had been on the newbuild programme, it was essential that I ensured that the upkeep of existing homes and the need for Housing Executive maintenance work to continue was also a priority.
1325. I have had many approaches, both in my constituency office and as a Minister, from tenants who believe that the provision of double glazing to their home would raise their standard of living in terms of heating, energy efficiency and fuel poverty. I am sure that members of the Committee have had similar approaches in their constituency offices. That is why I ensured, through the commitment that the Northern Ireland Executive gave in the Programme for Government, that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by March 2015 through the provision of double glazing.
1326. If the meeting on 16 April 2012 had not been referred to in the 'Spotlight' programme, or this inquiry was not taking place, I admit that I would probably struggle to remember who was at the meeting, especially taking into account the number of meetings that I have as Minister. For example, I have already received over 580 invitations this year alone, and that gives some indication of the number of meetings and the scope of the work that we do. However, I have a clear recollection of what the meeting was about and the discussion at the meeting, which focused on the potential for significant savings if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed in the double-glazing programme.
1327. The only thing that was of major significance to me at that time was what the meeting was about and not who was there. The representatives at the meeting referred on a number of occasions to their strong association with the Glass and Glazing Federation, and with all the discussion at the meeting focused on the Glass and

- Glazing Federation and its guidelines, I therefore believed that the representatives there were, in fact, representing the Glass and Glazing Federation and its interests. If they were not doing so, it had no bearing for me on the discussion at the meeting or the follow-up action that was taken afterwards by my officials in order to review the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines to identify significant savings.
1328. The Committee has been provided with a copy of a note of the meeting. This was an internal note that my private secretary prepared in order to keep some degree of an internal private office record of the meeting. As is the usual process, the note was drafted and was then amended to more accurately reflect the discussion. As I, at that time, believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position.
1329. I should say that it is only as a result of the document discovery process as part of this inquiry that I became aware, in very recent days, of this process and that there were drafts of any such meeting note.
1330. I would advise the Committee at this stage that I did not have any previous connection with the attendees. Whilst I am aware of Turkington Holdings as a company, I have had no association with them either then or now. I have also never sought to hide or deny who was at the meeting, particularly in relation to the attendance of Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings. For example, the note of the meeting at the outset states:
- “Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings”.*
1331. I also answered an Assembly question for written answer in September 2012, which clearly stated that the managing director and general manager of Turkington Holdings were at the meeting.
1332. Let me be frank: there was in no way any attempt by me as Minister to mislead or to misinform in any way anyone around
- the fact that this meeting took place, who attended or the capacity in which they were there. I also requested that the appropriate officials attended to listen to the issues that were being raised and to ensure that proper process was followed and that actions, if any, were followed through on.
1333. As I already said, it did not matter to me who was at the meeting or who they represented, whether it was Turkington Holdings, the Glass and Glazing Federation or, indeed, any other company. I would have held the meeting, and the follow-on actions and the outcome would have remained the same.
1334. The role of the DSD housing official who attended was to listen to the discussion and, if necessary or relevant, to take forward any actions that I might require. As a result, the following day, he raised the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines with professional staff with the necessary technical expertise and asked them to review the guidelines.
1335. Let me now deal with the drafting of the letter to the Chairman of the Committee, which issued on 24 May 2012. I received a letter from you, Chairman, dated 16 May 2012, which was a month after the meeting had been held. As per the usual process, my private office asked officials to consider the contents of the letter and to draft an appropriate reply to the letter for my consideration.
1336. When the draft reply was received in my office, it was my understanding that, and I genuinely believed it at that time, while staff from Turkington Holdings Limited were at the meeting, they were not representing the interests of that firm but, rather, were representing the interests of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Therefore, it was entirely right, in my view at that time, that I sought for the reference to Turkington Holdings to be reconsidered and amended.
1337. As is normal practice when I clear letters, I queried the reference to Turkington Holdings, suggesting that it

- should refer to the Glass and Glazing Federation. I also queried whether the meeting with Fusion21 should be included, as I had a recollection that, when I met them, similar matters were discussed.
1338. In relation to the inclusion of Fusion21, it is correct to say that I did have a meeting with them and, therefore, thought perhaps that it would be appropriate to include this in the letter. Indeed, after the meeting in April with Fusion21, they again contacted my officials in early May in relation to the double-glazing programme prior to the letter to you, Chairman.
1339. My request to have the draft letter amended was forwarded by my private office to the official who had drafted the letter to consider and amend the draft accordingly. It would be normal process within the Department for officials to consider amendments coming from the private office and, if necessary, come back via the private office with any concerns and suggestions. No concerns were raised. As a result, when I received the amended letter back from the official, I noted the amendments and signed it, and it was issued to you, Chairman, on 24 May 2012.
1340. I am also aware that, in relation to the letter, you raised with my official at the inquiry session on 14 November the fact that in a following paragraph it states:
- “As a result of this meeting”.*
1341. That naturally implies that, in the preceding sentence, there was only one meeting, which included the chief executive of the Housing Executive, the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21. My official advised the Committee on 14 November that he:
- “should have changed the first four words of the next paragraph. I missed that.”*
1342. The questioning from the Committee about that sentence implies that there was something sinister going on, or a potential cover-up. That could not be further from the truth. The truth is that it was an oversight or an inadvertent mistake — plain and simple. When the sentence was changed to include Fusion21, the following sentence should have been changed to read “these meetings” rather than “this meeting”. My official did not notice that. I did not notice it either. I looked at the letter, saw that an amendment had been made and signed the letter.
1343. I did not imagine at the time that a series of simple errors could lead us to this point. I doubt that any one of us here today could say that they have not made mistakes in letters, whether minor technical typing errors, grammatical errors or changing one part of a letter and forgetting to check whether that should be reflected elsewhere. Indeed, when I was reading these notes this morning, I noticed that I had also made a mistake overnight in amending something and correcting it inappropriately. The fact is that, in your own letter to me on 16 May there was a typing error, albeit a minor one, in the penultimate paragraph. That is just human nature; these things happen.
1344. Mistakes are made mainly because we are very busy dealing with a number of things at any one time. My officials and I have a considerable amount of correspondence to deal with, and therefore handle many different issues in a day. In fact, my private office can receive over 130 e-mails a day. To date this year, there have been over 4,400 pieces of correspondence, including reports, briefings, letters and Assembly questions. Some of those reports and submissions can run to several hundred pages. I should, for the record, point out that, in the month of April 2012, 397 papers and pieces of correspondence crossed my desk. In May, the number was 551. I had a total of 126 meetings over those two months. Taking account of the sheer volume of correspondence etc that goes through my office, errors — even just simple typing errors — can be missed.
1345. Let me be clear again: whoever was at the meeting on 16 April, it was immaterial to me at that time. My focus was simply on the double-

glazing programme, the review of the specifications in line with the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines, and the potential for significant savings to the public purse. The issue of who was actually at the meeting was not of such great significance at that time as others seem to place on it now. However, in considering where we are now, in light of the witness evidence given to date and the recent document discovery exercise in my Department, I realise and acknowledge that I inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter. Let me assure you that that was not in any way deliberate. I realise that there has been confusion around the letter and the meetings referred to in it. However, I never sought to hide the fact that staff from Turkington's were at the meeting on 16 April. I simply believed that they were representing the interests of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I also held a meeting with Fusion21 seven days later. That is why I subsequently made my position clear on the meetings held with the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21. I advised the Assembly on 8 July about that error, and I issued a revised written answer to set out clearly the position, which was that there were two separate meetings: one on 16 April 2012 and one on 23 April 2012. There are also a further two written answers that clarify the dates and context of both meetings.

1346. I meet many companies and many individuals in relation to many issues. Part of my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. It is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister to discharge the duties of my office. If an individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, I will not be deterred from doing so.

1347. Let me also say that neither I nor my Department have any role in the tendering and letting process of any contracts. Therefore, there was nothing

to be gained by anyone in relation to that meeting, other than significant savings to the public purse and less disruption to tenants when work is being carried out on their homes. My aim in relation to the double-glazing programme has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double-glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015 is met, whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards. Although much is being made now about the status of those who attended the meeting in April 2012 and the subsequent wording of the letter in May to the Chairman, that was entirely due to my genuine belief at the time that the attendees represented the Glass and Glazing Federation and to the errors in the subsequent typing of the letter in which the Committee was inadvertently misinformed about the meetings that I held in April.

1348. This phase of the inquiry is focused on allegations that the Committee was misled over the decision to seek a review of the specification of the supply and fitting of double glazing. Let me be clear: there was no intention to mislead the Committee. In hindsight I accept that I inadvertently and unintentionally misinformed the Committee about the attendees of the meeting that was held on 16 April. At the time, the priority for me was the delivery of the Programme for Government double-glazing commitment, that was announced in November 2011, in the most economical and efficient manner possible. That was first and foremost in my mind. In a context in which the Housing Executive advised that approximately 48,000 properties required double glazing at a cost in excess of £100 million, I was made aware that using an industry standard approach could save money and cause less disruption. I am sure, therefore, that the Committee can understand why I pursued this issue with my officials and the Housing Executive rather than being concerned with who was at the meeting. Thank you, Chairman.

1349. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you, Minister. Before I bring in other members I want to make a couple of points. First, I take it from your evidence that you accept full responsibility for changing the record of the meeting from a meeting with Turkington representatives to a meeting with Glass and Glazing Federation representatives. Do you accept that?
1350. **Mr McCausland:** In my introductory remarks, I stated clearly that I only became aware of the various iterations and the fact that there were iterations at all in the past few weeks and as a result of the discovery process of this inquiry. I had never seen the early iterations before and I was not aware that they even existed.
1351. It would perhaps be helpful if I draw a distinction between meetings of a very formal nature — for example, yesterday I met with the Housing Executive about a performance review; there will be minutes of that, they are circulated to everyone, we see them, they see them, they are they are circulated and agreed and there is an agreed agenda. Those are different from more informal meetings at which an issue is discussed, because quite often I go into meetings and I do not know what the person I am meeting wants to go into detail about. I did not see the note of the *[Inaudible.]* until sometime early last year — sorry, earlier this year. It was a considerable time afterwards — maybe nine or 10 months; I am not sure exactly — but it was sometime earlier this year that I saw that for the first time. I had never seen the note of the meeting until then.
1352. **The Chairperson:** You see, what goes to the heart of this — I have to say that nobody around this table is inferring anything; we are following the evidence.
1353. **Mr McCausland:** Sure.
1354. **The Chairperson:** The evidence that has been presented to us thus far tells us that not one single person, not one single iteration of the aide-memoire that was produced by Barbara McConaghie and not one piece of oral evidence that has been provided to the Committee has said anything other than the people who were at that meeting represented Turkington Holdings Limited. Not least, during their evidence session, the representatives of Turkington's were at pains to point out to this Committee that they made it very clear that they represented themselves and nobody else.
1355. In your evidence, you said that you were not really all that concerned about who the attendees were at the meeting. However, I suggest that if you read the four draft versions, including the final version of the aide-memoire from Barbara McConaghie, at no time is the Glass and Glazing Federation mentioned until the final and fourth version of the draft. In her written submission, Barbara McConaghie tells us that, normally, when she does an aide-memoire, she sends it to a lead official, who, in this case, in her words, was Michael Sands. In the second iteration of that aide-memoire, we see Michael Sands's name, which had been omitted from the first as an attendee at the meeting. We have a number of tracked changes for three drafts, and then we have a final version, which completely and utterly rewrites the first aide-memoire. Barbara McConaghie, in her written advice to the Committee, said that it would not be normal for her to be requested to change an aide-memoire, and she cannot recall who advised her or requested the changes. Minister, the changes were not technical; they were not clerical or administrative errors; they are not typos. It is a complete rewrite to delete any reference to Turkington Holdings Ltd and to replace the reference of the attendees to reflect the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1356. I also draw your attention to the e-mail correspondence between Susan McCarty in the private office and the Housing Executive in relation to their request to change their reference to who attended the meeting, from "Turkington Holdings Ltd" to the "Glass and Glazing Federation". That came from and through your office, in one instance, at

- least, from Susan McCarty. I suggest that, far from people not really caring or being interested or focused on who was attending, there was a very clear and concerted focus on ensuring that Turkington Holdings Ltd was deleted from the record of that meeting. I find that very hard to explain. I do not see that as a typo. I do not see it as a clerical error. I do not see it as an oversight, especially in light of the way in which the matter was dealt with. This matter was dealt with through a number of questions; it was dealt with through a television programme; it was dealt with by yourself here in the Committee meeting, after the 'Spotlight' programme, and, again, in the Chamber in the early debate. I have not had an explanation as to why you, Minister, can say to the Committee, this morning, that you had really no focus on who was attending, yet all the effort has gone into, not changing the substance of the meeting, but changing entirely the representation of the Turkington Holdings Ltd to make sure that they were deleted from any reference to attending this meeting. I have not heard any explanation from yourself, Minister, this morning, to explain how that happened.
1357. On the one hand, you are either not that focused on who is attending the meeting, or, on the other hand, somebody was focused sufficiently to make sure, after a number of iterations of an aide-memoire and a draft letter from Michael Sands to yourself, that, at the end, the result is that we have a complete rewrite and misrepresentation of who was at that meeting. I find that hard to square in my mind. Obviously, we will reflect when we get the entirety of the evidence, but I ask you this, specifically: do you accept that you changed the reference to Turkington's to the Glass and Glazing Federation? I think that you are saying that you did.
1358. **Mr McCausland:** No, I had no sight of any of those versions or iterations; I did not even know that they existed.
1359. **Mr Allister:** The Chairman is asking about the letter.
1360. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, the letter.
1361. **The Chairperson:** You also advised the Committee that you sought to make the changes to the draft letter.
1362. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, that is quite a long question and —
1363. **The Chairperson:** It is a simple question, Minister. Just so that we are very clear on what the question is — you are accepting that you wanted to reflect the meeting to represent that the people who were attending that meeting represented the Glass and Glazing Federation. I am saying to you that not one single other person had that as their recollection. In fact, it was made very clear to you that that is not who attended the meeting, yet you insisted on changing that. I do not think that we have heard an explanation as to why that was. I will give you another opportunity to do that.
1364. **Mr McCausland:** There are two separate things here. First, there is the note of the meeting and, secondly, the letter. I will take them in turn, if I may. I suppose the third element is my own recollection of that, but the two [*Inaudible.*] are the letter and the note. I will take the note first, because it is the simplest one. I did not see the note until much later. I had no input into it. I do not know anything about whatever changes were made. It was not something that I was involved in, so I cannot comment on that. When meetings take place and a note is produced internally within the private office and put on file, it is very, very rare that I would ever ask for that, comment on it or want to see it. Normally, as in this case, the official from the Department, in this case Michael Sands, would be at the meeting. That person would then take their own record of [*Inaudible.*] and the actions that were to be followed through, and they would follow through on them. So, that is left with that person, and the other is put in a drawer, and, normally, I would never see it again. So, that is why I was not aware of it until much later and then also was not aware of the iterations. I did not even know that there

- were such until a matter of a couple of weeks ago. So, I had no role in regard to that.
1365. As regards the letter, my recollection when I received the draft of the letter from Michael Sands — I have stated clearly that I was wrong — was that I genuinely believed at the time that the two gentleman were representing the interests of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I acknowledge now that that was incorrect. That was my belief at the time. The letter was then amended with a note saying to change it. I had written a note saying, “Please amend that accordingly”. There is also a note saying, “Fusion21?”. Those two comments, including the reference to Fusion21 with a question mark, were made on the letter. It was purely, as I believed, in the interests of accuracy that the change was to be made from “Turkington’s” to “Glass and Glazing Federation”. The other change was a suggestion in regard to completeness, because there was a meeting with Fusion21 a week later.
1366. **The Chairperson:** Members, on page 66 of your tabled pack is the first iteration of the —
1367. **Mr McCausland:** To be honest, I am at a slight disadvantage because —
1368. **The Chairperson:** I am going to get a copy for you now, Minister. An official will hand it to him. Thank you.
1369. **Mr McCausland:** Page 66, yes.
1370. **The Chairperson:** Michael Sands was very clear in his evidence that he had provided a draft to you through the private office and received back —
1371. **Mr McCausland:** The draft of the —
1372. **The Chairperson:** The letter.
1373. **Mr McCausland:** What I have in front of me on page 66 is the note.
1374. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, the aide-memoire, yes. The point that I want to make is that that aide-memoire refers to a number of people who attended that meeting.
1375. **Mr McCausland:** Correct.
1376. **The Chairperson:** So, what we are being told by Barbara McConaghie, for example, in her written advice to this Committee is that she is not aware and cannot recall who would have requested her to change the content in respect of Turkington Holdings from the aide-memoire. Michael Sands, in his evidence, said that, when he provided a draft letter to you, he referred specifically to Turkington’s and that, through the private office back from you, he was requested to change that. He accepted that that was an inaccuracy, but you are now saying that you were not involved in any of that middle drafting to the final letter. So, can you suggest who, among that list of attendees, could have had any authority to redraft the aide-memoire or the letter to this Committee?
1377. **Mr McCausland:** The two — the note and the letter — need to be taken separately. As regards the note, I can simply reiterate the fact that I did not see the note at the time. I did not become aware of its content until sometime early this year. I only became aware of the iterations in the past number of weeks.
1378. **The Chairperson:** In your estimation, who among that list of attendees could have changed that? Who would have the authority to change the content of an aide-memoire or, indeed, a letter to this Committee?
1379. **Mr McCausland:** I have no dealings with and no knowledge of the internal workings of the private office as regards how a document goes through a number of iterations.
1380. **The Chairperson:** OK. As I said, we will return to that, because we have specific issues around the evidence provided by Barbara McConaghie and Michael Sands. We will return to that later in the meeting.
1381. **Mr Brady:** Minister, just to reiterate what the Chairman has said, everyone else who gave evidence, including Turkington’s and, indeed, the Glass and

- Glazing Federation, stated very clearly that Turkington's was representing Turkington's and not the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Glass and Glazing Federation confirmed that it had no representatives here. Turkington's said that it was a member of, and affiliated to, the Glass and Glazing Federation but made it very clear that it was there as Turkington's.
1382. Just a couple of questions. At a previous meeting, a member here declared an interest and said that, in the previous election, Turkington's had supplied vehicles to your party. Now, you have said that you know the company but you have no association with it, so maybe you could give clarification on that, as it might be considered the elephant on the room.
1383. The other question is in terms of protocols for contractors, terms of contracts and incentivisation. If a contractor comes up with an idea that can save money — in this case, you are saying that something in the region of £15 million to £20 million was saved — is there some sort of bonus scheme that contractors may benefit from if it is suggested that there are methods of saving money in particular types of contracts, as apparently was the case here?
1384. It is very clear that, from all the evidence given, Turkington's was there to represent Turkington's; it was not there to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation. The issue around Fusion21 is that it also made it very clear that it was not at the meeting. I am not sure how anybody could question whether someone was at a meeting when they were not there. I think that you said you had a meeting with Fusion21 seven days later. To be reasonably clear, because it is based in Liverpool, as far as I know, and presumably the meeting was in Liverpool —
1385. **Mr McCausland:** No, the meeting was in my office.
1386. **Mr Brady:** They came here. At the same time, I am sure that with most meetings you go to and meetings that most of
- us go to, if there are people there who you do not know, there is a round of introductions so that people are fairly clear who is represented at the meeting and what the actual names of the people are and so on. Now, in this case, you are saying that Turkington's was there to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation, but it is very clear from all the other attendees that it was not. Do you have any comments on that?
1387. **Mr McCausland:** There are about four points there, and I will go through them as best I can. If I miss something out, please take me back over it. I will be happy to do that.
1388. Mr Brady raised the issue of some sort of bonus or benefit for someone if they come up with a good idea. No, that is not the case at all. In fact, in their submission to this Committee, the representatives of Turkington's were very clear that there was no possible financial gain in the course of this. All that might happen would be that, if there were savings — and there were substantial savings that we now know to be in the region of £15.1 million — those savings are savings to the system, to the Housing Executive and to the public purse. There is not, was not and could not have been any financial benefit for that particular company. That just clarifies that.
1389. **Mr Brady:** Just on that, Minister: I was not suggesting that there was. I just wanted clarification around the incentivisation.
1390. **Mr McCausland:** I appreciate that. It is an important point to clarify; I agree with that entirely.
1391. In retrospect or in hindsight, when I look back on this, it is clear that I was wrong. I was wrong in my belief that the people there, Mr McKeag and Mr Young, were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. Why did I come to that conclusion? That really is the heart of your question there. They stated at the meeting that they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Now, my misunderstanding was in taking it

that they as individuals represented the Glass and Glazing Federation by being members of it. They maybe meant simply that their company was a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation, but I misunderstood. I was wrong, and I accept and acknowledge that. I am happy to set that record straight.

1392. In the course of the meeting, not only did they say that they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, but quite clearly the bulk of the discussion at the meeting was about the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines and the issue of how you install windows, in particular. That was the core element of it. I have in front of me the transcript of their presentation. In answer to one question, Mr Young said:

“We covered the glazing and the health and safety issues pretty quickly; we then talked about the second issue. He”

— that is, me —

“wrote down the figures as we went along. He totted up the value himself.”

1393. So, as they began to talk about numbers of windows and how much you would save per window, the amount of money that could be saved was beginning to rise to a very substantial figure. Mr McKeag said:

“We went over it a few times. It was such a huge sum of money that it was difficult to believe at the start. It caught his”

— that is, my —

“attention very quickly. We put the numbers to him two or three times just to make it sink in that this could be the saving.”

1394. That is the one thing that stuck out in my mind afterwards about the meeting. It was around the fact that, if you went down that particular route of the guidelines, there were very substantial savings. By way of context, I should say that — I mentioned it in passing in the introductory remarks — when I came into the Department, one of the things that were in my mind from day one, because it was important enough to be

put into the Programme for Government, was the need to address single glazing in Housing Executive properties. That was because so many people were raising it as an issue again and again. Even recently, it is interesting the number of MLAs who ask questions in the Assembly, written and oral, about when the work will be done in their area or constituency.

1395. I was also concerned about the quality of the workmanship. I was out on one occasion with one of the officials from the Department, David Malcolm, who is now in another post. We looked at windows that had been very badly fitted. On another visit to a housing estate I had seen the mess and disruption to the tenant that there was while windows were installed using the previous method. Therefore, when they started to talk about it, changing the method of installation seemed like good sense to me. When I reflected on it, I remembered that, years ago, when I had some windows fitted in my home, they were fitted in that way. It was not disruptive or damaging, and there was no need for redecoration afterwards. We were able to save £15.1 million, a substantial amount of which was through not having to pay the redecoration grants. If you can save £15.1 million, that makes good sense.

1396. As you can see from their description of the meeting, the focus of my thinking and the thing that grasped my attention — both Mr Young and Mr McKeag make the point very clearly that I wrote it down, did the sums on the bit of paper and went over it a few times — was the huge sum of money. As he said, it is what caught my attention very quickly. So the focus in my mind was around the Glass and Glazing Federation. I was wrong in assuming that they did represent it.

1397. **Mr Brady:** Just on that point, why did you feel that it was more important that the attendees at the meeting should reflect the Glass and Glazing Federation, as opposed to Turkington’s, which, to my knowledge, is quite a large, reputable company that deals with all types of

- work in that sector? The Glass and Glazing Federation actually stated that it has protocols through which people have to go if they want to represent it. When it was contacted initially, I think, the Glass and Glazing Federation said that it did not have any representatives here in the North. It may have had members, but it had no people who could specifically represent it or had gone through those protocols to get permission to do so.
1398. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you for raising that; I had forgotten that other point. The third thing to mention regarding the meeting is that Mr Young specifically said — it was acknowledged in the meeting — that he was a former chairman in Northern Ireland of the Glass and Glazing Federation. In fact, I think he may have held other posts, not only chairman. My recollection of that is not absolutely clear, but it was definitely said that he had been chairman.
1399. **Mr Brady:** He did say, I think it was in 2005 or 2006, that he had been.
1400. **Mr McCausland:** In fact — I was just looking the other day — he was chairman again in 2007. I do not know over what number of years it was. All he said on the day was that he was a former chairman or the former chairman. There were a number of references throughout the meeting to membership and to the fact that Mr Young held an office in the Glass and Glazing Federation, as well as the reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines as being the main content of the meeting. All that led to my wrong conclusion that they were representing it. When it came to the letter, I simply suggested the change because I believed that that was a more accurate reflection of the meeting — erroneously.
1401. **Mr Brady:** The other issue was the Turkington's connection. In previous elections, that had been stated.
1402. **Mr McCausland:** On the reference in the 'Spotlight' programme to the fact that Mr Turkington had signed nomination papers for a candidate, I was not aware of that. I would not have a clue about who signs nomination papers. It just shows that he was a man of good discernment in that he —
1403. **Mr Brady:** I am not disputing that at all.
1404. **Mr McCausland:** Well, thank you.
1405. **Mr Brady:** It was not about signing papers. It was the fact that the Member had declared an interest in that vehicles were provided for the purpose of an election, which is slightly different.
1406. **Mr McCausland:** Yes, indeed. Mr Allister has said that he —
1407. **Mr Brady:** It is a much more active role.
1408. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Allister had said that he received that support for his election campaign for the European election. That is correct. He also made another reference to another event.
1409. My connection, and the party's connection, with — I would have no knowledge about that. Certainly, all I can say is that I have enough work to do with my Department and enough work to do with north Belfast. All I can say is that I have never had any connection with Mr Turkington and never received any support from him. To put the record straight, on reflection now, I think that I have only met Mr Turkington on two occasions. One was, and it was referred to by the representatives from his company, back in — I think that they said — 2009, when I was in DCAL. It was at a sporting event that his son had taken part in. There was a reception, and I met him there. It was the first time that I had ever met the man. After I came into the Department, there was a meeting at which there were several Ministers from different Departments. That is the only time, and nothing came of it. So, there has been really nothing in the way of contact.
1410. **The Chairperson:** I will bring Jim Allister in next. On the back of your last number of comments, for the record, the Egan contract process, under the framework change protocol procedure, provides an incentivisation for companies or others that can provide a different way of doing

- work in that they will receive a portion of the savings. So, the question clearly was whether the company, or the company to which it subcontracted, received any benefit? In fact, you have to ask yourself this: if it saved £20-odd million, why would it not, if that is the nature of the contract?
1411. **Mr McCausland:** It is interesting that, before I had the meeting, and I am not sure of the exact dates, there had already been under way over a period of time — because there is a constant review or revision of specification. There were specification revisions in — I am not sure of the exact years — 2006, 2010 and maybe again in 2011. There were three revisions of specification over a period of years. So that happened. I think that it is also on record that there had been a meeting between Turkington's and the Housing Executive prior to that. So, whatever was discussed at the meeting that I held back on 16 April would have had no benefit for them.
1412. **The Chairperson:** That was the question being posed: was there any potential benefit?
1413. I want to ask you about this last point, Minister, because you raised it again in this session. You have said that you were particularly focused on reflecting accurately the meeting. Can you show me anywhere in the aide-memoire any reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation's (GGF) specifications or, indeed, health matters? You have offered up a reason why you misunderstood Turkington's role — because the big focus was on the Glass and Glazing Federation's specifications. Can you show me anywhere that that is referred to in the aide-memoire on page 64, because I do not see it anywhere?
1414. **Mr McCausland:** The only document that I saw was the letter. I did not see the aide-memoire. I have no knowledge of it or what was in it. In fact, it is interesting, because if you look at it, you see that it is clearly written by a PS who would have no specialism in those things and would not deal with them on a regular basis.
1415. **The Chairperson:** With respect, if you cannot explain the change and did not see it, obviously, what you are saying is that cannot really speak to it. You cannot really offer up —
1416. **Mr McCausland:** There are many things that, with hindsight, you can speculate about. I agree with that entirely.
1417. **The Chairperson:** We will speak to Mrs McConaghie in further detail about that.
1418. **Mr Allister:** So as we are clear, Minister: as you sit here today, are you accepting that on 16 April 2012 you did not meet the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1419. **Mr McCausland:** My introductory remarks dealt with that point. I accept now, having read the submission by Mr Young and Mr McKeag — they are very clear — that, on the day, they were representing Turkington's, not the Glass and Glazing Federation. They merely said that they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation —
1420. **Mr Allister:** Do you accept —
1421. **Mr McCausland:** Let me finish, please.
1422. I said earlier that, having read the submission by Mr Young and Mr McKeag, it was very clear that I was wrong in my assumption.
1423. **Mr Allister:** And you came to that realisation having read the evidence.
1424. **Mr McCausland:** I accept that the two gentlemen were telling the truth when they were in front of the Committee.
1425. **Mr Allister:** Hitherto, you have been very robust in claiming that the meeting on 16 April was most assuredly with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Is that fair?
1426. **Mr McCausland:** That was my belief.
1427. **Mr Allister:** To the very point where, for example, in a letter to the BBC on 28 June this year, you threatened legal proceedings over an allegation that you were being less than truthful about that.

1428. **Mr McCausland:** I do not have a copy of that letter in front of me. All I will say is that, up until very recently, when I clearly read the submission from the two gentlemen, it was my belief that they were representing the GGF. I was wrong about that.
1429. **Mr Allister:** Does it come to this, Minister, that having proclaimed most vigorously that it had always been a meeting with the GGF and having put that in several Assembly answers and having asserted that on the Floor of the House at every opportunity, you simply ran out of road on this issue once the evidence became clear? Is that right?
1430. **Mr McCausland:** No. As soon as evidence is put in front of me, I read the evidence and accept the evidence. I acknowledge that my previous assumption was wrong.
1431. **Mr Allister:** Are you apologising to this Committee?
1432. **Mr McCausland:** I said already in my introduction that, just like anybody else, I am human and I make mistakes, and I regret that I made a mistake. I certainly —
1433. **Mr Allister:** Are you apologising?
1434. **Mr McCausland:** Again, Mr Chairman —
1435. **The Chairperson:** OK. Fair enough. When members ask a question, let the Minister respond without any interruption, please.
1436. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you, Chair. I regret very much making that mistake, and I apologise for making the mistake.
1437. **Mr Allister:** Does that include apologising for changing the letter of May 2012 to the Chairman?
1438. **Mr McCausland:** The letter to the Chairman is, in some ways, a mixture of two things. I would almost describe it as a botched letter; it was badly drafted. The original change that I made was to change Turkington's to Glass and Glazing Federation. I believed at that time that that part of it was correct. Following on from that, the reference to Fusion 21 with a question mark after it was misinterpreted, I think. My second mistake was to not have checked the letter thoroughly when I got it back. Ninety-nine per cent of the time when I get a letter back from officials with suggested amendments, it is totally accurate. On this occasion, it was not, and I did not pick that up. That was a mistake.
1439. **Mr Allister:** Leaving aside the Fusion 21 point in the letter, the fact that you changed the letter to refer to the Glass and Glazing Federation was indicative of your own determination to maintain to the Committee and others that that was who you had met.
1440. **Mr McCausland:** It was indicative of my belief at that time — I accept that it was erroneous — that I had met the Glass and Glazing Federation, and the letter was drafted accordingly.
1441. **Mr Allister:** Why was that so important to you?
1442. **Mr McCausland:** Because, quite clearly, I thought it was in the interests of accuracy. I was mistaken.
1443. **Mr Allister:** Or was it that you had some sensitivity about putting up in lights that you had met Turkington's, a party donor, and therefore had an anxiety to divert it off to the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1444. **Mr McCausland:** It is one of those issues that, when you get into the realm of party donations and people sending out begging letters, you get into territory that others may not necessarily want to pursue. The clear point I make is what I already said. I can only repeat it, because it is the truth. I thought it was more accurate. Maybe Mr Allister thinks he can read people's minds, but I cannot and do not think that he can either.
1445. **Mr Allister:** I am just asking you —
1446. **Mr McCausland:** No, but you were —
1447. **Mr Allister:** — whether you had a sensitivity that you were anxious to divert that meeting from being a meeting with Turkington's?
1448. **Mr McCausland:** Absolutely not.

1449. **Mr Allister:** You were very, very adamant, right up until this morning, that you had met the Glass and Glazing Federation. Today is the first day that you have conceded that you did not. Is that not right?
1450. **Mr McCausland:** This is my opportunity to come before the Committee once the process of inquiry has started. It was at the meeting on 14 November, a few weeks ago, that Mr McKeag and Mr Young were here. Some days later, I got a copy of the transcript. I have read it, I accept it totally and this is my opportunity to say that that is indeed the case.
1451. **Mr Allister:** Can I ask you about the dodgy dossier that relates to the rewriting of the minutes?
1452. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, I am not aware of something called a dodgy dossier.
1453. **Mr Allister:** It is my shorthand for the fact that the minutes were rewritten three times.
1454. **Mr McCausland:** I am not aware that there is a dossier.
1455. **The Chairperson:** Let the member make the point and the Minister can respond. Members should be mindful of what they are saying.
1456. **Mr Allister:** You accept that the minutes were rewritten three times.
1457. **Mr McCausland:** In the last few weeks, the system in the private office has been searched through and these various iterations have come forward. It was the first time that I was aware of them; I had never seen any of them before that.
1458. **Mr Allister:** And it accumulates to three rewrites. Is that right?
1459. **Mr McCausland:** That would be correct. It was something that I have no knowledge about.
1460. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And it was not until the final rewrite that, for the first time, there is any suggestion that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Is that right?
1461. **Mr McCausland:** I do not have the —. They are probably in here somewhere. Do you know what page they are on?
1462. **The Chairperson:** Page 64. These will be found between page 64 and page 69.
1463. **Mr McCausland:** There is a version, an iteration, on page 64, and the second one is on page 66.
1464. **Mr Allister:** I think that the final version might be on page 70. This is the final version.
1465. **Mr McCausland:** What page?
1466. **Mr Allister:** Page 70.
1467. **Mr McCausland:** OK.
1468. **Mr Allister:** I suggest to you that that is the first time — the final version — that the Glass and Glazing Federation appears. Yes. At the very heading.
1469. **Mr McCausland:** That would be correct, but again, we are into difficult territory, in so far as I had never seen these until recently and, therefore, anything I would say about them would be speculative and that would be unhelpful, probably.
1470. **Mr Allister:** You must have a working knowledge of your own private office. Do you?
1471. **Mr McCausland:** I have very few dealings with the internal workings of the private office. Documents such as this are in the system. As I said, I attend many hundreds of meetings, whatever number per month. Look at the number of meetings. I cannot recall ever having asked for notes of meetings, to be honest. If I had, it was only once or twice, but I certainly cannot recall ever having asked for notes of meetings. From time to time, as with the meeting yesterday, I have received the formal minutes, but normally I do not see those.
1472. **Mr Allister:** These are minutes. Are they not?

1473. **Mr McCausland:** It is a note that was taken by the PS. A minute is generally understood to be something that has been signed up and agreed to by others. This was an individual taking a note of a meeting. It was made purely for reference purposes later on.
1474. **Mr Allister:** Minister, according to you, they are minutes. On 4 July, you told this Committee:
- “The minute of the meeting also records that the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation advised”*
- such and such —
- “The minute of the meeting is very clear: it is headed ‘Meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation’”.*
1475. **Mr McCausland:** Shortly before that was the first time that I had seen the note of the meeting, the final version. I was not aware at that point of any earlier versions. I became aware of those only in the last few —
1476. **Mr Allister:** I am not dealing with the number of versions at this point; I am dealing with the fact that you described these as minutes.
1477. **Mr McCausland:** Strictly speaking, that would be incorrect. Various terms have been used. Some people have used the term “aide-memoire”; some people have used the word “note”; and sometimes people have used the word “minute”. I do not think that there are precise terminologies in this. It is purely a note of the meeting. The fact is that it was not circulated to all of those attending. Otherwise, as was pointed out by Mr Young or Mr McKeag, they would have picked up on the inaccuracies.
1478. **Mr Allister:** There was a point when you were very anxious to call them minutes, such as 4 July and such as when you intervened in the debate on 8 July and repeatedly referred to them as the official minutes. You seem less keen to call them minutes today.
1479. **Mr McCausland:** A lot of this is stuff that has really been looked into only because of the inquiry, as regards processes. I would not normally see those. You very much inherit processes from what has gone before. They probably vary from Department to Department. For example, I could not recall what the process was in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. I never had an occasion to look back at them there. Whatever term you use, whether it is aide-memoire, note or minute —
1480. **Mr Allister:** Would your special adviser have any role in the revision of minutes or aide-memoires?
1481. **Mr McCausland:** I have never actually had any dealing with those. I do not know who the PS spoke to or what she did when she was drafting it. She says that she cannot recall. There is no point in me speculating because —
1482. **Mr Allister:** And you have not carried out any inquiries.
1483. **Mr McCausland:** It would be difficult to find out from her if she cannot recall who she spoke to.
1484. **Mr Allister:** Have you carried out any inquiries?
1485. **Mr McCausland:** I have not carried out any inquiries.
1486. **Mr Allister:** You have not asked your special adviser, for example, if he knows anything about this.
1487. **Mr McCausland:** My special adviser said to me that he did not have a role in rewriting that.
1488. **Mr Allister:** So, at this point, it remains a bit of a mystery.
1489. **Mr McCausland:** There are some things in life that remain unknown.
1490. **Mr Allister:** Would it surprise you that a minute would be rewritten three times and there would be four versions of it?
1491. **Mr McCausland:** I have become aware of the existence of this and the fact that these notes may be revised only in the last few weeks. I have never had any reason to ask about them. They

- would not normally come to any future attention or use.
1492. **Mr Allister:** The original letter asking for the meeting from Turkington's — 2 February 2012 — was cc'd to the Minister of Finance and Personnel. Had you any discussion with him or any communication with that Department about this?
1493. **Mr McCausland:** No. I think that that point was dealt with by the two gentlemen, Mr Young and Mr McKeag, when they were here. I had no conversations.
1494. **Mr Allister:** Just remind us when your meetings with Fusion21 were.
1495. **Mr McCausland:** The meeting with Fusion21 took place a week after the meeting with the two gentlemen, Mr McKeag and Mr Young.
1496. **Mr Allister:** Had you just one meeting with Fusion21?
1497. **Mr McCausland:** I had one meeting with Fusion21. Now, I think that, somewhere in all of this, they have had conversations — e-mail contact and so on — with the Housing Executive and the housing section in the Department. I had only one meeting; that was all.
1498. **Mr Allister:** You now accept that your meeting in April was not with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Have you ever had a meeting otherwise with the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1499. **Mr McCausland:** No.
1500. **Mr Allister:** You answered an Assembly question from Mr McKay on 5 December 2012.
1501. **Mr McCausland:** What page is that on?
1502. **Mr Allister:** I do not think that it is. It has you claiming that you had two meetings with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1503. **Mr McCausland:** I do not have the answer in front of me, therefore I could not pass any comment.
1504. **The Chairperson:** That is fine.
1505. **Mr Allister:** It is not your evidence that you had two meetings? In fact, it is now that you had no meetings.
1506. **Mr McCausland:** At this point, I cannot recall. I will check back. I cannot recall. I need to look back at that. I do not have that with me.
1507. **The Chairperson:** We can get future clarification on that.
1508. **Mr McCausland:** I will be happy to respond to that when I actually see it.
1509. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
1510. **The Chairperson:** Minister, before I bring Trevor in, I want to raise very important issue. It goes to you and your evidence here. You continue to say that you only recently became aware that there were a number of drafts of the aide-memoire, minutes or note — whatever. It is really the content that is important. Do you agree or can you explain why, when your Department was in discussions with the BBC in June 2013, prior to the programme, it asked specifically why the draft letter that was provided from Michael Sands, as we understand it, to you through the private office, was changed to reflect that the meeting was, in fact, with the Glass and Glazing Federation, not Turkington Holdings? You are saying that you realise that only now on reflection and having discovered that documentation. Would it not have been appropriate to have asked at that time? What I can draw from that — and I am a bit reluctant to — is that, if your Department and you were in correspondence with the BBC about the nature of that meeting and how the draft letter was changed, somebody did not say to you that it actually was Turkington's at the meeting. Did you ask? Or how was that responded to? You responded in your name to the BBC.
1511. **Mr McCausland:** I responded because, at that point, I still believed that it was with the GGF.
1512. **The Chairperson:** And nobody in the department, despite the fact that there were four versions of the aide-memoire and the draft letter, which Michael

- Sands said that he sent, clearly stating that it was, in fact, Turkington Holdings, advised you to the contrary? That is what you are saying.
1513. **Mr McCausland:** No.
1514. **The Chairperson:** Fair enough.
1515. **Mr Clarke:** I suppose that the first thing for me, Minister — and someone maybe touched on the question earlier — is whether you had any reason to disguise the fact that it was Turkington's as opposed to the GGF? Was that of any benefit to you as an individual?
1516. **Mr McCausland:** There was no benefit. There would have been no benefit to me or, indeed, to them. I have met other companies from the construction sector — people, suppliers or whatever. Over the past couple of years, I have met a number. It would not make any difference. As regards the content, as I said at the start, it would have made no difference to the outcome of it.
1517. **Mr Clarke:** After that meeting and subsequently when it went to re-tender — following on from Mickey Brady's question about someone's benefiting from savings — what is your knowledge of Turkington's after it was re-tendered? Was there any benefit to them? Did they get the contract?
1518. **Mr McCausland:** No, they did not.
1519. **Mr Clarke:** So, in essence, what we are saying is that, for their saving Northern Ireland plc £15 million, they have lost money. Would that be fair to say?
1520. **Mr McCausland:** They did not win a contract. That is true. But the good side of it all is, as you, rightly, say, that Northern Ireland plc has saved £15.1 million.
1521. **Mr Clarke:** Yes, but would you accept, Minister, that there seems to be an awful focus — I have to say that there is confusion about the first letter in which Turkington's made the request. I have not got it handy at the moment. I think that, in about the third paragraph of that letter, they referred to being members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. There is a degree of confusion. Personally, I think that we are getting bogged down in the confusion about Turkington's and the Glass and Glazing Federation. We are not focusing on the fact that, under previous Ministers, this would have been reviewed three times, as I think you have just said in an answer to another member. Do you agree that it is sad that, even with regard to other Ministers, those savings were not realised much sooner?
1522. **Mr McCausland:** You are absolutely right: if potential savings had been identified some years earlier, money would have been available for other purposes and for services to tenants in the Housing Executive.
1523. **Mr Clarke:** Has any quantifying answer tried to establish what we spent over the years and what we lost because of the way the contract —
1524. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Trevor, this is not about savings. We know that those are very important and the Minister himself has, rightly so, addressed that issue routinely, as has the Committee. However, this is not about savings. This is about the terms of reference of this inquiry, which is about how those meetings were represented to the Committee and publicly. So, we are not dealing with savings.
1525. **Mr Clarke:** I am very clear on that, too, Chairman. I am very clear that, about 15 or 20 minutes in, the Minister acknowledged that he was confused on the GGF but we are still drilling down into that. I am trying to establish what went wrong as well. I think that you allowed a degree of latitude to other members but it is unfortunate, given that I am from the same political party, that I am not afforded the same latitude as other members.
1526. **The Chairperson:** I am sorry, Trevor, but I do not accept that at all. Every member —
1527. **Mr Clarke:** Well, I do. That is the point I am making.
1528. **The Chairperson:** Well, that is fair enough. The Hansard report will show

- that, under my chairmanship of this Committee for the past two years or thereabouts, not one member of this Committee can suggest or say truthfully that I treated them any differently from any other member. Not one member.
1529. **Mr Clarke:** I think that is a matter of opinion.
1530. **The Chairperson:** I am giving latitude but there is no question of anybody here being treated differently here, so let us not —
1531. **Mr Clarke:** I think that is a matter of opinion.
1532. **The Chairperson:** Well, that is fair enough. Let us not reduce this to a squabble. These are important matters. We have terms of reference that all the members agreed. That is what we are dealing with.
1533. **Mr Clarke:** I do not think that we all agreed. I think it was by majority, if I remember.
1534. **The Chairperson:** It was agreed by the Committee.
1535. **Mr Clarke:** Agreed by majority, that's right.
1536. **The Chairperson:** That is the Committee's ruling.
1537. **Mr Clarke:** Just one final question, Minister. I think that Jim referenced the biggest question in terms of something being cc'd to DFP Given the nature of the meeting that you had with the GGF, Turkington's, the representatives, or whatever they are, and the value that was being initiated, can you see the value of that being indicated to DFP?
1538. **Mr McCausland:** I can see there that it is important that DFP has an understanding of potential spend or reduction in spend because its role is to keep an oversight of the entire spread of money across Departments. It is, perhaps, important to reiterate that when this issue was first raised with the Housing Executive, I was told that there would be 48,000 properties that would require double glazing, and that it would cost £120 million and take until 2021 to do it. So, it would take 10 years.
- That was why I challenged them, in the Programme for Government, that it be done by 2015.
1539. It turned out that they did not have any proper record of how many houses were double glazed, single glazed or partially double glazed. The figures were initially an estimate of 48,000 properties. It turned out that the figure is much closer to probably around 30,000, so they were more than 50% out in that regard. The cost of £120 million seemed quite shocking at the start because I wondered how we were going to get the £120 million. I think that is why they were talking about doing it over 10 years.
1540. It then turned out that because of the smaller numbers and because we were able to do a lot of the work in a more cost-effective way, it was possible to do it for a lot less money, and we will have the work completed as promised by March 2015.
1541. **Mr Clarke:** We hear much in the media at the moment about whistle-blowers. Minister, would you accept that it is unfortunate that someone with a good reputation, such as Turkington's, albeit that they had a connection with the DUP in the past, that companies in future that may be connected to our party or another party, may be reluctant to come forward where they can save money given the quagmire that the good name of that good company has come through over the past few months?
1542. **Mr McCausland:** I am sure that if one were to look at all the companies that meet Ministers in other Departments, and then started digging around, it would be interesting. The fact is, if you have a political party that is the largest in Northern Ireland, and therefore has many people who are supportive of it, undoubtedly there will be people in a range of companies that will have support for that particular party, just as there are people in other companies that would be supportive of other parties. It would be totally inappropriate and wrong for us to ignore people because of their political interest or association. It would actually be impossible to do so,

- because you would be guilty of political discrimination, which would breach our equality legislation in Northern Ireland. So, it is important to remember that it would be impossible for anyone to refrain from meeting people because of any political affiliation that they might have.
1543. **Mr Clarke:** I accept the point that you are making, Minister. However, given the interest that the media have had in this story, has that made it difficult for other companies to come forward to show potential savings? In this case, Turkington's have not been a beneficiary and have not won a contract, but they have afforded Northern Ireland £15.2 million.
1544. **Mr McCausland:** I agree entirely.
1545. **Mrs D Kelly:** Has that been proven?
1546. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, go ahead Minister.
1547. **Mr McCausland:** I agree entirely. The current figure for savings is £15.1 million, and that is a very substantial amount of money. It would be very regrettable if people were deterred from coming forward with good ideas because they thought that they would be pilloried and hauled through the media.
1548. **Mr Clarke:** Thank you, Chair. I can see why Dolores was getting excited, given that her party held the Ministry before. Thank you, Chairman, for your patience.
1549. **The Chairperson:** I want to make it clear, and this is the point that you are rightly making, Trevor, that it is not an offence to donate to a political party.
1550. **Mr Clarke:** That is right. Some others think that it is.
1551. **The Chairperson:** It is important that there is transparency. That is another discussion, and it is not for this meeting.
1552. **Mr McCausland:** It is very clear that in the final version of the note there was a reference to Turkington's. There was no attempt to hide that fact and say that the two people had parachuted in from somewhere. It was made quite clear that they were members of Turkington's staff. I have never denied that and actually provided that information in response to a written question.
1553. **Mr Copeland:** It is widely accepted that the Glass and Glazing Federation, as a federation — it is a trade body — had no representatives in Northern Ireland at the time and that, when approached by the Housing Executive initially, it was unable to put forward anyone to speak about the technical specifications regarding their methods of installing windows.
1554. I want to come at this from a slightly different angle regarding the role of your political adviser. It appears, and you may or may not have had sight of this, that the BBC wrote to your political adviser on or around 7 June 2013. In that correspondence, it raised questions about a press release that stated that a relationship was being established with Mr McCausland's adviser. Do you have any notion about the nature of that relationship? Does it cause you concern that someone so close to you politically, albeit in a departmental capacity, was highlighted as establishing a relationship with a trade body that, on the face of it, did not have any official representation in Northern Ireland apart from corporate membership?
1555. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, I missed the last part of your sentence.
1556. **Mr Copeland:** That body did not have anyone in Northern Ireland that you could speak to corporately to seek the information that the Housing Executive was already seeking.
1557. **Mr McCausland:** The Glass and Glazing Federation, as its representative stated at the Committee, is a trade organisation with a number of other companies.
1558. **Mr Copeland:** He was there as a representative of a private company, not the Glass and Glazing Federation, apparently.

1559. **Mr McCausland:** On 21 November, when Mr Giles Willson from the Glass and Glazing Federation came to the Committee, he said that the federation was a trade organisation. He said:
- "In Northern Ireland we have a regional group".*
1560. That ties in with Mr Young saying that he had been chairman of the Northern Ireland branch, as we now know, for a number of years. Mr Giles Willson said that the chief executive, Nigel Rees, was unable to attend, and the question that was put to him was this:
- "Who are your representatives in Northern Ireland?"*
- To which he replied:
- "I can provide a list of all the members."*
1561. So there are clearly members in Northern Ireland; there is clearly a branch, as we term it, in Northern Ireland or a regional group, and there is clearly a chairman of that, and Mr Young held that position at a time.
1562. I have never actually seen the press release that was supposed to have appeared at that time. Was there a date against the press release?
1563. **Mr Copeland:** Not on the paper that I have.
1564. **Mr McCausland:** I have a recollection of being told — presumably from the 'Spotlight' correspondence — that it was sometime around the period shortly after I came into the Department. At that point, we received a letter from the Glass and Glazing Federation UK that raised the possibility of what it described as a window scrappage scheme, which is a bit like a boiler scrappage scheme or a window replacement scheme like the boiler replacement scheme. That letter came in at that stage, and it did not really have in it anything that was particularly relevant, as we thought at that point, and they were offered then the opportunity to meet officials. So I did not meet them at that point. They met officials, and I do not think that anything in particular came of that.
1565. This is where, when you start to look through things, you learn about other aspects of the matter. There was another meeting when somebody from the Glass and Glazing Federation was to attend — along with a number of other trade people — but did not turn up for the meeting.
1566. **Mr Copeland:** Was that from the Glass and Glazing Federation UK or one of the members?
1567. **Mr McCausland:** I am not clear on that. It was a Mr Ravey, whoever Mr Ravey is. He did not appear, so nothing came of that. The fact was that they had no representative in Northern Ireland. They had members, but whether a chairman in Northern Ireland has a particular role or not I do not know. Those are questions that you need to put to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1568. **Mr Copeland:** Just for clarification, when the question that you referred to was put to the representative from the Glass and Glazing Federation — "Who are your representatives in Northern Ireland" — the answer to that indicated representatives but indicated members —
1569. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
1570. **Mr Copeland:** — and each of those members would represent a corporate and, for some, an independent company, but it is only when they act corporately under the auspices of the Glass and Glazing Federation —
1571. **Mr McCausland:** It is, in so far as —. Mr Willson said that there are members in Northern Ireland, there are rules, there is a chairman. So, I am not quite sure. That is why I can understand it, because Mr Young said that he had been the chairman.
1572. **Mr Copeland:** But, on this particular occasion, that was historical, and I accept the fact that there are —
1573. **Mr McCausland:** It was. My understanding was, when they said

- that they were members, that they were members of some board or other.
1574. **Mr Copeland:** Could you tell us again, would it be a matter of concern that the body had members in Northern Ireland but no corporate structure, that it was represented in the United Kingdom and, indeed, had people that you could actually talk to, despite the fact that when the Housing Executive contacted them it was referred to a technical helpline, which seems to be to be a fairly dodgy way or a questionable way for a Glass and Glazing Federation to respond to questions put by the biggest single purchaser of glass and glazing products in Northern Ireland, referring them to a telephone helpline? They are putting out press releases lauding or stating a relationship being established with your adviser. What would be the benefits to them of establishing a relationship with your adviser? What is the relationship between your adviser, you and the Department? Although Mr Sands's presence at some of those meetings is a matter of some conjecture, which has now been rectified, the political adviser is listed second only to you in most of the pecking order, which, I assume, is just accidental or just the way that it is done.
1575. **Mr McCausland:** The role of the special adviser is set out in the document that we have all received recently. It very clearly sets out that person's remit, so I would refer you to that in relation to his particular role.
1576. We were unaware of the press statement until it was brought up in that letter, and we had never seen it. The only record we can find is that they sent that letter in regard to a proposal for a window scrappage scheme. That was shortly after I came into the Department. I must have seen the letter and noted it, but I did not —
1577. **Mr Copeland:** Would that be based on correspondence with your political adviser or with you?
1578. **Mr McCausland:** That was a letter that came to me.
1579. **Mr Copeland:** So how would —
1580. **Mr McCausland:** I do not know —
1581. **Mr Copeland:** — writing a letter to you lead them to the conclusion that they were establishing a special relationship with your adviser?
1582. **Mr McCausland:** I do not know. I do not have any idea at all. That is a question that you need to put to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1583. **Mr Copeland:** Or to your adviser.
1584. **Mr McCausland:** Well, he may say that, as I think he would, he knows nothing about it either.
1585. **The Chairperson:** OK, well, that is for him, if he is asked, to answer.
1586. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you for coming to the meeting, Minister. In total, how many years have you served as Minister across a range of portfolios?
1587. **Mr McCausland:** I was in DCAL for two years, and I have been in DSD for two and three quarter years.
1588. **Mrs D Kelly:** You would be well aware, then, of the seven principles of public life, which are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
1589. **Mr McCausland:** It is not even a matter of being a Minister and knowing them; every Member of the Assembly would know them.
1590. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes. Surely you would be acutely aware, as a senior member of your party and as a Minister, that, in adhering to those principles, there is an additional onus, if you like, to be entirely inscrutable around these issues?
1591. **Mr McCausland:** I do not think that "inscrutable" is quite the right word. I would say that there are seven standards, but infallibility is not one of them.
1592. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes, Minister, you come into the Committee and you give us an account of a flurry of meetings and a flurry of letters and correspondence

- to somehow suggest that you would, obviously, be unable to be on top of everything that crosses your desk. That was the principle on which you initiated your contribution to the Committee.
1593. **Mr McCausland:** I think that the description or phrase that you used — “not on top of” — is not an accurate or appropriate description. You obviously have not had the experience of being a Minister, but other members of your party have. Those others, I am sure, would confirm that DSD is on a much bigger scale than DCAL was. You have responsibility for the Social Security Agency and the amount of correspondence that comes in around the workings of that, and welfare reform, and particular cases that are taken up. There is a huge amount of correspondence from the Housing Executive on individual cases and so on. You are dealing with a large amount of material, and that is why you have around you the sort of system that you have, including a private office, secretaries, diary secretaries and all the rest. The truth of the matter is that the system — that structure — is on top of things, but it is composed of fallible human beings like you and me.
1594. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes, but really, Minister, you were trying to set the context for your contribution in evidence, which was that there is a huge level of correspondence and activities in your diary.
1595. **Mr McCausland:** I think that the figures confirm that.
1596. **Mrs D Kelly:** I do not think that there is any denial of that. That was the context in which you began the meeting. However, Minister, today has been the first time that you have recognised the fact that the meeting was with Turkington’s and not with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Given the substantial interest that there has been in questions put to you by Assembly Members, in correspondence from others and, indeed, via the BBC, why at a much earlier stage did you not think to look at your diary, where it very clearly says that the 16 April meeting was with Turkington’s, and put your hands up and say that you made a mistake much earlier on in the whole inquiry or, indeed, in that correspondence? It is very clear in the diary note that the meeting was with Turkington’s, so why put yourself through all this if it was so self-evident earlier on that you had obviously misunderstood who your meeting was with?
1597. **Mr McCausland:** The point at which I became absolutely clear that the folk at the meeting, whilst members of staff and managers within Turkington’s, were not representing also the Glass and Glazing Federation was the point at which they came to the Committee and stated that very clearly. I accept their word.
1598. **Mrs D Kelly:** Why would you not have asked earlier?
1599. **Mr McCausland:** No one came forward to me with any information to suggest anything to the contrary. I got that information in front of me a few days after their presentation on the fourteenth. I did not actually see the broadcast of the Committee, but once I got the Hansard report I was quite clear in my mind that, yes, I was wrong. That is why I have come this morning to acknowledge that.
1600. **Mrs D Kelly:** But in the intervening period you have threatened legal action against the BBC, which I presume that you are now not taking, and you had opportunities to ask, at a much earlier stage, who the meeting was with. Plus, you heard at the outset of the inquiry Mr Allister state clearly that, when he was a member of the DUP, Turkington’s were funders and provided vans to your party. In fact, is it not the case that it also funds during election time what is affectionately known in DUP circles as your battle bus? Have you asked your party executive or party leader to what extent Turkington’s fund, and have funded in the past, your party?
1601. **Mr Clarke:** No latitude on that?
1602. **The Chairperson:** It was declared as an interest by a member previously,

- Trevor. It is one of the issues that has been raised on a number of occasions, and raised publicly, so, it is a matter of public concern.
1603. **Mr McCausland:** I am not an officer in the party. My interests are entirely within my constituency and the remit of my Department. I have no knowledge at all with regard to the internal financial workings or arrangements of the party, because I am not an officer.
1604. **Mrs D Kelly:** But have you not asked? Since this statement —
1605. **Mr McCausland:** Why would I ask?
1606. **Mrs D Kelly:** Why would you not? Would you not want to be clear about how perceptions can be —
1607. **The Chairperson:** The answer is no.
1608. **Mrs D Kelly:** Well, it was not clear whether the answer given was yes or no.
1609. **The Chairperson:** I think that the answer given —
1610. **Mr McCausland:** The answer was clearly no. I agree, Chairman; you are right.
1611. **Mrs D Kelly:** Minister, you stated in a briefing to the Committee on 4 July 2012 that:
- “The important thing is that the Housing Executive itself was reviewing specifications in October 2011, long before any meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation, which came in April 2012 — more than or around six months later. Six months prior to that, the Housing Executive itself was working on that issue. I wanted it ramped up before we even put it in as Programme for Government target. The specification was discussed with the Housing Executive in December 2011, and it was acknowledged that it needed a new specification.”*
1612. Therefore, Minister, if you were aware in December 2011 that the new specification was required, why then did you delay your decision to seek a review of the Housing Executive’s double-glazing programme until the start of May 2012?
1613. **Mr McCausland:** The work on the review of the specification, as I have said
- previously, is something that happens periodically within the executive. It had already met Turkington’s and, I think, may well have met others — certainly it met Turkington’s with regard to the specification — about these issues. There was indeed a meeting between the Housing Executive and Turkington’s prior to my meeting with the Housing Executive and Turkington’s. They met separately. I think that the issue seemed to be urgency, because, every day that was going by, more money was being spent unnecessarily on redecoration grants that might not have been required.
1614. **Mrs D Kelly:** But Minister, in February 2013, regarding the Committee’s concerns about changes to the double-glazing specification, you stated:
- “This is an entirely operational matter for the Housing Executive and neither I nor Departmental officials have any approval role if they decide to change a specification.”*
1615. **Mr McCausland:** The important thing for members to understand is that, at the end of the meeting on 16 April, I simply asked my official Michael Sands to ask the housing experts in the Department — the housing advisory unit — whether there was something in this that would save us money. That was followed up by him the following day. That was the end of the matter, as far as I was concerned, for some time. I am not in the business of being involved in any way in the awarding of contracts, the determination of contracts or any of that. That is a matter for the Housing Executive. I am responsible for interrogating — to use an ex-Minister’s phrase — the Housing Executive to make sure that it is providing the best value for money.
1616. **Mrs D Kelly:** I accept that about interrogation. Do you not consider that your letter to the chief executive of the Housing Executive, which instructs him to put on hold all further double-glazing installations until new contract provisions were put in place, actually constitutes an operational decision?
1617. **Mr McCausland:** It was, in my view, not anything other than following through

- on the imperative to ensure value for money.
1618. **Mrs D Kelly:** But would —
1619. **Mr McCausland:** It is also worth noting that the contracts that had already been awarded were followed through. In the course of that year, the Housing Executive exceeded its target of, I think, about 8,600 units to be double-glazed. It actually did more in the year than the target figure. Where work was already under way, it was an opportunity for that work to continue. It continued until the point at which the new contracts came in.
1620. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you for that point, but the question was about whether you now consider that your letter to put on hold all further double-glazing installations until new contract provisions were put in place constitutes an operational decision.
1621. **Mr McCausland:** No.
1622. **Mr Allister:** Minister, you have told us today that you came to the point of acknowledging that you had not met the Glass and Glazing Federation because the evidence from Mr Young and Mr McKeag was very clear.
1623. **Mr McCausland:** It was indeed.
1624. **Mr Allister:** But you knew that from the very night that the ‘Spotlight’ programme went out, because it contained reference to Mr Young saying that they did not tell you that they were there on the federation’s behalf, and that he did not know why Mr McCausland subsequently portrayed the discussions as a Glass and Glazing Federation meeting. From the very night of the programme, you were alert to the Turkington position. Why, then, did you cling to maintaining that for all this time before you finally faced up to it?
1625. **Mr McCausland:** If, at that point, Mr Young had written to me and said that, I would have accepted that.
1626. **Mr Allister:** You knew that he had said that.
1627. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, just a minute.
1628. I have to confess that I do not necessarily believe everything I hear on ‘Spotlight’. I am sure that the member does not do so, either.
1629. **Mr Allister:** So, you heard but dismissed that Turkington’s was questioning why you would be maintaining that you had met the Glass and Glazing —
1630. **Mr McCausland:** As soon as it became clear in Hansard on record before this Committee, I accepted entirely that I was misinformed or had misunderstood the situation.
1631. **Mr Allister:** I put it to you again that you ran out of road, which is the reason for your U-turn today.
1632. **Mr McCausland:** The member has run out of questions and is merely reiterating what he has already said.
1633. I take this opportunity to clarify a point that Mr Copeland raised earlier that I did not fully deal with. When the GGF in Northern Ireland’s rep, Mr Willson, was here, he said:
- “We have a regional secretary for Northern Ireland. The gentleman who has been looking after that is Mr Declan Moore. He has just resigned from the GGF”.*
1634. There is a lack of clarity on and some confusion about the status and structure in Northern Ireland. I just put that down as a point of information.
1635. **The Chairperson:** Michael, you wanted back in briefly.
1636. **Mr Copeland:** Thank you for that clarification, Minister, because I am interested to know the methodology by which the GGF could put out the press release that it did in the absence of a press officer or someone similar in Northern Ireland. Further enquiries will reveal that.
1637. **Mr McCausland:** I do not know.
1638. **Mr Copeland:** Chairman, with your permission, I will continue. I do not intend to stray, but, if I do, I will immediately stop.
1639. **The Chairperson:** I will remind you.

1640. **Mr Copeland:** The Minister quite rightly emphasised the importance of saving money. I fully understand how, on the face of it, a scheme like this would be hard to turn down, if it proved to be accurate, with the vast majority of the savings, or potential savings, coming from the non-payment of redecoration grants. I understand that a number of these schemes have subsequently taken place. Although it is true that redecoration grants have not been paid, compensation has been paid to those who were deemed —
1641. **The Chairperson:** Michael, I am sorry, but in deference to members who have spoken, not least Trevor, who spoke a while ago, where is this going?
1642. **Mr Copeland:** I am simply asking whether, if this scheme was going to be adopted, there would be some methodology of testing. The reality of putting windows in, on a site, is difficult, and you cannot plan it on a piece of paper. If it proved to be that the savings were less than might have been expected, or that the scheme did not work according to plan — in other words, the need continued for compensation to be paid, perhaps through public liability insurance claims — would you revisit the decision or the methodology that was being approached?
1643. **The Chairperson:** Michael, you have strayed.
1644. **Mr Copeland:** I understand.
1645. **The Chairperson:** I am not sure what your question was, and, to be truthful, I do not know whether the Minister is aware of what it was.
1646. **Mr McCausland:** I am happy to speak to you in private about that.
1647. **The Chairperson:** There are just a couple of points, Minister, before we conclude, as no other members have indicated that they wish to speak. I just want to be clear on this: you said in your evidence that you wanted to ensure that the aide-memoire/note/minute of the meeting of 16 April reflected that the people who were in the room from the trade side were the Glass and Glazing Federation. I make the point for the record, again, that that is notwithstanding the fact that not one other person, by written evidence, submissions or oral evidence, has said anything other than they were clear in their mind that the people were from Turkington's.
1648. It seems that someone was at pains, through you and through Susan McCarty, if we follow the other e-mail correspondence that we received, to make sure that the final version of the official note, as it is now being described, which is the fourth iteration of that aide-memoire, plus the draft letter and the final letter to the Committee, were changed after considerable activity to make sure they were changed. I put it to you, Minister, that that goes against every other single piece of evidence that the Committee has received, not least from Turkington's. To the credit of Turkington's, they made it very, very clear that at no time did they represent themselves as anyone other than Turkington's. In fact, I think that they went further than that.
1649. Sorry, I neglected to bring in Fra McCann. I will bring him in in a wee minute. I just wanted to make it clear that that is what we are being told this morning. Further to that, we are being told by Barbara McConaghie, you and Michael Sands that they did not see the aides-memoires. Barbara McConaghie's evidence to the Committee, so far, is that she provided an aide-memoire and does not know where the changes came from. Obviously, we will have to return to that because there is a clear void of information.
1650. **Mr McCausland:** I want to correct one point. I said that I had no role in the note or the aide-memoire. I may have misheard, but, if I heard you correctly, you said that I was anxious that that be set straight. I was not anxious about the aide-memoire, because I did not even know that there was a change to it. I was anxious — not anxious — but I thought that the natural thing to do with

- regard to the letter was to make the change there, but I had no role in the aide-memoire.
1651. **Mr F McCann:** I will be brief. Trevor raised the point that whistle-blowers in other companies might come forward. In fact, others in the industry questioned the specifications that were being put forward by Turkington's. In fact, in some evidence given to this Committee, they questioned that and said, in the longer run, that it was not cost-effective. Can you recollect who told you that the two representatives from Turkington's were representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1652. **Mr McCausland:** Before the meeting took place, my special adviser had been on off on paternity leave for a number of weeks. Before he was off, he said to me that there are these Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines and that people are coming in about that. I assumed, wrongly, that they would be Glass and Glazing Federation people. The reasons why I assumed that I have set out additionally there. What was the other part of the question?
1653. **Mr F McCann:** Who told you? You are saying that it was a conversation that took place between you and your special adviser.
1654. **Mr McCausland:** When they came in, they did not conceal in any way, as is noted, that they were people who were employed by Turkington's. My assumption was that, when they said they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, they as individuals were, in some way, representing it. That was my assumption, wrongly.
1655. **Mr F McCann:** Did you not think of asking them, because there is a huge difference between representing Turkington's and the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1656. **Mr McCausland:** If you go back to the contribution from Mr McKeag and Mr Young when they described the meeting, you see that they said:
"It caught his attention very quickly."
1657. As soon as I had done the calculations and worked out how many millions you were going to save, that struck me as big money. Once I realised that, that was the only thing that really mattered to me. Once I knew that Michael Sands was going off as the relevant official to look into this and get housing advisory unit officials to look into this, it did not occur to me again because I had no further dealings with the two gentlemen. The focus was exclusively and entirely then on whether there could be a saving by changing the way in which you install windows. It is not only the question of money. I have seen windows butchered in some cases when they were being installed, and I raised the issue about the quality of workmanship. Having seen people in the middle of winter with windows being installed in a way that was more prolonged, was not as quick and which caused disruption of the plastering around the reveal, and all of that, it seemed to me that this was just good sense. Therefore, I thought that the guidelines were a good thing.
1658. **Mr F McCann:** Given that Turkington's was part of the industry, would it not have been better to bring in other people who work in the industry and ask for their position? They quite clearly said that, in the longer term, the specifications that were being talked about by Turkington's were not cost-effective. You could not even get guarantees over a longer period of time, so, rather than it being cost-effective, it could end up costing more in the longer term.
1659. **Mr McCausland:** I am not sure that other people have questioned this issue about the need to do replastering and the reveal on the inside or the outside. Other matters, maybe, but I cannot remember a particular challenge around that. However, we have said already that all I did was meet people and ask officials to look into it in the housing advisory unit. They produced some views on it, that was conveyed to the Housing Executive, and that was it. It was up to the Housing Executive, and it made a professional decision.

1660. **Mr F McCann:** Just one more question, Chair. On 2 February 2012, you received a letter from Turkington's requesting a meeting, but, the following day, you also received a letter from Trevor Turkington, advising you of the company's collaboration with the South Ulster Housing Association on a proposal for social housing in Portadown. Is it normal to receive such frequent communication from a Housing Executive supplier?
1661. **Mr McCausland:** First, I am not sure of the full details of the letter about the South Ulster Housing Association. However, the question is broadly around receiving two letters from one company. I am just trying to recall here. If you take those two letters, and, presumably, there was something around correspondence or invitation to that other meeting with the other two Ministers. In two and three quarter years, there have been no more than two or three pieces of correspondence from the company. In the space of two and three quarter years, that is not unusual. I meet a large number of companies and go out to look at their premises and see their ideas, particularly around insulation and energy efficiency, because fuel poverty is a major issue, and, if there are things that can be done, we should try to do them. So, I would have looked at examples of heating and so on from different companies, but that is just an occasional thing. There might be one or two meetings with a company.
1662. **Mr F McCann:** Just reflecting on this, I remember the whole thing about Turkington's because I think that it was in collaboration with Clanmil for a development in Portadown at the time. It was hailed then as a major step forward. It was out there, and it was being talked about in those circles.
1663. **Mr McCausland:** I would need to go back and look at the letter. I do not have it in front of me. Is it in the file?
1664. **Mr F McCann:** What is that?
1665. **The Chairperson:** What you are referring to. Is it in the tabled items file?
1666. **Mr F McCann:** No, it is not.
1667. **The Chairperson:** OK.
1668. **Mr McCausland:** If you want me to come back on that —
1669. **Mr F McCann:** Like yourself, I am trying to take it from memory.
1670. **Mr McCausland:** Age affects all our memories.
1671. **Mr Clarke:** I suppose it is dangerous sometimes to take things from memory.
1672. I will just come back on something that Fra was questioning about whether the savings are being realised or not. I accept what the Minister has said about Turkington's as opposed to GGF. I know that the member has a copy of what the representatives from Turkington's said when they were here, but something that came to my attention in the notes I have takes me back to Fra's point about savings. We now accept that they were Turkington's and not GGF, and you accept that, Minister, which is clear enough for my mind. I think that it was Ian Young — I am not sure of the names. They said at the meeting, and I am sure at the Committee, that they were talking about the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. I think that you will remember, from memory or from reading that, Minister, that the Glass and Glazing Federation is a very large trade body, and it is a recognised trade body. Would it be fair to accept that, whether they were representatives or members, the guidelines of a very large trade body would be important?
1673. **Mr McCausland:** The key element in the conversation that day and in what arose from it was all around the guidelines, which were not particular to a company.
1674. **Mr Clarke:** Sorry, whose guidelines?
1675. **Mr McCausland:** The Glass and Glazing Federation's guidelines. They are not particular to one company; they would be applied to and obeyed by all of the companies across the United Kingdom that are members of the GGF.
1676. **Mr Clarke:** You will recall from reading that, Minister, or maybe you will not — I

- think that Ian Young was one of them. What was the name of the other guy?
1677. **Mr McCausland:** Jim McKeag.
1678. **Mr Clarke:** I think that it was Jim McKeag who made the point that they were concerned about the health and safety of their workforce, given that they were expected, under the existing contract, to fit units that were coming fully glazed, and that that was one of the purposes of changing the contract.
1679. **Mr McCausland:** That issue regarding the health and safety of workers was raised at the start of the meeting. They said in their evidence that they dealt with that. We covered the health and safety issue pretty quickly, and the bulk of the meeting was then spent talking about the second issue.
1680. **Mr Clarke:** Which was?
1681. **Mr McCausland:** That was about the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. Mr McKeag said that the Glass and Glazing Federation phrase came up three times during the meeting.
1682. **Mr Clarke:** OK. So, your recollection is the same as theirs: that reference was made to their being the federation's guidelines?
1683. **Mr McCausland:** Absolutely.
1684. **Mr F McCann:** Just on the back of what Trevor said: are you saying that Turkington's was querying the health and safety record of the other companies who were putting the glazing units in?
1685. **Mr McCausland:** They were not querying anybody. They were simply raising an issue about the weight of window frames when the glass has been installed and transporting them from a to b. It was purely a matter that they raised. I did not get involved in that at all. The matter was one of the two issues that would have been noted by John McPeake as chief executive of the Housing Executive, and our own housing advisory unit then presumably looked at that when it was in contact with the Housing Executive, but I have no knowledge of that.
1686. **The Chairperson:** OK. We do not want to be straying into stuff that is really nothing —
1687. **Mrs D Kelly:** I just want to know why, Minister, you believed that you had to write to the Housing Executive to inform them that their understanding of the meeting with Turkington's was that it was not with Turkington's but with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Why did you take that specific action?
1688. **Mr McCausland:** I do not have that letter in front of me. Is it in the file?
1689. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes.
1690. **Mr Allister:** Page 28.
1691. **The Chairperson:** That is from Susan McCarty actually.
1692. **Mrs D Kelly:** From Susan, yes. Why was it so necessary to do that?
1693. **Mr McCausland:** Is it the e-mail of 1 July that you are referring to?
1694. **The Chairperson:** Yes, it is in the middle of the page.
1695. **Mr McCausland:** From Susan McCarty to Karen Mills. I was not aware that that had been sent, and there is no particular reason why I would be. It is not asking to do anything; it is simply advising them of a piece of information.
1696. **Mrs D Kelly:** In July, though, after all the other matters had been laid before you and concerns were raised, there was still no admission of a mistake having been made, even though the diary date for 16 April clearly says Turkington's. I just find it strange.
1697. **Mr McCausland:** I can honestly say to you that, as soon as the evidence was there from both gentlemen that I was wrong, I am happy to admit that. I have never been afraid to admit that I get something wrong.
1698. **Mrs D Kelly:** Surely the evidence was there long before that.
1699. **Mr McCausland:** The e-mail to which you refer is one piece of evidence. There is quite a bit of material floating about,

- some of which, in fact, has only come to light in the last few weeks.
1700. **Mrs D Kelly:** But the 16 April diary date was 16 April, and it was a meeting with Turkington's.
1701. **The Chairperson:** I referred to that precise e-mail contact from Susan McCarty earlier, so we will seek clarification from Ms McCarty as to why that was actually sent, because it was one of a number of e-mails that culminated in that particular message. I think it is important for the Committee to get clarification as to what that was and on whose direction Ms McCarty took that course of action.
1702. I will just ask two brief questions. In the draft letter to you from Michael Sands — it is on page 34 — is that your own handwriting?
1703. **Mr McCausland:** No, that would be the special adviser's handwriting.
1704. **The Chairperson:** That is the handwriting that strikes out "Turkington Holdings Ltd" and puts on the side column "Reps of the Glass + Glazing Federation", and, below that, "Fusion 21?"
1705. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
1706. **The Chairperson:** So, that is the action of the special adviser.
1707. **Mr McCausland:** Yes. By way of explanation on that, I refer back to the role, remit and job description for special advisers. One of the elements there is to review correspondence and documentation. If anyone is familiar with the room that I use upstairs, they will know that there are two tables. He works at one and I work at the other, and we regularly, in the course of dealing with documentation, refer from one to the other, so I was aware that that was written on it, but it is actually his writing.
1708. **The Chairperson:** In Michael Sands's evidence, he said that he sent a letter to you through your private office and received a letter back. I want to paraphrase Michael Sands: what the Minister wants, the Minister will get. Or words to that effect. The point is that we have a change to the draft letter, and Michael Sands, in his evidence, clearly acknowledged that that was an inaccuracy in the way it was written that changed the outcome, which was sent to me on behalf of this Committee. It was an inaccuracy. You have accepted today that you made the mistake, so obviously we will reflect on that.
1709. I have one final point. You said in your earlier evidence that you received a number of requests for meetings to discuss double-glazing contracts with companies with an interest in specifications. Did you have any meetings with any other company on that matter?
1710. **Mr McCausland:** Yes, I did.
1711. **The Chairperson:** Then the Committee will seek a list of that.
1712. **Mr McCausland:** That is fine.
1713. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you very much. Minister, thank you for that this morning. We will return.
1714. Members, we agreed that, on completion of this evidence session today, we would reflect on the evidence at the next meeting. However, as I pointed out earlier, there is clearly an issue about disclosure, which, as we all agreed in an earlier part of the meeting, is not acceptable. So, we will require Will Haire, the permanent secretary, to be here at the meeting on 9 January.
1715. We have conflicting evidence from Barbara McConaghie and Michael Sands. I obviously have no intention of commenting on the veracity or otherwise of any of that, but what we have received is conflicting. So, I suggest that we need to hear directly from both those individuals, and that, in this context, because of the conflicting information provided, we need to ask and require people to take the oath and make a declaration as they see fit. Further to that, we need to ask Susan McCarty to clarify the terms upon which she pursued that line of action in a number of e-mails and require Stephen Brimstone to come to the Committee

to give evidence as well. That will be on 9 January.

1716. On the back of that, we will take stock. It is fair to say that we have quite a quantity of information. In ideal circumstances, certainly from my perspective in trying to make sure that we conduct the inquiry properly, I would have preferred to have all the information provided to the Committee at an early stage so that we could have perhaps had an awayday to cogitate, reflect on and examine all that. We may well do that. So, what I am suggesting is that we move forward as we agreed to the meeting on 9 January. We will advise those individuals that we now require them to present themselves to the Committee.
1717. I just want to make it clear again for the record that this is obviously new territory for the Assembly. This is the first such inquiry that has been held. I want to make it very clear to the Department and others that when we require documentation that means that that documentation must be provided to the Committee. It is not an if or it is not a discovery exercise or a trawling exercise. It a statutorily-based inquiry, and the Committee takes very seriously its responsibility. On that basis, we conclude this session of the inquiry.

9 January 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Will Haire *Permanent Secretary,
 Department for Social
 Development*

1718. **The Chairperson:** As Committee members will recall, the Committee had agreed to take evidence today from Stephen Brimstone, Michael Sands and Barbara McConaghie. We understand that Michael Sands is unable to attend today's meeting owing to illness, and there is a letter to that effect in members' tabled items. We also have the permanent secretary, Will Haire, here this morning. Will is here not as a witness to the inquiry but to talk specifically about how the Committee's inquiry will receive the documentation that we require to allow us to do our work.
1719. I remind people that, on a number of occasions, more as a result of the due diligence of members and officials, we have continued to discover that we have not received all the documentation that we were expecting and should have had. If I were being cynical, I would say that it is almost a case of do not ask, do not tell. I do not accept that there has been information at the disposal of the Department that has not been given to us other than through us discovering that it is there. For example, in at least one meeting, Jim Allister and I raised the fact that we had no email correspondence provided to us. We had

to ask for that. In this day and age, for an inquiry of this standing, to have to ask for email correspondence is just not good enough. We pointed that out at the time. I made it very clear that this type of inquiry is kind of new territory, so there is a certain amount of latitude given and experience and lessons to be learned. We have dealt with the matter on a number of occasions, and I think that I said that failure to disclose information is, for me, a failure to disclose and a very serious matter. I acknowledge, Will, that you and perhaps other officials have met our Committee officials in recent days to work out how best to provide the relevant documentation to the Committee to enable us to do our statutory duty. I appreciate that. I want to give a couple of examples by way of addressing this before I ask you to speak, Will.

1720. **Mr Wilson:** Chair, I was not at the previous meeting, so I may be wrong here, but there is another issue that Will was involved in, and that is the single-tender-action decision by Mr Hoodless around the appointment of Campbell Tickell. Can we ask questions about that today?
1721. **The Chairperson:** I would prefer that, since we dealt with this matter earlier and because some of that — not that particular issue — could be related to it, we will take legal advice next week. I therefore suggest that we deal with that next week formally.
1722. **Mr Wilson:** It is just while Will is here. It really does not relate to the process, but, given what you said about why he is here today, it might be useful to explore that issue rather than have to bring him back.
1723. **The Chairperson:** It may well be that we need a number of people back on that matter, Sammy. We are in inquiry session at the moment, so I would prefer that we left that issue to deal with the totality of it. I appreciate the point

- that you are making. I do not want to be mixing agenda items, if you do not mind. The matter needs proper attention, and rightly so.
1724. I just wanted to make the point, Will, that, as I said in the example that I gave earlier about the email stuff, a number of people have rested their case around the record of the meeting on 16 April. A number of people, in the 'Spotlight' programme and to the Assembly and this Committee, have referred to the record of the meeting on 16 April.
1725. Then, subsequent to us doing our work, we discovered that there were four iterations of the record of that meeting. We subsequently discovered that there were actually six. Albeit that one or two of the changes might not be at all major or substantive, the fact is that people were relying on what they referred to as "the" record of the meeting when, in actual fact, the record changed through six iterations. Now, for me, that is a very important issue to highlight because the Department — your Department — was obviously aware at some point that there was more than one record of the meeting, certainly more than one version of it, and I will come to that in a moment. We will certainly deal with it later when Ms McConaghie gives her evidence.
1726. Also, we did not discover, for example, that we had not been told that the Minister was provided with a briefing before the meeting on 16 April. That was even though we had the Housing Executive officials here who said that they had been invited to that meeting on 16 April, but, unusually, they had not been asked to provide a briefing. Now, for me, that is two examples of where I believe that the Department has been remiss.
1727. We also had written evidence provided to the Committee by Barbara McConaghie that seemed to conflict — well, it did not seem to, it does conflict — with what was provided in evidence by Michael Sands. This week, the Department has provided the inquiry with a table that shows that
- Mr Sands — contrary to what he has said — amended the document/aide-memoire/minute twice. At what point were we to be advised of that? If it had that information, at what point was the Department going to tell the inquiry that what we had been hearing in evidence was actually incorrect?
1728. I think that these issues run very seriously to the heart of the ability of the inquiry to do its work.
1729. When he was here to give his evidence, I made it very clear to the Minister that this is nothing personal or disrespectful towards him, and he, in my view, seemed to accept that, but a further point that I wanted to ask about is that we have a situation where people from the Department refer their evidence to the Minister before they give it to this inquiry. That puts the Minister, never mind this inquiry, in a very invidious position. We have a Minister against whom allegations have been made, and that Minister is expected to take the evidence that is to be presented to this inquiry from those who are going to give it. So, what role in that should the Minister have or would the Minister possibly want to have?
1730. Will, we want to establish from you, as permanent secretary and accounting officer of this Department, what steps are being taken under your leadership to ensure that this inquiry gets all the relevant documentation in due course and in a timely fashion?
1731. **Mr Will Haire (Department for Social Development):** OK, fine. Thank you very much, Chairman. It was only on the day of the last meeting that I realised that problems of this nature were occurring.
1732. First, I want to make it very clear that you have my total assurance that I want to make sure that you get all the documentation that you want in a timely fashion, and I realise that there are issues here. I should say that this process has been a learning experience for us all, for the Committee Clerk and for us. Our main experience of this sort of inquiry is when Northern Ireland

Audit Office teams prepare material for the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Those teams do all the bedevilling and make sure that all the documents are in the right place for presentation to the Committee. In a sense, the way that you are running your inquiry has been slightly different. So, it has been a learning experience.

1733. From looking at this and having had discussions with your team and my team, I can clearly identify some of the problems. The approach that you have taken is for the Committee Clerk to send us very formal notes of the minutes and documents that you want. There are two elements here. We do not have a nice set of documents all sitting there nice and neatly. It is a large Department. You asked, for example, for all our contacts with Turkington. We had to go and ask every different unit of work to look into each of its electronic records to see whether it had any reference to Turkington. That was a large bit of work to do. It also depends on whether they put the right title on the document so that they would know the right process. That takes a bit of time. That is one element. It is our job to get the documents, but I am just saying that it sometimes takes a lot of time and that some of the timeliness problems come from that.
1734. The second issue is that we probably made a mistake in our first phase. We looked at your notes formally and answered the exam question that you set us diligently and quite precisely; overly precisely, I think. I do not think that that worked for you, and it did not work for us. That has prolonged this phase of the discussion. So, although I think that my teams have worked very hard on this issue, looking back on phase 1, I think that it would have been much better if your Committee Clerk's team and me had come together early on to talk about the issues and the documents and for us to show them the documents to see how much more they wanted, including, for example, the iterations of the Trimmed documents. In our system, documents are frequently
- changed until they are finalised. That is the nature of the TRIM system. You can see that that has happened. You have all the records of that now.
1735. We had a really good discussion with your team when we met on Tuesday. We are setting up a meeting on phase 2 for next week, at which we will talk about the broad set of documents. Phase 2 is massive so there is a really big task of work here. There are vast amounts of documentation. There are some quite good analytical reports, including the work of the PAC etc, that I think will help your Committee in that process. There are some bits that we can pull together. I suggested to Kevin and Claire that we sit down with them, get the guidance from them, get the documents to them and then, as they start reading through those, see whether there are other connections that we can make to build up a full dossier for you. I think that we should do that. We should meet regularly, and, Chair, I will certainly make sure that that is all done. We will work that through so that we produce a new protocol for how these documents are made. Once we have gone through and got you the documents for phase 2, we will move on to the phase 3 documents and cover the same issues. We can get all these materials.
1736. We have been getting notes and letters from you, and we have been answering the exam questions as we understood them. That clearly does not work for you. I think that we can produce a better system that is more open so that, as you start each phase of the inquiry, you have the full set of inquiry papers as far as possible. There will always be issues that come up in discussion about which you will ask for further material. We will get that for you as you go on. I hope that that gives you a sense that we have learnt in the process. I think that it is a joint learning experience for the Committee Clerk and for us. I hope that that will work for us moving forward.
1737. You talked about the fact that all papers coming to the Committee are noted by the Minister. That is the protocol between the Executive and the

- Assembly, under which all of us operate. Sammy, having been a Minister, you will recognise this issue. We put that issue to the Minister purely to note, and the Minister has never made a query about it. That is the protocol that I am working under and that the Executive and the Assembly have agreed to work under. I can understand why you are saying that, in this circumstance, there is a particular issue. I am just saying that I am working within the rules that were set. Since the Minister is the head of the Department and represents the Department, he has to understand what the Department is saying. We work to the Minister because he is accountable to you and we are accountable to him. That is the nature of public servants, and that is what the protocol is trying to recognise. As I say, when this Committee asks the Minister about issues, those are issues on which the Committee and the Assembly might want to reflect in future. However, those are the rules as I understand them.
1738. **The Chairperson:** That is fair enough, and I am not suggesting for one second, nor is there any evidence to suggest otherwise, that the Minister has, in any way, wished to interfere in any of that. However, I recall that the Minister seemed to accept quite clearly the concept of a Minister against whom an allegation has been made. It puts the Minister in a very difficult position. So, if I remember correctly, evidence was presented to this Committee that took two or three weeks to get here because we were told that it had to go to the Minister.
1739. You leave yourself open to an allegation that there is a conflict of interest. So, what you need to do is to go away and speak to the Minister, and, I suggest, to whomever else, to work out that there is absolutely no suggestion, that there can be no suggestion and that it cannot be left open to suggestion that there is any conflict of interest. I do not accept the characterisation that you gave that this Committee has done something different. This inquiry has been set up under statute. This is not an informal Committee hearing; this is a legally based inquiry. We are doing our work strictly to the letter of the law, and everybody clearly understands that. So, there can be no corners cut here.
1740. **Mr Haire:** I am not suggesting that.
1741. **Mr Wilson:** I just want to establish a particular issue. Will made an important point, and I can see this from both sides. Very few officials would be very happy about sending stuff out from a Department, especially given, or maybe because of, its sensitive nature, without having notified the Minister first. Indeed, it probably would put officials in far more difficulty if they were not to send papers through the normal channels that are established for communications between the Department and Committees. I do not know that we, as a Committee, can overrule the protocols that are set down. Indeed, I suspect that very few officials in Departments would be happy to be placed in a position where they make the decision about what goes to a Committee, especially if it involves the Minister.
1742. **The Chairperson:** I want to make it clear that this is an inquiry that we are working on. I am not at all suggesting that we want to overturn or thwart any protocols. However, we need to establish that there has been no interference with any information or evidence that has been presented to this inquiry. That is absolutely sacrosanct. I want to return to that, but a couple of members want to come in.
1743. **Mr Allister:** Let me just pick up on the point that the Minister must be kept informed because he is the head of Department etc. Is there a reciprocal dimension to that for you as permanent secretary? Are you kept abreast of meetings that the Minister is having and of the content of those meetings? Does the Minister act in a silo in that regard?
1744. **Mr Haire:** Sorry. The Minister's political meetings are nothing to do with us.
1745. **Mr Allister:** I am not talking about the Minister's political meetings.

1746. **Mr Haire:** There are communications between a Minister and a permanent secretary, but I know of no protocol for them.
1747. **Mr Allister:** For example, at the heart of this phase of the inquiry is the meeting that the Minister had with Turkington's. Did you have knowledge of that meeting before it happened?
1748. **Mr Haire:** I can presume that I am allowed to look at the Minister's diary every week, partly just to make sure that I understand what is going on. For that reason, I will see the Minister's diary.
1749. **Mr Allister:** Is that how you glean your knowledge?
1750. **Mr Haire:** Yes. I also see submissions going through.
1751. **Mr Allister:** In this case you saw the pre-meeting briefing.
1752. **The Chairperson:** Jim, I am sorry. I need to address the question of legal and procedural fairness. Will Haire has come here this morning as a witness to the inquiry. Under the legal advice that we have been clearly presented with on this whole question of procedural fairness, if we invite someone here under the terms of the inquiry to answer questions to the inquiry, obviously, we have to give him notice of that so that there are no surprises. I have to rule that out for this morning because Will was invited here to address the issue of how he, as the permanent secretary in the Department, is going to make sure that this Committee is provided with all the relevant information that we are entitled to have. That is the legal advice. I want to make sure that we do not stray into an evidence session.
1753. **Mr Allister:** Obviously, I accept what you say, but point 6 on our agenda is the inquiry into allegations arising from the 'Spotlight' programme, with Mr Will Haire in attendance. That is very suggestive to me that he is here under the aegis of the inquiry.
1754. **The Chairperson:** No. Jim, we made it very clear that we were inviting him here to deal specifically with the provision of materials to the inquiry. That is obviously related to the inquiry, but he is not here as a witness.
1755. **Mr Allister:** Would it be a way forward to indicate to Mr Haire that, if he feels uncomfortable answering any questions, he need not because he has not had notice? However, he is here and he might have useful information to give. Do we not take that opportunity?
1756. **The Chairperson:** We have established the procedure by which we are working the inquiry. In the interests of consistency and making sure that we can never be accused by a witness that they were misled before they came here, we will not do that. If we feel the need to bring Will Haire here as a witness, obviously we will do that. Will is well aware of that, as is any other official. So, Jim, if you do not mind, we will not do that. That means that we will keep ourselves right, keep all risks to a minimum and treat people professionally and fairly, as we are legally obliged to.
1757. **Mr Allister:** There is only one other issue that I wanted to raise, and you can tell me whether it is in order or not. Since the permanent secretary is here, I want to get a better understanding of the role of special advisers in the Department and how they sit in their powers, their access to people and papers and their power to give directions. Is that within the ambit?
1758. **The Chairperson:** We are in danger of straying. I am not as wedded to the initial advice that I gave on that question. If Will is content to answer that, well and good, but I would prefer that we deal with it on another occasion. However, I can see the point that you are making, so I am happy enough to give a certain amount of latitude if Will wants to take that question up, as long it does not impinge on the work of the Committee. It would be a general response as opposed to something specific to the inquiry.
1759. **Mr Haire:** Mr Allister is an expert in this area. Having done so much work on it

- for his Bill, he will know the set rules for what a special adviser is to do and the code that sets out that role. There is no better document for setting out the role, so I refer you to that. That document is key. That is all I can say at this stage.
1760. **The Chairperson:** That is fair enough.
1761. **Mrs D Kelly:** Will has set out the protocols, which include all the papers going to the Minister before they go anywhere else. Given that this is not a normal request or situation — this is an inquiry, and the Committee, under the terms of the inquiry, is asking for papers — is there a different protocol? Presumably, as the most senior person in the Department, you have to keep yourself right in the protections that the Department and you are afforded. Therefore, does the same protocol apply to our requests as it does to everyday requests?
1762. **Mr Haire:** My guidance is that that protocol does apply. That is my understanding. Let it be recognised that I and the Minister understand the sensitivity of this issue. We are conscious of that. I can give an assurance from all that I have seen, and I think the Clerk and the Chair have seen, that the Minister is absolutely clear that there is a delicacy to this because of the inquiry. The Committee can be assured that the material will be got to it.
1763. **Mr Wilson:** Has —
1764. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Sammy. Dolores has not finished that point.
1765. **Mrs D Kelly:** At any stage, has there been a delay when you have given approval to something that has gone to the Minister? Have there been any areas of tension or vetoes in any requests?
1766. **Mr Haire:** There has been no veto.
1767. **Mrs D Kelly:** Have there been any delays?
1768. **Mr Haire:** No —
1769. **Mrs D Kelly:** There has been a swift turnaround. You will have told the Minister that the Committee is looking for this paper and asked him whether it will be OK for you to send it to them. The reply will be “Oh, yeah sure,” and off it goes. The Committee wants it and, given the circumstances and the powers of the Committee as far as the inquiry is concerned, it is more or less a rubber-stamping matter by the Minister.
1770. **Mr Haire:** It is also important that the Minister knows what information is — *[Inaudible.]* I have a duty to make sure that my Minister is aware of everything. It is impressed and agreed with the Assembly that I have the duty to do that and I make sure that that is complied with. As I said, I think that we can deal with those things and are dealing with them effectively.
1771. **Mrs D Kelly:** I do not think that that entirely answers the question, Chair. People are aware, but we are not being told whether it is an immediate turnaround.
1772. **Mr Wilson:** If you did not abide by the protocol as it is at the moment, it is conceivable that information could be passed to this inquiry that the Minister would not be aware of. Since he is the subject of the inquiry, not only would that be unfair but it would put you or other officials who had supplied you with the information in a particular difficulty if the Minister were to say that that information was supplied but that he had no knowledge of it.
1773. **Mr Haire:** I presume that that is behind the reason why the protocol was written in the way that it was. As you said, I am accountable to the Minister, the Minister is accountable to you. The whole infrastructure that has been established for the system, therefore, is not irrelevant in this area. As I said, we recognise the sensitivity of this issue.
1774. **Mr Wilson:** I want there to be no misunderstanding. I think that the implication in the question and the points that have been made to you are twofold: either that, somehow or other, the Minister acts as a sift for the information that you send to him and

- that eventually comes to the Committee; or that he acts as a block to frustrate the Committee by, if not stopping the information totally, delaying it. Given all the information that has been sent by the Department so far, are you aware of any occasions when the Minister has said, “That is not going”, “That is going in an altered form” or “Make them wait for it”?
1775. **Mr Haire:** The Minister has certainly not done anything of that nature. No way. He has been very clear about getting the materials and forwarding them to the Committee.
1776. **The Chairperson:** It is important and helpful for the inquiry to have that information. Sammy, just to make the point for the record, when anybody is invited here or required to attend as a witness, under full disclosure from this end of the Table, they are provided with any relevant information that would affect them. There is total openness, transparency and procedural fairness under our working procedures.
1777. **Mr Brady:** Obviously, there are protocols that have been applied. However, this is a unique situation in that, as far as I am aware, this is the first inquiry of its kind that has been conducted by this Committee or, indeed, by any Committee. The inquiry might set a precedent as it evolves. Has the Department considered that protocols might have to be established to deal with this particular type of situation that might vary or be different from the normal protocols that apply on a day-to-day basis within the context of the Assembly?
1778. **Mr Haire:** The protocol is, of course, between you, the Assembly, and we, the Executive. So, it is a joint protocol. It is your inquiry, so, in a certain sense, it is a joint issue for us as to question whether, when we have concluded this inquiry, we collectively feel that there are lessons that we need to think about. I suspect that that might be an issue that is worthy of reflection. Mickey, I suggest that it is a joint issue for us and not just for me.
1779. From the outset, I have been very aware that this was the first time that this type of inquiry has been used. As I said to Kevin, the Committee thought through its protocols and systems of how it should conduct this inquiry. At one stage over the summer, I thought about whether I should talk to Kevin about the issues that would come up. I said to myself, “No, I must not”, because if I did, I would be seen to be interfering in your inquiry. It is your inquiry. We have had a learning experience and there have been problems, and you have come to us, rightly, and said, “Sort this out”. I think that we are sorting it out. It is your inquiry. We are very keen to deal with those issues. I deeply respect the primacy of your role, as a Committee, to do this inquiry.
1780. **Mr Dickson:** I understand the need for the protocol and the importance of the Minister seeing or being aware of all the documentation that is transferred to the Committee, and I, of course, accept your assertion that there has been no interference in that or any reluctance with regard to it. Who else sees the information that is passed to the Minister before it comes here?
1781. **Mr Haire:** The rest of the senior people. Whoever is gathering the team together. The special adviser will see it as it goes through as well.
1782. **Mr Dickson:** That is fine. Thank you.
1783. **Mr Haire:** The special adviser will see everything that goes to the Minister.
1784. **Mr Clarke:** Will, you said that the same protocols apply between all Ministers and permanent secretaries.
1785. **Mr Haire:** Yes, it is a protocol.
1786. **Mr Clarke:** Mickey Brady referred to this inquiry being the first of its kind. So, if Conor Murphy had still been here, would the same have happened with DRD if it had called an inquiry into his religious discrimination case?
1787. **Mr Haire:** I do not know the detail of the process. I can only presume. That it is the one that all civil servants work to.

1788. **Mr F McCann:** You said earlier, Will, that you look through the Minister's diary to look at what meetings he has on over the weeks. If you look at the diary and there are queries or what you might see as a conflict of interest — even if you go over the meetings afterwards — would you advise the Minister about that possibility? I am talking about a contractor meeting a Minister on issues that they may later apply for contracts under.
1789. **The Chairperson:** We are in danger of straying into substantive inquiry business. We will not deal with that.
1790. Will, I want to come back to you because I do not really accept your characterisation earlier that this inquiry started off, you picked your own rules, it is a learning curve and all the rest of that. This matter has trundled on now for several months and longer. It has been the subject of television programmes, Assembly debates, Committee hearings, and so on. I have a clear impression in my mind that there is a lack of proactivity on behalf of the Department to provide this inquiry with information, and, even before the inquiry was established, I believed that there was information at the disposal of the Department that seemed to contradict what people were saying. I find that very serious, and I am trying to grapple with it in very diplomatic terms. As I identified earlier, in the course of this inquiry, we have discovered additional information or other documents that the Department has provided to us that contradict, on more than one occasion, evidence presented here. When the system throws up something that appears to contradict what someone has either written or given in verbal evidence, at what point will the Department come and say, "Excuse us, we have evidence that suggests that what you heard is not correct"? That is fundamental. That goes to the truth of these matters.
1791. **Mr Haire:** For example, you made a reference to Michael Sands saying he had not seen the note. If I understand rightly, Michael clearly did see it on 17 April, and the record indicates that he made a change. In fact, you can see what he did. He cut and paste and did a note to the technical experts whom he had sent off to check out the technical aspects. It is quite clear that the private secretary had sent him the note on that date to check that she had got it right. That was her personal note, and she wanted to know what was going on for her records and to keep on top of it. He basically felt that her description of it was not correct. She is not an expert in this area at all, but he took his section and put it in there. Now, he had clearly forgotten about that issue. I suppose that, if he had been here today, I am sure he would have said —
1792. **The Chairperson:** In fairness to Michael, he is not here and I do not expect you to interpret why or how anybody did anything. If we are going to deal with it, stick with the facts.
1793. **Mr Haire:** The point is that, if a situation came round that something had not been disclosed — it is a very fair point — and we said that there is evidence there, I take the point that we have a duty to make sure that you would see it, but I think that the point is —
1794. **The Chairperson:** In taking the point, what did you do about it?
1795. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, I was working on the basis that Michael was going to be here today.
1796. **The Chairperson:** OK.
1797. **Mr Haire:** If it had not been — clearly, if I see somebody not — if the situation comes and something has been, that is a point, it is important that there is transparency for this Committee.
1798. **Mr Wilson:** I know that a lot of the discussion so far has been around a meeting and how it was described, even though it is fairly clear from all the documentation that we have been provided with that there was no attempt to disguise who was having the meeting because we know from the headed notepaper.

1799. There is one particular area that I am concerned about, Will, and it is not around who attended a meeting or under what auspices the meeting was held, but on the substantive issue of the contracts themselves and the damage that has been done to some of the firms that were named as a result of information that came from the Housing Executive. We have had and we are having difficulty in getting to the bottom of that and that is where the real obstruction has been in this inquiry to date. What help can you, as permanent secretary to the Department, afford to this Committee to ensure that we have information provided on the real issue; that is, the allegations about £18 million being owed by contractors and the damage that that has done to their reputations?
1800. **The Chairperson:** We are moving into another phase of the inquiry, Sammy. I do not want to frustrate people here.
1801. **Mr Haire:** That is presumably one of the points that your Clerk will bring to our attention when they come to the meetings. The whole question of access to material is exactly the sort of issue that I hope we can then resolve in that way.
1802. **The Chairperson:** We will deal with that at a later discussion, Sammy. We will set a date, as the Committee agreed prior to Christmas that we would, at a very early juncture in the new year, to take stock of where we are in this phase. This is taking a bit of time, partly because of the information that we have not been receiving in a timely fashion. We hope to address that. As I said, I do not want to frustrate any member asking questions. They will have all the opportunity to ask those questions, but it has to be at the right time and under the proper circumstances.
1803. At this moment in time, I just want to make it very clear, Will, that I remain to be convinced on a range of these matters. I have given you some illustration of where I think we have had to address some fundamental problems, and nobody wants to have to continue to face what I consider to be obstacles to the work of this inquiry. On that basis, and on your own commitments as I acknowledged earlier on, we can sit down with Kevin and Claire and work out how we best proceed during the time ahead.

9 January 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Stephen Brimstone *Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development*

1804. **The Chairperson:** We have with us Stephen Brimstone, special adviser to the Minister for Social Development. I formally welcome Stephen to the inquiry this morning. We had asked Stephen to brief the Committee on matters outlined in his written brief in relation primarily to the meeting on 16 April and any other attendant matters around that. I formally remind the Committee and you, Stephen, that Ms McConaghie will be presenting evidence in the next session under a declaration that is similar to an oath. There will be overlap in some of the questions. I am just advising you of that for the record. Stephen, you were asked to provide some commentary to the Committee, which you have done. That is on page 14. Just to make the point again: it clearly states that the meeting was scheduled for Turkington's and not for the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). Sorry, it is on page 82. Stephen, do you want to make your opening remarks?

1805. **Mr Stephen Brimstone (Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development):** Thank you, Chair. Following the Minister's announcement in late 2011 that, as part of its Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive gave a

commitment to have all Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) homes fully double-glazed by 2015, I was approached by a representative of Turkington Holdings, who asked whether they could meet me to share how they believed this Executive priority could be delivered with significant savings to the public purse. I agreed, and I met representatives of Turkington Holdings on 25 January 2012.

1806. Although I cannot recall the detail of the meeting, I do recall forming the impression that Mr Young was going to write to the Department on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation asking for a meeting with the Minister in relation to realised potential savings.

1807. Subsequently, I updated the Minister verbally on the meeting that I had held and indicated that it was likely that the GGF would request a meeting with the Minister. I was aware that I was likely to be taking leave, so I informed the Minister's private secretary verbally that a letter from the GGF requesting a meeting was to be expected, that the Minister was interested in what it had to say and that, as it was ultimately a matter for the NIHE, the chief executive should also be invited.

1808. I attended a meeting on 16 April 2012 with the Minister, departmental officials and NIHE officials Mr Young and Mr McKeag. My role in attending was as special adviser to the Minister. I had been on leave when a letter requesting the meeting was cleared by the Minister and had not seen that the meeting was being requested by Turkington Holdings as opposed to the GGF. I did not see the letter until about July 2013.

1809. In April 2012, I believed that, although the meeting was attended by staff from Turkington Holdings, they were, in fact, representing the GGF. The only communication that I had sight of, or in which I had a role in drafting or

- amending, was a letter to the Chair of the Committee for Social Development on 24 May 2012. The Minister's recollection of the meeting on 16 April 2012 was that, although staff from Turkington Holdings were present, it was the GGF and its standards that were being discussed. The Minister also had a recollection that there had been a separate meeting with Fusion 21 where some of the same issues were discussed. He asked me to note the suggested amendments on the letter, and it was sent back via private office to officials. An amended letter, which reflected the Minister's amendments, was subsequently sent back to the Minister with no concerns or alternative suggestions being raised.
1810. **The Chairperson:** OK, Stephen, thank you. You met Turkington's earlier in the year. Can you explain how and why you met them because that goes to the heart of this? You did not refer to meeting them as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation, so I take it that you met them on other business. I am trying to work out how you jumped from —
1811. **Mr Brimstone:** No, that is absolutely right. Turkington's approached me towards the end of 2011. I do not recall exactly when and asked for a meeting. They believed that they were aware of ways in which significant savings could be made as part of the double-glazing programme, and they gave an indication of, I think, £30 million or £40 million. I did not go into any more detail at that point. I agreed to have a meeting, which was set up for 25 January 2012.
1812. **Mr Brady:** Thanks for the presentation, Stephen. I have a few questions. Had you met Turkington's previously? In their evidence, they indicated that they had met you when the Minister was the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure. That is going back a while. Had you been familiar with Turkington's before this? Did you have contact with them in any party political sense, in a social way or anything like that?
1813. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I had no contact in a party political sense, and I had no contact socially. My recollection is that Trevor Turkington's son was involved in touring car racing. An event, or a meeting, was requested back in 2009. I have no other recollection of it; I think that it might have had something to do with Nutt's Corner. That is where I would have met Trevor Turkington. There was a subsequent event, after we came into the Department for Social Development, to discuss Marlborough House. Minister Attwood and Minister Wilson were at that meeting.
1814. **Mr Brady:** Who commissioned the pre-meeting briefing for the meeting? On what basis was it commissioned? John McPeake gave evidence to the effect that he was contacted to attend the meeting, but, unusually, was not asked for a briefing. That seemed unusual, because, obviously, it was something that related specifically to issues that concerned the Housing Executive. Who prepared that briefing? On what basis was it commissioned?
1815. **Mr Brimstone:** I have no idea; I would not have been involved in that.
1816. **Mr Brady:** So, a briefing would have been done for a meeting that had been arranged with Turkington's, and you, as a special adviser to the Minister, would not have had any sight or knowledge of that beforehand?
1817. **Mr Brimstone:** No. If you want, we can go back to the pre-meeting that we had. The essence of that pre-meeting was to ask whether it would be appropriate if they were to ask the Minister for a meeting. The outcome of that meeting was that I agreed that it would be appropriate that they request a meeting with the Minister. Subsequently, they wrote to request that. To be perfectly honest, from the end of the pre-meeting, I had no other contact until the meeting itself.
1818. **Mr Brady:** So, presumably, this briefing for the meeting just appeared. Presumably, somebody had to commission it.
1819. **Mr Brimstone:** I am sure that someone from within the officials, the housing division or the Department, once the

- Minister had agreed to have a meeting, would have been commissioned; absolutely.
1820. **Mr Brady:** The briefing mentions Turkington's throughout; it does not mention the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1821. **Mr Brimstone:** That is correct.
1822. **Mr Brady:** In relation to Turkington's representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, they were specific and clear in their evidence that at no time did they indicate that they were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. Furthermore, when the Glass and Glazing Federation gave evidence, its representatives indicated, very clearly, the protocols. We have been talking about protocols quite a lot this morning. They said that there were protocols and that if anyone was to represent them, certain procedures had to be gone through. I think that the only reference in their evidence was that Mr Young had, at one stage, been chair back in 2005-06. So, you were not involved in that pre-meeting briefing note, which, subsequently, was presumed to have been given to the Minister on what was going to happen at the meeting and who would be attending.
1823. **Mr Brimstone:** This is in relation to the submission that the Minister got as part of the meeting from officials?
1824. **Mr Brady:** Yes.
1825. **Mr Brimstone:** I had no role in that at all.
1826. **Mr Brady:** Normally, for meetings of this kind, pre-meeting briefing notes are given. Do you normally have access to those? Do you normally see them?
1827. **Mr Brimstone:** I normally see them; absolutely. I normally see them in advance of the meeting. It so happened that that meeting was on a Monday afternoon. That Monday, the Minister had questions for oral answer, so, between party business in the morning and preparing the Minister for questions for oral answer, I did not have a chance that week to look at that week's folder, which would have held the submissions for that week. I had no opportunity at all. I believe that we came straight out of questions for oral answer and into the meeting with, as it now turns out, Turkington's.
1828. **The Chairperson:** Stephen, can I press that a little bit before I bring in Jim? Page 14 of the tabled pack is the briefing that was presented, and which, I think, you are now saying you did not have a chance to read, because of Question Time. You are listed as the first recipient of the letter, and the Minister is number two.
1829. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1830. **The Chairperson:** The heading of the meeting is, clearly, "Meeting with Turkington Holdings". I understand, if I am correct, that there was a pre-meeting briefing.
1831. **Mr Brimstone:** I do not believe that we had one in that instance.
1832. I had a personal appointment. It turned out that was unable to stay for the whole meeting that took place with Turkington's. I had a personal appointment after that meeting — I had to leave the meeting early, actually. I cannot recall whether, in fact, we went straight into that meeting. I cannot recall whether the Minister felt that he knew the issues that were to be discussed and went straight into the meeting. I cannot recall. It is possible that we went straight into the meeting and that there was no pre-briefing before it. That would happen on occasion.
1833. **The Chairperson:** You received that briefing on 11 April. The meeting was not until 16 April.
1834. **Mr Brimstone:** I did not know. I got that as part of my submission pack. That is the date on which it was produced. I would not have seen it until the actual meeting itself or until it was part of my pack for the week.
1835. **The Chairperson:** OK.
1836. **Mr Allister:** I will go back to the end of 2011, when you said that a

- representative from Turkington's asked to meet you. Who asked to meet you?
1837. **Mr Brimstone:** It was either Trevor Turkington himself or a PA who was working for him. Jim, I cannot recall exactly who it was.
1838. **Mr Allister:** How was that done?
1839. **Mr Brimstone:** I think that it was done by phone call.
1840. **Mr Allister:** To the Department or to your mobile phone?
1841. **Mr Brimstone:** To my mobile phone.
1842. **Mr Allister:** Therefore, Turkington's had your mobile number.
1843. **Mr Brimstone:** It had it, I believe, from 2009, from the time of whatever happened with that DCAL sports centre.
1844. **Mr Allister:** And you cannot help us on whether you spoke directly to Trevor Turkington.
1845. **Mr Brimstone:** On the phone in late 2011?
1846. **Mr Allister:** You cannot help us on that?
1847. **Mr Brimstone:** No. I cannot recall, no.
1848. **Mr Allister:** You cannot recall.
1849. **Mr Brimstone:** No. I cannot recall.
1850. **Mr Allister:** Why do you think that it might have been him at all?
1851. **Mr Brimstone:** He had my mobile number. He was the one who, in 2009 —
1852. **Mr Allister:** He had your mobile number. Had he phoned you before?
1853. **Mr Brimstone:** No. He had my mobile number from 2009, from the earlier event during the DCAL time.
1854. **Mr Allister:** This is a man whom you had never met otherwise.
1855. **Mr Brimstone:** No. I had not.
1856. **Mr Allister:** But he had your mobile number.
1857. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. A lot of people have my mobile number.
1858. **Mr Allister:** Who, then, did you meet in January?
1859. **Mr Brimstone:** Trevor Turkington and Ian Young were at the meeting on 25 January.
1860. **Mr Allister:** Where did that meeting take place?
1861. **Mr Brimstone:** It took place in the Radisson Blu Hotel, next door to the Department's headquarters.
1862. **Mr Allister:** You seem to have some difficulty remembering details of that meeting. Did you not take any notes?
1863. **Mr Brimstone:** I did not, no. I was listening. I felt that I had taken the main point away from the meeting to report back to the Minister. Your question is whether I took any notes: no, I did not take any notes.
1864. **Mr Allister:** Is it your custom and practice not to bother taking notes?
1865. **Mr Brimstone:** Not if I am in a listening exercise like that, no.
1866. **Mr Allister:** If you are a listening, do you not want to be able to recall?
1867. **Mr Brimstone:** If I feel that I will not be able to recall before I report to the Minister after the meeting, I would take a note, yes.
1868. **Mr Allister:** So no notes were taken.
1869. **Mr Brimstone:** No notes were taken.
1870. **Mr Allister:** Did you know what the meeting would be about before you went there?
1871. **Mr Brimstone:** Other than about the potential for savings as part of the double-glazing programme? No.
1872. **Mr Allister:** Would it not have been of particular interest to note what those savings might be?
1873. **Mr Brimstone:** I reported to the Minister what the reported savings were after the meeting.
1874. **Mr Allister:** The product of that meeting was a letter from Turkington's to the Minister.

1875. **Mr Brimstone:** That is correct, yes.
1876. **Mr Allister:** Had you any part in drafting that?
1877. **Mr Brimstone:** I had no part in drafting it.
1878. **Mr Allister:** In suggesting its content?
1879. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
1880. **Mr Allister:** Had you any part in suggesting that it should be cc'd to DFP?
1881. **Mr Brimstone:** No. In fact, I did not see that letter. I believe that we had our second child the day before that letter arrived with the Minister, so I was off on paternity leave for a number of weeks. I had other things on my mind.
1882. **Mr Allister:** When Turkington's representatives gave evidence to us, they were very clear — it is on page 11 of the Hansard report — that nothing was said at that January meeting with you that could have given the impression that they were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. Do you recall reading and seeing that evidence?
1883. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1884. **Mr Allister:** Do you challenge that?
1885. **Mr Brimstone:** In preparing for the briefing for the Committee [*Inaudible.*] , I have given a significant amount of consideration to recalling the precise detail of that meeting, which took place some two years ago. I recall the discussion around the GGF and Mr Young's roles in that organisation. I recall the significant potential savings that they reported there would be if the methodology with which we fit windows was adopted. Tens of millions of pounds would be saved. That is my recollection of the meeting. I accept what Mr Young said in his evidence. I can give you only my impression.
1886. **Mr Allister:** If you accept what he says, you accept that nothing was said by them at that meeting that implied or could cause anyone to conclude that they were representing anyone other than Turkington's.
1887. **Mr Brimstone:** No. I can only give my recollection of that meeting.
1888. **Mr Allister:** Turkington's came along and had these great ideas to save money, etc. They were talking about how the Housing Executive should do things. Why did you not simply set up a meeting for them with the Housing Executive?
1889. **Mr Brimstone:** They claimed that they had attempted to meet the Housing Executive. Bearing in mind the history of where we are coming from in 2011, the Minister's view of the Housing Executive and its handling of contracts and its ability to spend money or save money, whichever way you want to look at it, I felt that my responsibility was, first of all, to tell the Minister that there was this opportunity. He wanted to have a meeting. I suggested to his private secretary that, as this was primarily to do with the Housing Executive, the chief executive of the Housing Executive should be invited along to that meeting.
1890. **Mr Allister:** But we now know, Mr Brimstone, that three other contractors asked for meetings and were refused. Is that not right?
1891. **Mr Brimstone:** When was that?
1892. **Mr Allister:** We have it in our papers that three other named contractors asked for meetings and were refused. It is on page 67 of the tabled documents. The contractors were PK Murphy's, Paddy McIlhatton and Super Seal Windows. They asked through Sandra Overend and were refused, and when they asked through William McCrea they were granted a meeting. Do you see that?
1893. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1894. **Mr Allister:** So, these were all parties that had an interest in the specifications, as Turkington's had, but only Turkington's got a meeting. Why was that?
1895. **Mr Brimstone:** When we talk about specification, the four other meetings, with PK Murphy, Paddy McIlhatton, Super Seal Windows Ltd and Super Seal — are they both the same? — were, from my recollection, to do with the specification

- of the hinges on this casement type, or whatever it was, but the Turkington's issue was about the methodology of fitting the windows. It was about whether the plaster around the window frame is torn out or whether a different methodology is used that saved all that happening.
1896. **Mr Allister:** The heading is a list of all companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting. Would it be quite wrong for the Committee to draw any inference from the fact that, of all the companies who asked, the only ones who got a meeting were Turkington's and Super Seal Windows Ltd after they came through the DUP and not through another party? Should we draw any inference from access to the Minister about that scenario?
1897. **Mr Brimstone:** None of that came through me.
1898. **Mr Allister:** We now know that on 16 April 2012 there was a great flurry of activity in the Department about altering minutes and diary entries, and that on that day, for the first time, on the sixth version of the minutes, they were altered to proclaim the meeting to be with the Glass and Glazing Federation, and the Minister's diary was retrospectively altered on that very day to proclaim that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Can you cast any light on what was the catalyst for that flurry of activity on that day?
1899. **Mr Brimstone:** I cannot. We keep hearing reference to the four — now the six — drafts of the note of the meeting. I had no sight of any of those, and I would not have.
1900. **Mr Allister:** Are they not on the TRIM system?
1901. **Mr Brimstone:** I do not have access to the TRIM system.
1902. **Mr Allister:** You do not?
1903. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
1904. **Mr Allister:** I thought that special advisers were all-knowing and all-seeing.
- You do not have access to the TRIM system?
1905. **Mr Brimstone:** I do not have access to the TRIM system.
1906. **Mr Allister:** Is there a prohibition on special advisers accessing the TRIM system?
1907. **Mr Brimstone:** Maybe there is, but I do not have access to the TRIM system.
1908. **Mr Allister:** I assume that your evidence to this Committee would be no different if you were giving it on oath.
1909. **Mr Brimstone:** I try to tell the truth about everything that I say.
1910. **Mr Allister:** Your evidence is that you had no lot or part, directly or indirectly, in altering or having altered the minutes or the diary entry. Is that right?
1911. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. I will go further than that. I have no recollection of having made or requested any changes to any private office meeting note. It would not be normal practice for me to be involved. That applies to both DCAL and DSD. To be perfectly honest, my sense of all of this was as the Minister outlined in his opening remarks:
- “As is the usual process, the note was drafted and was then amended to more accurately reflect the discussion. As I, at that time, believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position.”*
1912. **Mr Allister:** So you cannot help this Committee whatsoever on the question as to what caused that flurry of activity on 16 May.
1913. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I am sorry, I cannot.
1914. **The Chairperson:** If I could, maybe helpfully, intervene at this point. That flurry of activity that you described actually occurred on 16 May.
1915. **Mr Allister:** Sorry, did I not say May?
1916. **The Chairperson:** You said April. That was on the basis that a letter was sent by me, on behalf of the Committee, electronically to the Department seeking

- clarification from the Minister. I suggest that that was the reason for the flurry of activity. I would just like to set that on the record.
1917. **Mr Allister:** OK — 16 May. When did you become aware, Mr Brimstone, of the letter from the Chairman of this Committee covering these issues?
1918. **Mr Brimstone:** It would have been whenever the Minister saw that letter. I was not aware of that letter from you, Chair, until the Minister and I were sitting in an office together and it arrived up as part of the pack.
1919. **Mr Allister:** On that same day, the sixteenth?
1920. **Mr Brimstone:** No, it would not have happened until after whatever time it took for officials to go and draft a response to it and everything else. I would not have seen your letter and the Minister would not have seen your letter, Chair.
1921. **Mr Allister:** Could the catalyst have been the three Assembly questions tabled on 10 May by Mr McKay asking for details of all meetings with groups from the glass and glazing industry in the last year, asking to whom he spoke in the glass and glazing industry that led to his concern about value for money, prior to his announcement in the Assembly about postponement, etc? Could that have been the catalyst for the flurry of activity within a week, on 16 May?
1922. **Mr Brimstone:** There were written questions and meetings were had in the Department about what the response of housing professionals in the Department was on the back of the meeting with Turkington's, as it now turns out. The Minister was very keen for those issues to be looked at to see if there was any merit in them. The Minister continually, throughout all of that — whoever was in the room will have heard it — referred to the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. That was his impression, that was my impression, and anybody who was in the room at the time —
1923. **Mr Allister:** Until 16 May, a minute that had been through five versions referred to it as Turkington's. The Minister's diary, until that date, referred to the meeting being with Turkington's. I am trying to invite you to help the Committee to find what the catalyst was for that flurry of activity on 16 May that suddenly wrote Turkington's out of the script and wrote the Glass and Glazing Federation into it. Was it the Assembly questions? Was it something else? Can you help us at all?
1924. **Mr Brimstone:** As I said before, Jim, I had no role in changing that note. I have no recollection of changing a note on any meeting that happened in the Department. You raised one other point there that I was going to come back to you on, but it has slipped my mind now.
1925. **Mr Allister:** While you are thinking about that, so that we are clear, you are saying expressly to us that you gave no instructions, took no actions yourself, had no one else give instructions and can shed no light on why those changes were made.
1926. **Mr Brimstone:** I have no powers to give instructions in the Department. I have no powers at all to give instructions to anyone. The only action —
1927. **Mr Allister:** That was not the question. The question was this: did you give any instructions? Did you have anyone else give instructions?
1928. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I did not. The reason why I did not and cannot is that I have no powers to give instructions. The Minister is the only person — I could give instructions until I am blue in the face in the Department, but unless the Minister —
1929. **Mr Allister:** Did you give advice to the Minister that the minute should be changed, that the diary should be changed, and that the trail should be converted from Turkington's to the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1930. **Mr Brimstone:** No, because I was not aware of what was in the note of the meeting.

1931. **Mr Allister:** But you were aware when it came to drafting or redrafting the letter that the Minister was sending back to the Chairman.
1932. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely.
1933. **Mr Allister:** And it is in your hand.
1934. **Mr Brimstone:** It is in my hand, yes.
1935. **Mr Allister:** Is that because the idea originated with you?
1936. **Mr Brimstone:** No. Quite often, we all work together in the office, whether that is the office in the Department or the office in Parliament Buildings. Generally, what happens is that the papers arrive with me, I will make comments, and if there are any questions to be put back to officials or anything else, I will put them on the papers. You will see if the special adviser makes a comment on something, it is classified as the special adviser has queried this or the special adviser has asked for this to be changed. When this letter came up, my first recollection was: hold on, this meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation, was it not? At that point, I would have asked the Minister what his recollection of the meeting was. His recollection of the meeting was that it was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Another point —
1937. **Mr Allister:** So you sowed that idea, did you?
1938. **Mr Brimstone:** No. I asked the Minister whether my recollection of the meeting was the same as his. At which point he agreed. Another point was raised about whether there had not been a meeting with Fusion 21 around similar matters.
1939. **Mr Allister:** Mr Brimstone, was there any sensitivity with you or the Minister, given that Turkington's were known to be party supporters of the Minister's party? Was there any sensitivity about the meeting with Turkington's?
1940. **Mr Brimstone:** No, not at all. I have no knowledge of who party supporters are or are not. I have no knowledge of that at all.
1941. **Mr Allister:** Are you a member of the DUP?
1942. **Mr Brimstone:** I am a member of the DUP, yes.
1943. **Mr Allister:** On 28 June, Susan McCarty — do you know who that is?
1944. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1945. **Mr Allister:** — advised the Housing Executive that the meeting had, in fact, been with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Have you any evidence to give as to how that came about?
1946. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I do not.
1947. **Mr Allister:** As far as you are concerned, if Barbara McConaghie made the changes to the minutes and made the changes to the diary on 16 May, you can shed no light that would suggest that she did not just do that on her own volition.
1948. **Mr Brimstone:** No. The private secretary would have been sitting in on any meetings that the Minister would have had with officials. The private secretary would have been fully aware of what the Minister's view of that meeting was, and that is the only thing that I can assume.
1949. **Mr Allister:** Was she sitting in on the meeting when the letter back to this Chairman was amended?
1950. **Mr Brimstone:** That was not a meeting. We were just working together in the room.
1951. **Mr Allister:** So she was not there then.
1952. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
1953. **Mr Allister:** The Glass and Glazing Federation has claimed — has boasted — that a relationship was established with you. What can you tell us about that?
1954. **Mr Brimstone:** I have no idea what they are referring to. I can only assume that they refer to the previous special adviser in the Department. I have had no communication with the Glass and Glazing Federation. In fact, I will go further: my first introduction as to who the Glass and Glazing Federating were — I had never heard of them before —

- was at the pre-meeting with Turkington's in the Radisson Hotel at the end of January 2012.
1955. **Mr Allister:** So, you are in the hapless position, Mr Brimstone, of having access to the top and heart of the Department but being totally unable to help the Committee as to how significant changes were made to minutes and to diaries and writing a particular company that it had a meeting with the Minister out of the script and writing someone else in.
1956. **Mr Brimstone:** That was the point that I forgot earlier on, Jim. Apologies. I had no role in this, but, looking at the note of the meeting, even in its final draft, Turkington s are clearly referred to in the first paragraph. A written answer to a question, I believe, from Daithí McKay, in early September also clearly identifies Turkington s as being the company that the individuals whom we believed at that point represented the Glass and Glazing Federation worked for. I do not see any I have no sense of how there was any attempt to cover up the fact that Turkington s were at that meeting.
1957. **Mr Allister:** There were certainly changes made on 16 May —
1958. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely.
1959. **Mr Allister:** — to headings, minutes and diary entries. There were retrospective changes to a diary, which might seem rather bizarre.
1960. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. They reflected Minister's take on the whole thing.
1961. **Mr Allister:** Yes. Does that suggest that that direction came from the Minister?
1962. **Mr Brimstone:** I had no sense that the Minister directed it. He may well have done.
1963. **Mr Allister:** He may well have done.
1964. **Mr Brimstone:** But —
1965. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
1966. **Mr Brimstone:** — the Minister has said that he is not aware of that note, either.
1967. **The Chairperson:** We are going to return to that when we have our next evidence session with Barbara McConaghie because it is a relevant testimony. I remind you, Stephen, as I remind every witness to this inquiry, that the Committee took the view that we would take every witness on the basis of professional integrity and that we would not require people to take an oath or swear a declaration or an affirmation but that, where we, at any time, had any conflicting evidence, we would do so. We have done so, which will manifest itself later this morning. I am just making the point that, at any time, if we come across what we see as conflicting evidence — we already had that provided to us before today — we will not hesitate to bring people back under oath or with an affirmation. For the record, I remind the wider public of the implications of that, the potential legal requirements of all that and the potential legal outcomes of that, because it goes to the question of perjury.
1968. Before I go to other members, you are saying, Stephen, that at no point did you seek to change any references to Turkington's to refer to it as Glass and Glazing Federation representatives. I put it to you that we are being asked to accept information that basically tells us that, despite all the other evidence, verbal and written, that was at your disposal, you still had a recollection that you were dealing with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1969. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1970. **The Chairperson:** There has been no explanation of how you got that impression. Turkington's have made it very clear that at no stage did they represent them. In fact, they were emphatic about that. We had the letter from Turkington's requesting a meeting. We had the briefing paper for the meeting that was held on 16 April. We had the flurry of activity, subsequent to that, on 16 May. I am less concerned about the 'Spotlight' programme, but it wrote to you, I think, in June. That was a very controversial programme, to say the

- least. I am more concerned about the information provided to the Assembly and this Committee. We are being asked to accept that, notwithstanding all the evidence that has been presented, written and verbal, you still have an impression that you were dealing with the Glass and Glazing Federation, despite the fact that nothing anywhere indicates that that was the case.
1971. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. I left the meeting on 25 January 2012 with the clear impression that a request was going to come to the Minister from Ian Young, but in his role with the Glass and Glazing Federation and as its former chair. It was a shock to me when I first saw the letter in July 2013 and the logo at the top of that letter was Turkington's as opposed to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1972. **The Chairperson:** You are also saying that you had no part in amending the aide-memoire or minute of the meeting. We were advised in at least the written submission from Barbara McConaghie that she had seen only a final version. It was then described as the final version, but it is version 4. It was presented to her by the departmental Assembly liaison officer (DALO). The DALO specifically asked Barbara that question, but you are saying that you certainly had no role —
1973. **Mr Brimstone:** I would not normally, either.
1974. **The Chairperson:** OK.
1975. **Mr F McCann:** I will be brief. A memo or letter sent to you and the Minister on 11 April by Susan McCarty quite clearly says that you have accepted a meeting with Jim McCabe and Ian Young from Turkington homes. There is no mention of the Glass and Glazing Federation. A memo sent by Margaret Gibson quotes Declan Allen from the Housing Executive. It is on page 85 of the tabled documents. He said that at no time did Declan think that Turkington was representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. Where do you think the confusion came from in all of this?
1976. **Mr Brimstone:** The confusion clearly came on the back of the pre-meeting that I had had with Turkington's and my expectation, and I briefed the Minister to this effect, that Ian Young would be writing to him as being from the Glass and Glazing Federation. The confusion also arose because I was off when the actual letter arrived requesting the meeting; I did not see that letter until July 2013. I had no sight of the letter requesting a meeting until July 2013.
1977. **Mr F McCann:** It is a bit strange that a series of meetings took place. As the Chair touched on, everyone is adamant that the Glass and Glazing Federation was not represented. It is a bit strange to believe that you initially met them, you organised a meeting and that the Minister was advised that, as you say, he was meeting representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
1978. **Mr Brimstone:** I did not organise the meeting with the Minister. I suggested to them that it would be worthwhile their writing to request a meeting with the Minister. On the back of that, I briefed the Minister that I had met two staff members from Turkington's. One was Ian Young, who had a role in the Glass and Glazing Federation. I briefed the Minister to expect a letter. I outlined as well the potential savings and the idea behind how windows are fitted in a house. It was all through the Glass and Glazing Federation; it was all to do with its specifications and standards. It was nothing to do with a particular company, and I was —
1979. **Mr F McCann:** They never said it.
1980. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry?
1981. **Mr F McCann:** They never stated that they were representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Ian Young and —
1982. **Mr Brimstone:** At which meeting?
1983. **Mr F McCann:** The initial discussions that you had with them.
1984. **Mr Brimstone:** No, at the initial meeting that I had with them, they were there as members of staff from Turkington's.

- I was under the understanding that a letter was to come not from them but from Ian Young requesting a meeting as the Glass and Glazing Federation, speaking on behalf of the wider industry.
1985. **Mr F McCann:** Did he say that he was going to send you a letter that stated that he was coming from and representing the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1986. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry, Fra, can you repeat that?
1987. **Mr F McCann:** Did he say to you that he would send a letter saying that he represented the Glass and Glazing Federation?
1988. **Mr Brimstone:** That is my recollection of the meeting: that was what was going to happen.
1989. **Mr F McCann:** I tried to broach another thing earlier. Do you not think it unusual that a contractor or a subcontractor of a contractor who has an interest in glazing or in other contracts would have access to the Minister and, as a question touched on earlier, would not be advised to talk to the body in charge, which is the Housing Executive?
1990. **Mr Brimstone:** That is why I suggested that the chief executive of the Housing Executive should be at the meeting, if the Minister agreed to have it.
1991. **Mr F McCann:** Jim asked a question this morning about Turkington's being given access to the Minister, yet three other firms were not. Following through with that could be seen as a conflict of interest.
1992. **Mr Brimstone:** I would need to check up on that. However, I believe that the reason why two of the three subsequent firms did not have access to the Minister was because the Minister had already listened to what the issue was around the hinge and that and passed it on to the Housing Executive. It was a matter for it to deal with. He had no role at all in deciding the specification of a window, and that is why he felt that he had no role in meeting the other two organisations.
1993. **Mr F McCann:** Are the savings that Turkington's talked about transparent?
1994. **Mr Brimstone:** I believe that it is £15.1 million.
1995. **Mr F McCann:** There have been savings of £15.1 million.
1996. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
1997. **Mr F McCann:** We have been given a number of figures of what savings may —
1998. **Mr Brimstone:** I believe that it is £15.1 million.
1999. **Mr Wilson:** Will you just go through the chronology of events again, Stephen? You had met representatives from Turkington's in the late part of the year. Before that, had you ever heard of the Glass and Glazing Federation?
2000. **Mr Brimstone:** No, not at all.
2001. **Mr Wilson:** So, it did come up in conversation with Turkington's —
2002. **Mr Brimstone:** At length.
2003. **Mr Wilson:** — that either some of the people there were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, were representatives, had held some standing in that organisation and they also talked about the standards that are normally set down by the federation. You are saying that that was what planted the idea of the Glass and Glazing Federation in your head.
2004. **Mr Brimstone:** That was the first that I heard of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I genuinely came out of that meeting with the impression that a letter was to be sent to the Minister from the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2005. **Mr Wilson:** Just so that we can get the sequence, because it is coming out in some of your answers. From that, it was agreed — as was quite usual for a special adviser — that you would then go to the Minister and say that you thought that you believed it to be worthwhile having this meeting.

2006. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
2007. **Mr Wilson:** And, between that and the meeting, were you aware of the letter coming in, who the letter came from, what the letter said or anything like that?
2008. **Mr Brimstone:** I am not even sure that I queried it up until the point that the meeting happened. I will be perfectly honest: we had just had another addition to the family. I was back from leave and catching up after being off on leave. I had no sense that I was aware that that letter had arrived.
2009. **Mr Wilson:** So, the next contact, I suppose, was the meeting.
2010. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
2011. **Mr Wilson:** At that meeting, all of the issues that had been discussed at the pre-meeting were discussed, so it was quite reasonable to assume that these were issues that would have been of concern to the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2012. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. The same issues as discussed at the pre-meeting were discussed with the Minister and with the Housing Executive and with the senior departmental staff in the housing division.
2013. **Mr Wilson:** Much has been made of the fact that Turkington's were granted this meeting. Were you aware of whether other organisations associated with this contract had sought meetings, first of all with the Housing Executive?
2014. **Mr Brimstone:** Will you repeat the question?
2015. **Mr Wilson:** Yes. Were you aware that some of the contractors had sought and been refused meetings with the Housing Executive?
2016. **Mr Brimstone:** I believe that that was one of the issues that led to Turkington's requesting the meeting with me.
2017. **Mr Wilson:** And can you give any explanation for the fact that Turkington's was granted the meeting — because a bit has been made about that — as opposed to the others that were not granted meetings?
2018. **Mr Brimstone:** The Turkington meeting was requested much earlier in the year. The other meetings that were requested were around a particular issue, in which I believe that the Committee was quite heavily involved as well. That was around a separate but closely linked issue, but the other companies were all seeking meetings about the same but particular and separate issue.
2019. **Mr Wilson:** There has been a suggestion that this was an attempt to write Turkington's out of the script, to use the term that I think Jim used. How could Turkington's be written out of the script in this? Will you take us through the trail that you are now aware of that very clearly pointed to Turkington's being part of the script anyway?
2020. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. A letter arrives from Turkington Holdings and Ian Young, who I believe is a managing director of a subsidiary company within Turkington Holdings, requests a meeting with the Minister. The meeting is held with departmental senior officials and with senior Housing Executive officials. I do not see how anybody could interpret that as an attempt to write something out. I saw nothing shady, dodgy, or inappropriate in any way about it.
2021. **Mr Wilson:** Not in the letter, of course, but the briefing —
2022. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely, the briefing as well, yes.
2023. **Mr Wilson:** So any allegation that is being made here that somehow or other you or someone else contrived to write Turkington's out of the script just does not bear any relation to the facts or all of the paper evidence.
2024. **Mr Brimstone:** The only change that was made — I am aware of this change now — was to reflect what was clearly the Minister's opinion. That was a change to the note of the meeting to state that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation as opposed to Turkington's.

2025. **Mr Wilson:** If you, the Minister or an official believed that the meeting was actually with the Glass and Glazing Federation, it would be quite in order to change the minute to reflect that; would it not?
2026. **Mr Brimstone:** In the interests of accuracy; absolutely. I would have thought that it would be expected that that would be changed to reflect the Minister's view.
2027. **Mr Wilson:** Fra McCann said that it is unusual for someone who is involved in a contract to ask for a meeting with the Minister. Do you find that unusual?
2028. **Mr Brimstone:** No; I do not. As you can see, there were a number of requests from companies involved in contracts to see the Minister. Of the four companies listed, the Minister has seen two, and that is just on the windows issue.
2029. **Mr Wilson:** Have you had any other experience — I had experience of this as a Minister — where firms feel that they have not made any traction with officials and then seek to go to the top?
2030. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. I can give no examples off the top of my head now, but that is quite often what happens. An individual or a company, having tried all other avenues, feels that they have no other recourse but to go to the Minister.
2031. **Mr Wilson:** Any party affiliation that you know of or do not know of should not be a reason why people should not have access to a Minister; should it?
2032. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely not. I will state again that I am not aware of who are the Democratic Unionist Party's financiers, supporters or anything else. It was news to me when Mr Allister declared that Turkington's had provided some funding for vans or whatever for his election campaign. The 'Spotlight' programme identified that Trevor Turkington had some role in Stephen Moutray's nomination. That was all news to me. I was not aware of any of that.
2033. **Mrs D Kelly:** I will pick up on a couple of points. People have talked about an attempt being made to write Turkington's out of the script. On page 91, Turkington's were very literally written out of the script in the letter to you, Chair. Mr Brimstone, may I ask you to confirm that the handwriting to amend and remove Turkington's from the script of the letter is, in fact, your handwriting?
2034. **Mr Brimstone:** I already did that with Mr Allister earlier, but absolutely, Dolores: that is my handwriting.
2035. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you. On whose direction did you amend that, given that you were aware that the meeting request was with Turkington's?
2036. **Mr Brimstone:** I was not aware that the meeting request was with Turkington's.
2037. **Mrs D Kelly:** At all.
2038. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
2039. **Mrs D Kelly:** So you did not see any reason why that would be changed or to ask any questions of anyone in relation to that.
2040. **Mr Brimstone:** I believed, and the Minister believed, that, in reality, the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation as opposed to Turkington's. It was purely in the interests of accuracy and nothing else that that letter was changed to reflect that. The Minister had some recollection that Fusion21 had some role in all of this as well, although not at the same meeting. Bear in mind that, quite often, the Minister makes amendments to letters or I make suggestions; there is a difference there. They go back to branch. If there are any issues — sometimes there are and sometimes there are not — those issues will come back to the Minister. No issues came back from officials around any of those changes, and the Minister continued in the belief that this meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2041. **Mrs D Kelly:** Perhaps I misunderstood, but I understood that you said at the outset that you never made any amendments to letters and did not initiate those. Maybe I took you up wrong.

2042. **Mr Brimstone:** I was talking about departmental meeting notes. I have no role in any of that at all. Day and daily, I get papers that come up to me for the Minister. I will put queries and suggested amendments on them. That happens on a day-and-daily basis, as a part of the approval process by which it goes to the Minister.
2043. **Mrs D Kelly:** So it is very separate from the departmental —
2044. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. That is a private office issue, and I am outside of that.
2045. **Mrs D Kelly:** Four companies wanted a meeting but only two were granted one. What criteria were used to agree to meetings with two companies and not with the other two?
2046. **Mr Brimstone:** It was the Minister who agreed to those meetings. I —
2047. **Mrs D Kelly:** So you have no influence over the Minister on whether he should meet any particular companies?
2048. **Mr Brimstone:** Generally, the Minister will take decisions based on a combination of things. There may be departmental official advice and there may be advice from me on an issue as well. That is all I can really give on that, I am afraid.
2049. **Mrs D Kelly:** So there is no reason why two companies would have got meetings and two would not?
2050. **Mr Brimstone:** Other than the reasons I have already outlined.
2051. **Mrs D Kelly:** Were the amendments that were made to the draft letter ever discussed with Mr Michael Sands?
2052. **Mr Brimstone:** They were sent back to the branch that Michael Sands is part of. That is a part of the private office. So, in essence, a paper comes back to the private office from the Minister with suggestions, amendments and whatever else on it. The private office sends it back to the branch to verify and check that. It came back up, and there was no issue. The letter was amended, reflecting the Minister's requests. The Minister went on to sign it and, Chair, it arrived with you.
2053. **Mrs D Kelly:** Do you not find that very strange, given that the diary entry was subsequently amended to tie in with the amendments to the letter and the aides-memoires, or minutes, were drafted six times? Do you not find that strange, looking back?
2054. **Mr Brimstone:** To be honest, it is outside. I have no sight of or connection with that at all.
2055. **Mrs D Kelly:** But you can understand the wider perception?
2056. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. I can understand the wider perception of that. I cannot give any insight into it, I am afraid.
2057. **Mrs D Kelly:** You cannot give us any insight into the influence of the freedom of information requests that were received by the Department in relation to the minutes or the meetings, and whether or not that influenced the timescale that Mr Allister was talking about, and the flurry of activity from Mr Daithí McKay? I believe that, on the DSD website, the freedom of information request came in from Mr McKay MLA as well. You are not aware of that? No?
2058. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry, I am not aware of what?
2059. **Mrs D Kelly:** The freedom of information requests in relation to meetings, as well as the AQs?
2060. **Mr Brimstone:** At the time, I would have been aware of it. You are asking me today whether I am aware of a particular freedom of information request and my reaction, or the Minister's reaction to that FOI request. No. Bear in mind as well that FOIs come in and it can take some time before they arrive up with the Minister to clear as well.
2061. **Mr Wilson:** I got hundreds of them.
2062. **The Chairperson:** Fra McCann and Stewart want to come in briefly on the back of that. Can you keep it brief please?

2063. **Mr F McCann:** It is just about something that Sammy said. He spoke about the move to write Turkington's out of the meeting, but the fact is that others, who did not take part in the meeting, were being written into it. Did you realise at the time, when Turkington's had asked and even given their briefing, that other members of glazing companies were seriously questioning the information given and the lifetime of the specifications given?
2064. **Mr Brimstone:** Is that the hinge issue you are talking about?
2065. **Mr F McCann:** Yes. I am talking about when the double glazing people wanted to talk but were not given the opportunity.
2066. **Mr Brimstone:** I think that the methodology of fitting a window is separate from the hinge issue. To be honest, at the time of the meeting with what is now Turkington's, none of those other issues were on the table at all. I do not think that the Minister would have had any sight of those.
2067. **Mrs D Kelly:** Just one point. Thank you, Chair, for your indulgence. Mr Brimstone, am I right in recollecting that you suggested that the Minister would have no part to play in relation to the specifications for the windows? The Minister would have had no active part to play in deciding the specifications for the windows and the hinges?
2068. **Mr Brimstone:** That would be a technical decision for the Housing Executive.
2069. **Mrs D Kelly:** So are you not shocked, then, when you read on page 20 that, in an email from DSD's Thomas O'Reilly on the double glazing programme, he says in the opening line:
- "I wasn't aware that the Minister was going to approve the window specification!"?*
2070. That would suggest that the Minister had full authority in that level of approval, which, I suggest, contradicts what you said earlier.
2071. **Mr Brimstone:** I do not believe that the Minister has any role in the approval of technical specifications.
2072. **Mrs D Kelly:** It is quite clear that both DSD and others think that he does.
2073. **Mr Clarke:** Picking up on that point, Stephen, I do not know whether you have a copy of this or not.
2074. **The Chairperson:** What page number are you referring to?
2075. **Mr Clarke:** Dolores is referring to page 20. Stephen might like to look at pages 17 and 20, because page 20 originates from page 17. Read page 17 first, Stephen.
2076. The date of that email, from memory, is the day after the meeting with the representatives of Turkington's, or whatever you want to call them. Michael Sands contacted Norman. Could it be construed from that that Norman was getting a wee bit concerned that the Minister was showing them the error of their ways, that there were potential savings and that he and his Department had got it wrong?
2077. **Mr Brimstone:** On page 20, the response is sent to Norman from a Thomas. I am trying to see who this Thomas individual is.
2078. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thomas O'Reilly.
2079. **Mr Brady:** The chief executive of the Social Security Agency.
2080. **Mr Brimstone:** I do not think that it is the same person.
2081. **Mr Brady:** Is it not the same one?
2082. **Mr Brimstone:** He is a multi-skilled individual, but I am not sure —
2083. **Mr Clarke:** Michael Sands sent the email on page 17 to Norman and a list of others. This came a few days afterwards, referring to the meeting that happened on 16 May. I can understand the point, and I am sure that you do as well, Stephen, that Ministers do not normally get involved in specifications, but they are responsible for the money that is spent in their Department.
2084. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely.

2085. **Mr Clarke:** If someone from the federation or someone who fits windows and wants to talk to Turkington's comes forward and shows the Minister how he could save millions of pounds, would it not be normal for the Minister to be concerned and pass that to his Department?
2086. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely, but the Minister would have passed that to technical experts to make a decision. He would have listened, and it sounds as though a legitimate case was being made, and asked the experts to investigate to make sure that the proposal was as it sounded.
2087. **Mr Dickson:** Going back to the little piece that Mr Allister talked to you about earlier on and the press statement from the Glass and Glazing Federation, you said that you thought that it was referring to a previous special adviser. Is that right?
2088. **Mr Brimstone:** The SDLP special adviser. I had been in the Department only a number of months at that time.
2089. **Mr Dickson:** When did you join the Department?
2090. **Mr Brimstone:** May 2011. I had no communication with or from the Glass and Glazing Federation. My first introduction to the Glass and Glazing Federation was at the meeting on 25 January 2012.
2091. **Mr Dickson:** I heard what you said about the potential for the Glass and Glazing Federation to have been referring to a previous special adviser. However, the press statement is from October 2011, when you were in office, and it states: "a relationship is being established". There is a clear implication that that is with the new adviser.
2092. **Mr Brimstone:** I can say only that I have had no contact with —
2093. **Mr Dickson:** So it would be unfair to suggest that they were referring to a previous special adviser.
2094. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I was suggesting only what could have been happening. I had had no contact with the Glass and Glazing Federation: I was not even aware of its existence before 25 January 2012.
2095. **Mr Dickson:** Did you see that press release?
2096. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
2097. **Mr Clarke:** May I make a supplementary comment, Chair?
2098. **Mr Dickson:** It is about the date of the press release. I am not quite sure where the press release is.
2099. **The Chairperson:** It is on page 98. Is there a specific point that you want to make about that?
2100. **Mr Dickson:** It refers to the fact that a relationship is being developed. Mr Brimstone had indicated that he thought that it was not him that was being referred to, but, given the dates, it probably could not be anybody other than him.
2101. **Mr Clarke:** Given that Stewart maybe wants to hang a suspicion around Stephen on that particular aspect —
2102. **Mr Dickson:** I was just trying to ask —
2103. **Mr Clarke:** Sorry, Chairman.
2104. **The Chairperson:** Let people —
2105. **Mr Clarke:** Should we write back to the Glass and Glazing Federation and ask it to establish who that individual was? That may be useful in ruling Stephen in or out. It may also bring in someone else, perhaps a previous special adviser. You never know.
2106. **The Chairperson:** I understand that we did that, but that we have not yet received a response. But you are right. We will follow that up. I am happy enough to do that.
2107. **Mr Wilson:** Chair, I want to ask one question. Stephen, do you see any significance in the fact that, after the meeting, the memo from Michael Sands had at least two or three references to the Glass and Glazing Federation?
2108. **Mr Clarke:** It is on page 17.

2109. **Mr Wilson:** On page 17. You had a meeting in January at which Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were discussed and the associations that Ian Young has with them were mentioned. You had no knowledge at all of the letter that came from Turkington Holdings. The meeting was held and, quite clearly, there were liberal references to the Glass and Glazing Federation at that meeting. Would that not indicate and perhaps not have reinforced in your mind that it had something to do with the Glass and Glazing Federation? It certainly seems to have played quite significantly in Michael Sands' report.
2110. **Mr Brimstone:** My recollection of the meeting between the Minister and Turkington's, as it now turns out, was that the only thing that was discussed was glass and glazing standards, guidelines and the differences between how the Housing Executive would carry out work and the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines and standards. From my recollection, those were the only issues that were discussed at that meeting. It was all about the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2111. **Mr Wilson:** The memo was dated the day after the meeting, which would, again, indicate that it was fresh in the mind of the person who sent the memo that there had been significant discussion about Glass and Glazing Federation standards.
2112. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
2113. **Mr Wilson:** Just on the other issue —
2114. **The Chairperson:** OK. I will let you in. You are jumping the queue.
2115. **Mr Wilson:** Sorry.
2116. **The Chairperson:** Go ahead. Finish it off.
2117. **Mr Wilson:** My question is on the other people who had sought meetings. Once a Minister receives an application from somebody to talk about an issue, others will then say that they also have a view on the same issue. I have received such requests on many occasions. It would not be unusual for a Minister to say that he has heard the issues, has taken them up and does not need to meet additional people. Will you also explain to us that, when it comes to setting up meetings with Ministers, sometimes a conversation with the special adviser or directly with the Minister helps to explain what meeting might be more relevant?
2118. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. I do not have the facts around my Minister to say to pick one meeting as opposed to another. I can only assume that that was the reason behind it.
2119. **The Chairperson:** A number of members have indicated that they want to come in again. In the interests of making sure that everybody has their say, we will do that. Do not worry; your name is on the list.
2120. I want to make two points, Stephen. There is not one letter or memo until the later iterations of Barbara McConaghie's minute that suggest that the meeting was with anyone but Turkington's. That is important and goes to the bottom of all of this.
2121. **Mr Clarke:** That is wrong.
2122. **The Chairperson:** I am sorry, Trevor.
2123. **Mrs D Kelly:** No, it is not.
2124. **Mr Clarke:** If you look at page 17, Chairman —
2125. **The Chairperson:** Sorry —
2126. **Mr Clarke:** That has been your opinion since the start of this inquiry.
2127. **The Chairperson:** Let me finish what I am saying, Trevor. If you want to go to page 17, the email starts off:
"I attended a meeting yesterday with the Minister and Turkington's Builders".
2128. It refers to the Glass and Glazing Federation. That is not a difficulty at all, and I am not taking issue with that whatsoever. What I am pointing out is that, throughout a fairly protracted and publicly controversial period, but, more importantly, through business with the Assembly and the Committee, not one person gave evidence — particularly, I have to say, from Turkington Holdings

— nor was there one piece of correspondence that suggested anything other than that the meeting was with Turkington's. I need to establish that for the record, again.

2129. **Mr Brimstone:** I accept that.

2130. **The Chairperson:** You accept that. Further to that, in the midst of it, even going into June when the BBC was contacting you — I put this question to the Minister — at no time did anybody come to the Minister to correct him on the information that he stated publicly and to the Assembly that the meeting was with the glazing federation. We dealt with this earlier with Will Haire and will return to it with other witnesses. You are a special adviser with a particularly important role, as you understand. So, at no time did anybody ever believe it appropriate to go back to an official or the record to say,

"Excuse me, Minister, we have got this wrong, because actually the meeting was with Turkington Holdings."

2131. We are being asked to accept evidence that at no time did anybody ever go back to anybody and say no. In fact, the reverse is the case, because even if you follow the Susan McCarty and Housing Executive email trail, the Housing Executive was quite clear that the meeting was with Turkington Holdings. Michael Sands was quite clear in his evidence, and said in his evidence, that he was prepared to accept an inaccuracy when he was asked to change the letter to me as the Chair of this Committee. That was in your handwriting and, based on your evidence this morning, done on the instruction of the Minister. We are being asked to accept the proposition despite the fact that there is not a single piece of documentation, until the last two iterations of Barbara McConaghie's note, that the meeting was with anybody other than Turkington Holdings.

2132. **Mr Brimstone:** I accept most of that, Chair. This all goes back to my expectation, coming out of the meeting on 25 January, that a letter was to be sent to the Minister from the Glass

and Glazing Federation requesting a meeting with Ian Young from the Glass and Glazing Federation. If I had seen the letter that arrived at that point, flags would have been raised in my mind as to who was actually asking for this meeting. If I had seen it at the point in April when the meeting was held, flags would have been raised in my mind. I do not believe that that letter was part of the pack that the Minister got on the day. Even during the meeting, you can sometimes scuttle through the submission when the meeting is happening. I did not see that letter, and, therefore, up until very recently, I was of the impression and entirely convinced that the meeting was requested on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

2133. **The Chairperson:** OK. As I said, a number of people want to come in.

2134. **Mr Brady:** It goes back to that point, Stephen, because you said that, after the meeting of 25 January, you were under the impression that a letter was going to come in from the Glass and Glazing Federation. I alluded in previous questions to the pre-meeting briefing. It says very clearly "MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS". It then goes on to say:

"Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes."

2135. It then goes on about the detail. So, whoever prepared that briefing was very clear that it was from Turkington's. Presumably they must have had access to the letter if they arranged the meeting. I know that you had to leave the meeting. It was on a Monday, and you said that you did not see this. If they were there as Turkington's, did you not at any stage think — and you were present, I presume, at the initial stages of the meeting. Would it not have occurred to you to say, "My understanding was that you are here to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation as opposed to Turkington's". You were certainly under the impression — you stated that — that they were

- sending in a letter as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Declan Allen from the Housing Executive, who also attended that meeting, said at no time was he aware that they were from the Glass and Glazing Federation, and Turkington's were very clear in their evidence — Jim McKeag and Ian Young — that they had never mentioned it.
2136. **Mr Brimstone:** They did mention it.
2137. **Mr Brady:** They said that they never mentioned the fact that they were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. They said that they had been members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Glass and Glazing Federation representative from England said very clearly that a protocol would have to have been gone through for them to represent the Glass and Glazing Federation at any meeting. I just wonder whether it occurred to you at that time to say, "Are you representing the Glass and Glazing Federation or are you representing Turkington's?" It is a moot point, but it seems to be a relatively straightforward issue.
2138. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely. In hindsight, a lot of things would probably have been done differently.
2139. **Mr Allister:** You have already accepted that Turkington's evidence is to the effect that they said nothing at the meeting on 25 January that could have left you with the impression that they were representing the federation, yet you ask the Committee to believe that you left that meeting believing that they were. That is rather inexplicable, if their evidence is to be believed. You said that you expected the letter to come from the federation.
2140. **Mr Brimstone:** From Ian Young.
2141. **Mr Allister:** Yes, on behalf of the federation.
2142. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
2143. **Mr Allister:** At the meeting on 25 January, did you suggest at any time that that is who it should come from?
2144. **Mr Brimstone:** No, they were the ones who brought up the Glass and Glazing Federation. I had no knowledge of the Glass and Glazing Federation before that meeting.
2145. **Mr Allister:** There is no question but that the Glass and Glazing Federation's guidelines have been part of many of these discussions. Nobody disputes that: the dispute is about who was representing whom. Turkington's was very clear to the Committee in its evidence that it said nothing to you that could cause you to believe that it was representing the federation, yet you come to us without any notes of the meeting to tell us that that is the impression that you left with. It is rather inexplicable.
2146. **Mr Brimstone:** It is, but I was asked by the Committee to give a briefing as to what my understanding was, and you will see in the expanded version of what I was asked by the Committee to provide that I have given that. I can only give that. That is my belief as to what happened at the time. Up until very recently, that was my belief going into the meeting on 16 or 17 of April.
2147. **Mr Allister:** But it is not rooted in anything, according to Turkington's evidence of what it said to you.
2148. **Mr Brimstone:** I accept that.
2149. **Mr Allister:** You accept that?
2150. **Mr Brimstone:** I accept that.
2151. **Mr Allister:** Is it the case, Mr Brimstone, that, in a way, you are kicking up some dust — not to be the fall guy — but to try to provide an explanation as to how the federation ever came into the picture in order to soften the blow in respect of the Minister? Is that what you are at?
2152. **Mr Brimstone:** No, not at all. I am providing honest, truthful answers to the Committee to the best of my ability. I left the meeting on 25 January, which the Minister was not at, with a clear impression that a letter was to come to the Minister from an Ian Young representing the Glass and Glazing

- Federation requesting a meeting. After that meeting, I briefed the Minister on the meeting that I had had and told him that I expected a letter from an Ian Young from the Glass and Glazing Federation requesting a meeting with him .
2153. **Mr Allister:** But that impression was not based on anything that Ian Young had said, according to the evidence that he gave us.
2154. **Mr Brimstone:** I can only give you my interpretation.
2155. **Mr Allister:** Are you calling Ian Young a liar?
2156. **Mr Brimstone:** I am not calling anybody a liar.
2157. **Mr Allister:** Right, so can we believe his answer that they were equally clear when they met you that they were just Turkington's?
2158. **Mr Brimstone:** I can only give you my impression of what was going to come on the back of that meeting.
2159. **Mr Allister:** And I am just probing how you could possibly have that impression if Ian Young's evidence is to be believed.
2160. **Mr Brimstone:** I clearly was led to believe during that meeting — it is two years ago now — that a letter was to come from the Glass and Glazing Federation. I was clearly under that impression.
2161. **Mr Allister:** I do not want to labour this, but I suggest that that impression could not have come, if Mr Young is to be believed in his evidence, from anything that Mr Young or Mr Turkington said to you at that meeting.
2162. **Mr Brimstone:** I can only tell you my impressions on leaving that meeting.
2163. **Mr Allister:** You said that, on 16 April, nothing was discussed except the specifications. Were no health and safety issues described?
2164. **Mr Brimstone:** The note clearly says that health and safety issues were discussed. I do not know whether that happened after I left the meeting. As I said earlier, I left the meeting early as I had a personal appointment, so I do not know whether they were discussed after that.
2165. **The Chairperson:** I have one final point. Stephen, I will put this point later to Barbara McConaghie. There was an email from Barbara McConaghie on 22 February and it relates to a meeting regarding an invitation from Turkington Holdings, with a PDF attachment from Turkington. Further down the page, we then have reference to an invitation from Ian Young, Turkington, and the subject is Turkington Holdings. I am looking for some explanation as to why and how there can be any misunderstanding around this correspondence and referring to this request and to the ultimate meeting. Here, again, we have a complete and utter example of how all the correspondence relates specifically to Turkington's.
2166. **Mr Brimstone:** After I briefed the Minister on the meeting that I had with Turkington's, I knew that I was going to be going off on paternity leave, as my wife was expecting a child any day, and I updated the Minister's private secretary that I expected a letter to be coming in from the Glass and Glazing Federation. I was not going to be here when it arrived. I had let her know that the Minister was keen, following my briefing with him, to hear the issues being raised, and I had suggested that, when the letter arrived, the chief executive of the Housing Executive should be at that meeting as the issues were largely to do with Housing Executive matters.
2167. **The Chairperson:** I appreciate that, but this is 22 February. This is not April, May or June.
2168. **Mr Allister:** Perhaps Mr Brimstone can tell us when he came back to work.
2169. **Mr Brimstone:** It was two weeks. I went off on the 27th, I think it was.
2170. **Mr Allister:** Of?
2171. **Mr Brimstone:** Of February.

2172. **Mr Allister:** Of January?
2173. **Mr Brimstone:** Of February.
2174. **Mr Allister:** Then, you were there when the letter came in on 2 February.
2175. **Mr Brimstone:** You misunderstand how the private office works. I would not have seen the letter until it came to the Minister's desk.
2176. **The Chairperson:** Stephen, you were cc'd into this email on 22 February. There is total, exclusive reference to Turkington Holdings.
2177. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely, and if you know the way that the email system in the Department works — in fact, the Department has taken steps to try to do something about it — there are lots of cc'd emails that I never read. I cannot read them because there are literally hundreds of them.
2178. **The Chairperson:** So, you did not read the email.
2179. **Mr Brimstone:** I never read that email.
2180. **The Chairperson:** So, you did not see the email, you did not read the letter, and you did not read the briefing in your role as a special adviser, despite — and I will repeat this for the third time — despite all the public attention, Assembly inquiries, this Committee writing and all of that?
2181. **Mr Brimstone:** I have never seen this email, Chair, or I would have seen the document attached to it. Anybody will confirm that, until recently, I was cc'd into hundreds of emails and it was impossible to read them. All the evidence that I have given so far is as honest and as clear as I can be.
2182. **The Chairperson:** OK. There are no other indications that any other member wishes to speak at the moment, so I am happy enough to adjourn and leave it at this juncture. Thank you for your evidence here this morning. We will reflect on all this and may well return to you for further information.
2183. It is now 1.05 pm. Before we go into the next evidence session, I propose to take a 15-minute comfort break.

9 January 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Ms Barbara McConaghie *Former Private Secretary to Minister for Social Development*

Please note that this is a *fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.*

2184. **The Chairperson:** Could I extend a formal welcome now to Ms McConaghie for this particular evidence session. Barbara McConaghie is a former private secretary to the Minister for Social Development. I would just like to acknowledge in the first instance that I can understand that it can be quite a daunting experience to give evidence to a Committee, never mind an inquiry. So, I just want to make sure, from the outset, that you're comfortable enough in terms of giving your evidence. You'll have ample opportunity to have you say. You will, obviously, have questions from the various members, including myself, to address, relating to your own evidential role in all of this. But, as I say, you'll have plenty of time to do that, and I think that you have been provided with the relevant documentation from this side that we wanted you to, kind of, specifically deal with.
2185. Obviously, it's probably even a little bit more stressful to be required to give evidence under oath. In your case, I think I understand you're wanting to

take an affirmation. Just to state for the record, obviously both are equal in terms of standing and, more importantly, legal implications. So, on that basis, I want to say that, in the administering of an oath or requiring a person to give evidence by way of an affirmation, we are not calling into question anybody's integrity. We said from the outset that we would take people and their professional integrity at face value, and that's what we have been seeking to do, but, of course, where we get what appears to be a conflict of evidence between people who are presenting evidence, then we are duty bound to make sure that we are rigorously exploring that. In this case, therefore, for yourself, as you're aware, Barbara, you had presented the inquiry with a submission some weeks ago, and then Michael Sands had also then given oral evidence at the inquiry, and there is a conflict between the evidence provided. It's not up to us. We haven't made any judgements as to where the inaccuracy might lie, but you understand our position that we have then, on the basis that we are not treating one person differently to another or have anything against one member or one witness, in this instance, required both people to be here. As you know, Michael Sands won't be here today due to illness to give further evidence under oath or by way of affirmation.

2186. Without any further ado, and just in terms of the housekeeping here and good practice, as I understand it, you have opted to make an affirmation as opposed to the oath, which, as I said earlier on, has the same standing. I understand that you've been advised by the Department's officials of the potential legal implications of all of that.
2187. **Ms Barbara McConaghie (Department for Social Development):** That's right.
2188. **The Chairperson:** On that basis then, I am happy, if you are happy, that we will

- initiate the affirmation. I will ask Kevin Pelan, the Clerk, to give you a copy of the affirmation, which then I will ask you to — I will let you have a look at it for a moment or two, so that you are comfortable enough with the wording of it. As soon as you are happy enough, just let me know, and then we will administer that affirmation.
2189. **Ms McConaghie:** It's fine. Go ahead.
2190. **The Chairperson:** Are you happy enough?
2191. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2192. **The Chairperson:** Could I then formally, Barbara, ask you to verbalise the affirmation, just for the record, to the inquiry?
2193. **Ms McConaghie:** I do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
2194. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you.
2195. Moving ahead into the core of the business, I suppose there are just a couple of points that I could make before I take members in order of their requests. There are probably essentially two points that I want to address with yourself, Barbara. On the one hand, Stephen Brimstone, earlier on, had indicated that he had advised, I think, yourself to expect an invitation or a letter from what he described as the Glass and Glazing Federation, but the emails, I think on page 97 — First of all, could you advise us — Were you advised by Stephen to expect a letter from the Glazing Federation?
2196. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes. I do recall a conversation that Stephen had with me to expect a letter coming in from the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2197. **The Chairperson:** But your email on 22 February relates entirely and exclusively to Turkington's.
2198. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes. I think, when the invitation actually came in, my interpretation when I read that was that the meeting was from Turkington's, so that's therefore the reason why I had interpreted that it should be a meeting with Turkington's.
2199. **The Chairperson:** Yes. No, I think that's clear, because the letter does indicate clearly it was from Turkington's. I'm just trying to just establish this for accuracy, so, but, could I ask you, how would you then, I mean, obviously, you saw the letter from Turkington's. How then was it agreed that Turkington's meeting would go ahead? Did you advise, because, obviously, if you had been advised by the special adviser to expect a letter from the glazing federation and that that meeting should go ahead, but if you got a letter from Turkington's, would you have made a judgement, "Well, it's the same thing really"? Why would you have made a determination, because, obviously, you would receive other letters, and other requests were denied, so —
2200. **Ms McConaghie:** Basically, I have to go on what was written, you know? At that time, Stephen was actually off, I believe, on paternity leave, so he wasn't around to actually clarify, so the fact that the letter came in from Turkington's, it's recorded on our knowledge network system as an invitation case, and that is sent out to the branch saying "For advice" for the Minister as to whether he should accept or decline the invite.
2201. **The Chairperson:** But Stephen didn't go off until the 27th, which is five days after the 22nd email.
2202. **Ms McConaghie:** I honestly can't recall the details, but, as far as I know, Stephen wasn't around for me to clarify with him, but the normal procedure for me when I receive an invitation is to have it logged on the system and sent out to officials for advice.
2203. **The Chairperson:** OK. Now, in your —
2204. **Ms McConaghie:** Sorry, just say as well, sometimes, there is maybe conversations go on outside out of what I would be privy to, you know. And things can move on, so, you know, there is no reason for me to question where the

- letter or where the invitation was coming from or it was any different, you know?
2205. **The Chairperson:** Can you — I mean, we received evidence from the Department on actually 6 January which gives us a schedule of amendments to the 16 April, your aide-memoire, your — I am not sure whether we call this a minute or an aide-memoire, but we should call it one or the other, so will just, will members agree if we can call that a minute? I do not mind. It is a toss-up if it is an aide-memoire or a minute. So —
2206. **Mr Clarke:** The only thing, Chairman — I have no real issue with that, but I think, just in speaking back a few meetings ago, there was reference, a minute — if it was a minute, it would have been circulated. Because it was not circulated, I think we should be referring to it as an aide-memoire, I think, only for procedural purposes, to be honest.
2207. **Mr Allister:** But the Minister repeatedly referred to it as a minute —
2208. **Mr Clarke:** He may have done.
2209. **Mr Allister:** — in the Assembly, in his evidence.
2210. **Mr Clarke:** He might have done, Chairman, but we did hear that it is normal practice if it is a minute, it is circulated to all those who present. Now, we did take an awful lot of weight from Turkington's and what they have said. They said they didn't get a copy of the aide-memoire, so I don't think we can call it a minute.
2211. **The Chairperson:** Well, OK. I'm easy, but, I mean, we can probably interchange the term because we are maybe going to — do not have to agree as such, but, in respect of that, there have been a number of changes to that, and, I think, a total of six. And on, up until the fifth aide-memoire iteration, Michael Sands, for example, had been recorded as having made two amendments. And then you have been recorded as having — I am just trying to get my page — is this a hundred and —
2212. **Ms P Bradley:** Page 70.
2213. **The Chairperson:** This is 69, is it?
2214. **Ms P Bradley:** It's 70.
2215. **The Chairperson:** No, it is not that one. That is a schedule of —
2216. We have a number of changes made, according to this table that we have provided, and that is on page 70, is it? Page 70, Barbara. The number is actually clipped on my page here, so it is —
2217. **Ms P Bradley:** It is 70.
2218. **The Chairperson:** You have 70. Have you got — So, it is just to ensure Barbara has that. So, again, in Michael Sands's evidence, he had said that he had not seen this at any time, but this schedule appears to — well, it indicates clearly that Michael Sands on 17 April added to the list of attendees, and then, on version 5, is amended with the tracked changes which people have, and then it goes on to say that the finalised version changes from version 5 to 6 were made by you. In your written submission, if I remember correctly, you had said you had not seen any of that until the fourth or the final version. So, what we are interested in establishing here is, in the first instance, from the version 5 to the version 6, the two significant changes of concern to this Committee are that the name of the organisation supposed to be holding the meeting was changed from Turkington's to the Glass and Glazing Federation and then, further down that letter, it changes Turkington's and again replaces that with the glazing federation. Can you explain why, according to this schedule, you made that change?
2219. **Ms McConaghie:** From the outset, I know it says there is actually six versions, but maybe it would be worthwhile to explain that, when I actually go in to draft or take it from the manuscript to put it to on an electronic version, if I go out of that at all, that will save that as a version, even though if I just make sort of a couple of minor mistakes, it is classed as a draft. Once I recorded my interpretation of the meeting, that would have been sent,

- obviously, to Michael Sands, and he would have had sort of responsibility to make any amendments. The reason that is sent to Michael is really just to, number one, make sure it is an accurate reflection of what happened at the meeting and, number two, is to follow up then on any action that will come out of the meeting. Michael made his changes and then, as you say, I did change it, but, in all honesty, I cannot recall at this point as to who or why I made the changes to that final version. The role that I have as PS was extremely, extremely busy. I would have been acceding to requests from various people from various parts of the Department, whether it be urban regeneration or housing or Social Security Agency, and to recall, to go back and recall specifically why I made the change to this one, unfortunately, I can't.
2220. **The Chairperson:** Would you agree that, in your previous written evidence, you said that you would not normally be asked to make such changes? So, would it not be reasonable for us to expect that, if it is not normal for you to do that, when you were asked to make changes that you then made those changes? And could I suggest that they are not minor changes; they are significant changes? So, you're asking us to accept that you can't recall what would've been a very unusual transaction.
2221. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, as I said, on a daily basis, I would've got a number of requests to, you know, change submissions, briefings, maybe, you know, correspondence cases, invitations cases. And, amongst a wide range of correspondence, I can't honestly recall the specific details around this. In my role, I would say I maybe was attending maybe 25 minutes — well, 25 meetings, sorry — a week, which, you know, on average, is about 1,000 a year, and I was PS to Minister McCausland for four years. So, amongst 4,000 meetings and amongst dealing daily with a number of submissions, a number of correspondence cases, "treat official" cases, general mail cases, I can't honestly recall the specific details.
2222. **The Chairperson:** Can you recall any other occasion when you would've changed a diary entry for the Minister?
2223. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, again, I would've been in the diary very, very regularly. Part of my role would've been sort of monitoring the diary and keeping it up to date, and, again, you know, the diary could've changed at the last minute. And to be in the diary for me was not — you know, that is a regular part of that. It was a daily part of my duties.
2224. **The Chairperson:** But, the question is — I mean, you changed the diary entry to reflect a different meeting, as I would describe that. So can you explain how usual that might be? It is one thing looking at a diary and so on and so forth, but to actually go into a diary entry a month later when it was put in to actually change it — I mean, did that did not seem unusual?
2225. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, again, I can't recall the details of why the diary was changed but it's not unusual for me to go into a diary entry retrospectively. Again, that could be to add if there was a briefing for the events or the meeting and that wasn't actually attached to the diary. It could've been maybe just to ensure that the records were up to date and try and update who was at the meeting or maybe if the meeting, you know, the venue changed at the last minute. It could've been to go in to update, you know, that part of it. But I don't recall the actual details of what I changed.
2226. **The Chairperson:** Well, again, you are asking us to accept that you made what are significant changes to an aide-memoire/minute. And you also changed a diary entry retrospectively, but you have no understanding at all how that might have happened or did anybody request that. And, the key question that I want to ask here is that, with the distribution list on that aide-memoire, there are a relatively small number of people who received that from yourself.

- So, who among those people would have had the authority — if I could narrow this down a little bit to help recall here — who among that group of people would have been able to have the authority to come back and say, “Actually, no, that is who we met”?
2227. **Ms McConaghie:** Well —
2228. **The Chairperson:** Because I mean — you have to help — I think you have to help us out here.
2229. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes, and I am to the best of my ability, but I obviously don't want to say anything that is going to implicate somebody wrongly either.
2230. **The Chairperson:** But you have to give us your best recollection.
2231. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2232. **The Chairperson:** It is not a question of doing anybody any wrong; this is about following evidence. This is about following people's — we have heard people giving evidence here this morning that they had a clear recollection of something, which clearly was incorrect, but they gave it as their recollection. So, I would suggest to you that, if you have a recollection, you can put that and you can qualify it however way you think is appropriate. But, this is not about not doing anybody wrong or doing anybody right; this is about us exploring the evidence, as we have said from the outset that we are determined to do, and we will get to the bottom of it. So, could I suggest, if you are unsure about something, you might actually volunteer that information and caveat that as you see fit, as opposed to saying, “Well, I'm not sure, so I'm not going to say”? Because that is what I am interpreting it as —
2233. **Ms McConaghie:** I know. Well, the person that could have authorised or instructed me to change anything probably would have been the Minister, or the special adviser or it could have possibly been somebody from the housing — a senior housing official.
2234. **The Chairperson:** As in?
2235. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, it could have been Michael, although I am not sure that it would have been Michael, because I think he was under the impression that the meeting was with Turkington's.
2236. **The Chairperson:** Yeah, and also that there wouldn't have been any other officials at the meeting. You know — well, the Housing Executive, for example, weren't asked but they have also, in their evidence, said that they had no sight of it. So —
2237. **Ms McConaghie:** No, because it was just an aide-memoire. Really, the idea behind this is more of a — was to keep me correct if there was any follow-up action so that I had an internal document that I could go back to and follow up on, you know. So, the note wasn't circulated to those people who were at the meeting.
2238. **The Chairperson:** And could you maybe offer some explanation as to how — if you received a letter from Turkington's and recorded that as such in your email, and in fact distributed that email to a number of people — that how, after, as even this table shows us that Michael Sands, for example, as one of the people who may have been able to make a change, made two changes, that in the finalised version that we get, which the only explanation we have at this moment in time is that you changed that? So, at this moment in time, you have to provide an explanation as to why you changed that.
2239. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, I'm assuming —
2240. **The Chairperson:** And, if you know what I mean, so —
2241. **Ms McConaghie:** Yeah.
2242. **The Chairperson:** — you have to offer us some rationale as to why you changed the reference to who the meeting was with and why you did that, despite that fact that you had a letter from Turkington's.
2243. **Ms McConaghie:** Yeah. Well, I'm assuming that the instruction come from either the Minister or the special adviser

- since they were under the impression that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2244. **The Chairperson:** And you can't offer any explanation as to how that was conveyed to you. Did somebody come in till you? Did somebody send you an email? Did somebody phone you up? Did somebody stop you in the office and say, "By the way, you need to change that"?
2245. **Ms McConaghie:** I honestly don't recall the incident at all. And, again, as I said before, I would have received numerous requests. I could have been — you know — it's a very, very busy post.
2246. **The Chairperson:** But, it is your job; it is your post to do that.
2247. **Ms McConaghie:** It's my job to, you know, accede to requests and to reprioritise my work. And, you know, in the middle of attending meetings and maybe answering the telephone and dealing with officials, sometimes you just become sort of almost automatic or robotic in what you do, you know.
2248. **The Chairperson:** OK. To Jim Allister.
2249. **Mr Allister:** Just explain to us the chain of command in the private office. You are the private secretary to the Minister.
2250. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2251. **Mr Allister:** But what is the hierarchy? Who can tell you what to do and who can't?
2252. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, I obviously have my line manager at DP level. I also have then — on top of that, there would have been the grade 7 ahead of the DP.
2253. **Mr Allister:** Can you put names on those?
2254. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes, if you need to be. My line manager, at that time, was Billy Crawford, and the grade 7 ahead of Billy then would be Alastair Newell, and that would have been my hierarchy in terms of line management.
2255. **Mr Allister:** But in terms of your role as private secretary, that was to the Minister. Obviously, you would take his instructions.
2256. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2257. **Mr Allister:** Would you equally take the special adviser's instructions?
2258. **Ms McConaghie:** If the special adviser had asked me to do something, yes; uh-huh.
2259. **Mr Allister:** So, he had that status to tell you what to do or not do.
2260. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, obviously, it depended on what the requests are as well, you know. But, yes, if the special adviser had asked me to do something, for me, he is a more senior member of staff than what I am.
2261. **Mr Allister:** Dealing with the two specifics on the one day — I remind you it was the one day, 16 May 2012 — the retrospective change of the diary entry to change who the meeting was with and the change to the minutes to show — to change who the meeting was with: they both happened on 16 May. Can you give any indication as to why both those matters were addressed on the same day?
2262. **Ms McConaghie:** Again, I can't recall actually doing this, so, therefore, it is hard for me, you know. I cannot recall actually going and changing this specifically.
2263. **Mr Allister:** But you accept that you did make those changes.
2264. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, the evidence is there that I made the changes; yes.
2265. **Mr Allister:** Previously, your statement to us suggested that maybe you did not, but you now accept that you did; is that right?
2266. **Ms McConaghie:** Did I say that? I do not recall saying that I did not —
2267. **The Chairperson:** In your initial statement. In your submission to us, you said — and it is on page 101 — you said that you were not normally required to make amendments, and you went on to say that you had only sight of the final version when it was provided

- to you by the DALO. But today, in your evidence, you are saying that you made the changes, but you cannot recall why you made them. So, that is a conflict. Do you understand where we are coming from?
2268. **Ms McConaghie:** Well —
2269. **The Chairperson:** You are conflicting your own evidence.
2270. **Ms McConaghie:** Sorry, what I meant in this actual paragraph here of the written submission was, based on the evidence that I had that I was the last one that actually recorded on the minute, that I made the changes. On the basis of the version that was provided to me, yes, I accept that I done that. However, could I just say, you know, if somebody had provided me a separate version of a minute and said, “You were the last person to change that”, well, then, you know, I would have accepted that.
2271. **Mr Allister:** Well, let us be clear. Your evidence to us is that you did not make either of those changes to the diary or to the heading on the minute of your own volition; is that right? Someone told you to do it.
2272. **Ms McConaghie:** I am not denying. I made the changes.
2273. **Mr Allister:** I am not quibbling that. I am asking did you do it of your own volition in either or both cases, or did somebody tell you to do it?
2274. **Ms McConaghie:** I would have done it under instruction.
2275. **Mr Allister:** Under instruction. So, the question now is: help us where you can as to who would have given that instruction.
2276. **Ms McConaghie:** At this point, I cannot recall who exactly gave me the instruction to change that.
2277. **Mr Allister:** Mrs McConaghie, you have already said to us in your written statement that being asked to change minutes was unusual. It was not something that you were normally doing. So, the very fact of its unusualness would cause — would it not? — for it to somewhat stick out in your memory.
2278. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, no, because, as I said before, I would have made numerous changes on a daily basis to various documents — not just, you know. There would have been ministerial submissions, there would have been ministerial correspondence, there would have been “treat officials” cases coming up, and I could be making changes to any of those documents.
2279. **Mr Allister:** But you were changing something here that coloured the trail in respect of this meeting. This was, as I said earlier, rewriting the script of who the meeting was with. It was as fundamental as that; wasn't it? The diary was being changed to say “Meeting with Turkington's” to “Meeting with Turkington's representing Glass and Glazing Federation”. That is the change that was made there. The heading change that was made on the minutes was meeting, scrub Turkington's, “Meeting with Glass and Glazing Federation”. That was the commonality of the change. It was fundamental to the trail of who the meetings was with. They were made on the same day. One of them, we know, made at 12.32 pm, just before lunchtime I imagine.
2280. **Ms McConaghie:** Lunch?
2281. **Mr Allister:** You don't get lunch? *[Laughter.]* A notional lunchtime. Are you seriously saying to us that in those circumstances, where you were asked to change not one but two documents for the same purpose, and the purpose being quite dramatic in terms of changing who the meeting was with, that you cannot help us about who asked you to do that?
2282. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, on hindsight now, and the fact that this inquiry has opened, yes, I can see how it is a big factor, do you know what I mean? But, at the time, it didn't mean anything to me that I was changing something like that. On hindsight now, yes, I can see that it is something that I — that should've been sticking in my mind but —

2283. **Mr Allister:** It meant this to you: you had seen the 2 February letter asking for the meetings. It unequivocally was from Turkington's. You had seen the pre-meeting briefing, unequivocally with Turkington's. You were at it. Turkington's evidence is they never represented themselves as anyone but Turkington's. And now, suddenly, one month later, after the meeting, you're asked to rewrite the script of who the meeting was with. So it was quite striking, was it not?
2284. **Ms McConaghie:** I fully accept what you are saying but, you know, as I said before, there's conversations go on outside of my role as a PS. I'm only a very small cog in the wheel, you know, and if there's conversations going on and things move on and I'm asked to change something, I obviously think it's because maybe I've got the wrong end of the stick, or you know —
2285. **Mr Allister:** I'm not asking you to discern why you were asked to make a change. I am asking you to focus very strongly on who asked you to make the change on the same day on two different documents. Now surely you can help us with that?
2286. **Ms McConaghie:** If I could, I would. I honestly can't.
2287. **Mr Allister:** Did you see the Minister on 16 May? Have you checked back? Was he in the country? Was he in Stormont? Where was he? Have you checked any of that?
2288. **Mr Clarke:** You would think she was in the witness box.
2289. **Ms McConaghie:** I'm sorry. This is now 2014.
2290. **The Chairperson:** The witness is asked the question. Sorry, sorry Barbara. We just need to ask one question at a time, please.
2291. **Mr Allister:** Have you sought to check if you saw the Minister on 16 May?
2292. **Ms McConaghie:** No, I haven't, because I do not have access. I have since moved post and I don't have access to private office registers.
2293. **Mr Allister:** Just going back to the manuscript copy of the minutes that you took, where did the manuscript copy go to?
2294. **Ms McConaghie:** Well after I do the manuscript copy and then I put it on as an electronic version, it's shredded. There's no reason for me to keep that.
2295. **Mr Allister:** So it was shredded.
2296. **Ms McConaghie:** If I was to keep all those minutes —
2297. **Mr Allister:** And let's be quite clear, you wrote up that first minute as a meeting with Turkington's. That right?
2298. **Ms McConaghie:** Correct.
2299. **Mr Allister:** And the subsequent versions of that minute until the last one were all proclaiming it to be with Turkington's. Isn't that right? And then someone said to you, change that from "Turkington's" to "Glass and Glazing Federation." And you can't help us as to who that was?
2300. **Ms McConaghie:** You know, as Stephen said, he interpreted that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2301. **Mr Allister:** Don't let's worry about what he interpreted. Can you help us as to who told you to do that?
2302. **Ms McConaghie:** Unfortunately, I can't recall.
2303. **Mr Allister:** Are you taking refuge in that?
2304. **Mr Clarke:** How many times are you asking the same question?
2305. **The Chairperson:** Could I actually, just at this juncture, because I think this is where — We need to make an important —
2306. **Mr Clarke:** Do you think she is in court?
2307. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Trevor. Just, sorry. People. Every member around this table is entitled to ask questions

- providing those questions are not badgering anybody and they're giving the witness ample time to answer and, equally, that they stay within the terms of reference. And I know it can be a wee bit difficult but, I mean, we've managed, I think, this inquiry quite well thus far, and hopefully, on a professional basis, we'll continue to do that. But, you know, we are here to probe questions and answers and explore evidence that has been presented to us, particularly when that conflicts. And unfortunately, we have evidence which conflicts. That's the difficulty we have, which is why people were called this morning here to give evidence either under oath or by way of affirmation. And, I mean, I want to underline just again the importance of that, because we have had evidence from both the Minister and Stephen Brimstone here this morning, who both said they had no role in changing that version of the minute. No role. So that means in your evidence, that — And you've accepted that you changed it. And you're saying, obviously, you would've changed it by way of instruction or whatever. You're not quite sure by whom. But your evidence is telling us at this moment in time that you changed it, and a number of the people, Michael Sands included, who is not here, but in his evidence he said that he had never even saw it despite what the evidence has now thrown up to the contrary. But, nevertheless — and we will address that with Michael in due course, but in his evidence, which is all we can deal with, he had said very clearly that he saw no aide-memoire and never made any changes. Both the Minister and Stephen Brimstone have both said in their evidence to this inquiry that they didn't make the changes.
2308. So, you have accepted that you had made the changes, and you have offered up that it may have been a limited number of those individuals who you named. Do you understand that the position that you now stand in? So, you're standing and making this declaration that you've made a change to the document and others, are saying that they had no role in that. So, again,
- you're being put on the spot, I would suggest, to explain —
2309. **Mr Clarke:** Chairman, when does badgering not become badgering? Whenever a question has been asked a number of times and the person giving the witness here has said she can't remember. Now, as well as that — and, I mean I agree, with you There is a shadow over Michael Sands's evidence. But now you are actually accepting what he said to try and badger the witness even further.
2310. **The Chairperson:** I am not accepting —
2311. **Mr Clarke:** That's what you're doing.
2312. **The Chairperson:** I am not accepting — it's not my job to accept anybody's evidence. My job is just to moderate the conduct of this inquiry. The members of this Committee —
2313. **Mr Wilson:** No, Chairman, you are going further. With respect, you are going further than that. Someone has sat here and told you — and I don't think you fully understand what a private secretary has to do on a day-to-day basis. We have received evidence here today — and in fact I think it's been underplayed — as to the pressures which are on somebody who has a PS role on a day-to-day basis. She has indicated that she cannot remember on a number of occasions. She cannot remember who, if anyone, gave an instruction. And to choose a name out of the names which have been suggested will have severe implications for the individual who she happens to choose.
2314. Now, you and this Committee have to then accept that if the witness decides that she cannot remember and she is not prepared to take pot luck in a busy day to decide who may have given that instruction because of the implications that would have and because she wants to try and, as honestly as possible, answer the question. Then there is no — it amounts to badgering for you or anyone else in this Committee to say, "Give us a name." And that is what you're doing.

2315. **Mr F McCann:** Chair.
2316. **The Chairperson:** Well, at no point — sorry, I will just take members in their turn. At no point am I saying to Ms McConaghie that she's to give a name. At no point have I said that, and the record will show. What I am obliged to do, as is every other member, is to explore the evidence, and when we have a conflict —
2317. **Mr Wilson:** You're past exploring the evidence, Mr Chairman.
2318. **The Chairperson:** No, we're not. I am sorry, we're not.
2319. **Mr Wilson:** You are past exploring the evidence, because you've had — I don't know how many times, and you've had a perfectly good explanation as to why the information may not be forthcoming, and I don't know how many times you have been told the information is not forthcoming. So, you can keep asking the question and asking the question and demanding a name or asking for a name, and that becomes badgering.
2320. If the witness has given you — and it's not that the witness has not given good reason as to why a name cannot be recalled. And I guarantee if somebody asked you to remember — and you probably don't do half of what a private secretary has to do in a private office. If somebody asked you to recall every conversation you had and every instruction you got two years ago on a specific day, you couldn't remember either.
2321. **The Chairperson:** That's fair enough. And that's not the point we're making here, and I will stand over the procedural fairness which guides the conduct of this inquiry from A to B. And it will be up to anybody, in particular witnesses — and I've made it very clear I understand the difficulty would be for any witness, including the Minister, who'd be a well experienced political representative, to be here to give evidence. I accept that and acknowledge all that. But we are here to follow what we hear, and it'll be up to every person, particularly those who are required to give evidence, to be able to challenge if they are considering that they're being treated badly.
2322. So, you know, let's be fair and reasonable. The conduct of this inquiry thus far has been, in my view, held quite professional, and that will pertain until this inquiry concludes. I will not be making judgement on anybody's evidence. This Committee, in its entirety, will deliberate on what we hear. What we are duty bound to do here is to explore what we hear. I am simply — I feel it very appropriate to make Ms McConaghie aware that she has given her evidence, and I am reminding her of other evidence that was presented by the people that she has suggested may have directed her. They have both said to this inquiry that they didn't. I am just making that point. You may or may not wish to comment on that. That is entirely a matter for you. You are not being coerced to make any comment at all. If you want to refer to —
2323. **Mr Allister:** That is the point I was coming to, that you have just touched upon. Ms McConaghie, you identified three possible instructors: the Minister, the SpAd and Mr Sands. As the Chairman has pointed out, each of those, at various stages, have denied to us that they were involved at all in any of these changes. I simply wanted to give you the opportunity. In light of that, have you anything further to say about how these changes came about?
2324. **Ms McConaghie:** I've nothing really further to add than what I've already said. I would've been instructed to have made the changes. I wouldn't have done it off my own bat. At this point, I can't remember who instructed me to make the changes.
2325. **Mr Allister:** Look at page 71 of the bundle, would you? Sorry, it might've been put in upside down. It says:
- “Meeting with
Attendees:
Minister McCausland
Barbara McConaghie.”*
2326. What's that referring to? Sorry, it's 71.

2327. **Ms McConaghie:** That is the first draft. That would be my first attempt at actually trying to write up the minutes. As I was sort of trying to explain earlier on, I'm trying to do the minutes in the middle of doing meetings, dealing with telephone calls and my normal duties, so —
2328. **Mr Allister:** So does that mean that the Minister was there when you were doing that and you showed them to him and discussed them with him? What does that mean?
2329. **Ms McConaghie:** No. That was me starting to draft the minutes.
2330. **Mr Allister:** Why does it say:
*“Attendees:
Minister McCausland”.*
2331. **Ms McConaghie:** Because Minister McCausland was at the meeting.
2332. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but so were half a dozen other people.
2333. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes, but that was me just starting to draft the minutes. I must've got called away to do something. That was the first version of those minutes.
2334. **Mr Allister:** Oh, I see. That was as far as you got.
2335. **Ms McConaghie:** That was as far as I got when I started to do the minutes, or the aide-memoire or whatever you want to call it.
2336. **Mr Allister:** In all subsequent versions, of course, you're not the second person listed, for what it matters. Not that it really matters, but I'm just —
2337. **Ms McConaghie:** The process that I use to actually start to type my minutes is that I would've probably copied a previous minute. So I obviously was deleting those people that weren't at the — do you know what I mean? I was copying a previous minute, deleting all the information that wasn't appropriate, and that was the only information that was appropriate at that time.
2338. **Mr Allister:** So that is the full extent of version 1? Two names?
2339. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, I was obviously called away to another meeting or something. That is all I got done —
2340. **Mr Allister:** That's when you went out of the system or whatever. I understand. In terms of what was referred to as the TRIM system, were the minutes on that system?
2341. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes. The TRIM version holds — that's what that is. That was obviously my first attempt, so —
2342. **Mr Allister:** And who has access to that?
2343. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, TRIM can be accessed by anybody really in the Department — in DSD.
2344. **Mr Allister:** The special adviser told us he couldn't access it. Does that surprise you?
2345. **Ms McConaghie:** No. As far as I remember, that is correct. The reason for that is, as far as I recall, there was some sort of guidance, possibly from OFMDFM at that point, to say that special advisers were not allowed to access previous correspondence from previous Ministers etc. So they don't have access to TRIM.
2346. **Mr Allister:** Yes, I understand.
2347. **The Chairperson:** Is that you, Jim?
2348. **Mr Allister:** Do you know anything about the instruction issued at the end of June to the Housing Executive that the meeting, in fact, was with the glazing federation?
2349. **Ms McConaghie:** No.
2350. **Mr Allister:** You had no involvement in that?
2351. **Ms McConaghie:** No.
2352. **Mr Allister:** Had you any contact — sorry, one final question — had you any contact with the Department of Finance and Personnel about the meeting, given that the request letter was cc'd to DFP?

2353. **Ms McConaghie:** No.
2354. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
2355. **The Chairperson:** OK. Mickey Brady.
2356. **Mr Brady:** Mr Wilson has alluded to how busy a private secretary is. I fully accept that and I think we all would accept that it's a difficult job when you're multitasking and all of that. But I would presume you are doing that job because you are efficient and you are capable of doing it. I mean, that may be an inverted compliment, but I know you would have to be good at what you do; otherwise presumably you would not be in that position, and it would be accepted that you are very, very capable of doing that. Just to make that point.
2357. Two questions really. The diary changes. You mentioned that diary changes can be made retrospectively, but I would presume that that's to reflect accurately the meeting, and yet in the first five versions of the aide-memoire/minute, it says very clearly "Turkington's", and then the last version and the amended version in the diary says "Glass and Glazing Federation". So, obviously, that change came about when somebody had to, presumably, initiate that change. I do accept that you have said that you have no recollection of that.
2358. The other question you may not be able to answer, but it's a kind of a general query. On page 14, there is a briefing which was for the meeting, and Stephen Brimstone has said he didn't see that until the actual day. It was done on 11 April 2012, and it talks about a meeting with Turkington Holdings, and you accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings. Now, I would assume that's not part of your remit, but would you have any idea who would normally prepare those briefings, because it was inferred earlier by Mr Brimstone that it would probably be a departmental official because there would be no need, presumably, for you necessarily to have a copy of that at the meeting because you are there to get the aide-memoire or the minutes or whatever. That would be your function at the meeting to accurately reflect the content of the meeting.
2359. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, the housing officials, they prepare the briefing and they send it up to private office, and then the private office would prepare a briefing pack for the Minister, and I actually would have a copy of this myself as well.
2360. **Mr Brady:** But would you accept then that, on the face of that briefing, it was very clear that the meeting was with Turkington Holdings and not the Glass and Glazing Federation? Just from sight of that.
2361. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2362. **Mr Brady:** Thank you.
2363. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you, Chair, and thanks, Barbara, for your evidence. Can I just clarify for my own point of view? In the versions on page 78, you know the way some of the lines are underlined and some of them are scored out, you know, why would that be and who would have — I mean, is that something that you would have done on your own computer system or would that have been something —
2364. **Ms McConaghie:** Normally, when I do up the draft version, I would send it out for officials and ask them to track the changes on it. So it gives me an idea just of what has been changed on it. So that would be automatically done by the system using that sort of facility.
2365. **Mrs D Kelly:** So that's what tracked changes look like within your system basically.
2366. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2367. **Mrs D Kelly:** You know, some people use a wee box at the side type of thing.
2368. **Ms McConaghie:** That would be the tracked changes facility.
2369. **Mrs D Kelly:** I note there's a line under Michael Sands's name in the tracked changes in version 5. Why would that

- be? Is that the first time he's been added to the —
2370. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes. I omitted him when I was doing it, unfortunately.
2371. **Mrs D Kelly:** It was in version 4, sorry, as well, yes. So that just then continued through. And who would have advised of those tracked changes being required?
2372. **Ms McConaghie:** When I had sent my version of my interpretation of the meeting to the official, I would have said to them, "Look, would you mind tracking the changes on that?".
2373. **Mrs D Kelly:** That would be Michael.
2374. **Ms McConaghie:** So Michael would have just, you know, used that facility. It just gives me an indication as to what was different from my version really.
2375. **Mrs D Kelly:** No, no, that is fine. Barbara, I note in your briefing, and you also made reference to the fact, that you are no longer a private secretary. Where are you working now?
2376. **Ms McConaghie:** I'm working in the regional development office based in Ballymena and —
2377. **Mrs D Kelly:** Is it closer to home for you?
2378. **Ms McConaghie:** Exactly, yes.
2379. **Mrs D Kelly:** I thought I heard a bit of a Ballymena twang there, given that I am married to a man from up round Glenravel.
2380. **Ms McConaghie:** I'm actually Ballymoney, so —
2381. **Mrs D Kelly:** Ballymoney.
2382. **Ms McConaghie:** So it's handy.
2383. **Mrs D Kelly:** And you're no longer working as a private secretary then, no?
2384. **Ms McConaghie:** No, I gave up the post last January. January 2013.
2385. **Mrs D Kelly:** What post do you hold then now?
2386. **Ms McConaghie:** At the minute, I'm working in the regional development office —
2387. **The Chairperson:** Well, I don't know what —
2388. **Mrs D Kelly:** Just in relation to —
2389. **The Chairperson:** I don't know what — I mean, that really wouldn't have any relevance to the —
2390. **Mrs D Kelly:** I was just interested to see when you said you were no longer — I didn't know whether you had left the service overall or whether you were still within it.
2391. **The Chairperson:** Well, if it's a matter of interest, then it will be on your own time.
2392. **Mrs D Kelly:** Sorry about that.
2393. **The Chairperson:** Fair enough. I was just trying to keep it —
2394. **Mrs D Kelly:** That is fair enough.
2395. I think that you will appreciate from others' perception that, given that you said in your evidence that the changes are extraordinary rather than run-of-the-mill, and accepting that you have a busy day and all the rest, you can understand why others would think, "Well, if it is an extraordinary thing to happen, you would then have a better recollection." At these evidence sessions, we have heard a lot of lecturing and badgering, allegedly, and memory loss, allegedly, so there are some common themes emerging throughout the course of the inquiry. In terms of all these changes, the freedom of information requests and the Assembly Member questions, you would have no role in any of those? Those dates, how do they sit? If Barbara is not able to tell us, and I suspect that you might not be, could we find out in terms of the timescale, in terms of the freedom of information requests and Assembly questions in relation to those changes? That might be useful for us to have. In terms of the six versions —
2396. **Ms McConaghie:** Sorry, what page are you on?

2397. **Mrs D Kelly:** Page 70. In relation to all those changes, it would be interesting to know how they relate to requests by way of Assembly Members questions or FOI requests. What I am trying to say is that you might not have knowledge, but, from my perspective, it would be useful if we could add to that chronological timescale in relation to those.
2398. Obviously, the Chairman was trying to inform you of how others have said that they would not have any role in amending any of the minutes, but, as I understand it, that is not what you have said. Both the Minister and the special adviser could suggest amendments. That would be correct, and that would not be unusual.
2399. **Ms McConaghie:** It would not be unusual.
2400. **Mr Wilson:** Barbara, I have some sympathy with the point you made about not remembering, but it might be useful for the Committee to know, in a bit more detail, what a day for a private secretary is like with a Minister. Will you elaborate on the kinds of things —
2401. **The Chairperson:** With all due respect, Sammy —
2402. **Mr Wilson:** It is relevant.
2403. **The Chairperson:** We understand that people work and work hard. There is nobody taking exception to that. It is not relevant to go through someone's day job.
2404. **Mr Wilson:** It is relevant to the ability to recall detail. That is the point that I am making. I think that it would be useful to hear the kinds of things that a private secretary does on a daily basis.
2405. **Ms McConaghie:** On a daily basis, you could be starting work for meetings at 8.00 am. During the course of the day, you could be attending six or seven meetings. On top of that, you are dealing with, in the Department for Social Development, not only housing, you have urban regeneration, the Social Security Agency and the child maintenance and enforcement division. You also have all the policy documents.
2406. On top of all that information coming into the private office, you could also be dealing with changing diaries at the last minute. If the Minister is running late, you could be changing diaries to try to bring things on track. So, it is a really busy day. You are acceding to requests from other MLAs, and you are dealing with the permanent secretary and senior officials. That is on a daily basis. That is something that happens every day. Do you know what I mean? So, you go into a case of working almost on automatic pilot at some cases. I could have been working until 8.00 pm, and then I still had an hour and twenty minutes to go home. So, it is an extremely busy post, and forgive me if I do not remember every single detail of what I did.
2407. **Mr Wilson:** I think that it is hard to encapsulate. I know that private secretaries work far harder than Ministers, by the way, but I will leave that aside. It is hard to encapsulate the kind of pressures and, therefore, the difficulty in remembering the detail, but when we come to the changes in the minute that were asked to be made, would it not have been unusual, given that there were still liberal references to Turkington's in this, for you to have thought that that actually changes the significance of this if a request was made for those changes?
2408. **Ms McConaghie:** Well, as I said earlier, when Stephen had said to me about the possibility of a letter coming in from the Glass and Glazing, I think there was maybe some confusion from my perspective, because I am not sure — did the meeting move on? Were there conversations that happened outside of the meeting that I am not aware of, even with officials? Turkington's and the Glass and Glazing, yes, I know there is a difference, and it does affect the minute, but, in my mind, I was not aware of the conversations that are happening outside of that.
2409. **Mr Wilson:** And there were still plenty of references to Turkington's in the minute, as it stands, anyhow, even in the last version.

2410. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2411. **Mr Wilson:** I think that there are three references to Turkington's in it in the opening and in the last paragraph of the letter.
2412. You have been, and I can understand it, reticent about asking who made — who asked for the change to be made. Again, given the busyness of the office, would that be unusual? If, on a day-to-day basis, someone came in and asked for some changes, would it be usual for you to remember who that individual happened to be anyhow?
2413. **Ms McConaghie:** I couldn't remember. Forgive me, but I actually have a bad memory. For me, part of my role, when I was in private secretary, I would have had different mechanisms for recording and reminding me to do things, whether that be using the diary, Post-it notes, follow-up, even on Microsoft Outlook to bring up something to say, "You need to do this". Taking copious notes was my way of trying to remember what happened at particular meetings. My memory is bad anyway, but for somebody to come in and ask me to do something, you do it almost automatically, because you know what has to be done. Sometimes, things have to be done because they are urgent, and, for me, my role is to do my job to the best of my ability and let the people that it affects know that if something has been done, it has been done for a reason.
2414. **The Chairperson:** OK. I do not have any other members. I have a couple of points to finish off on myself. You have accepted that you have presented evidence that you actually made the changes, both to the minute and to the diary entry. You have confirmed that.
2415. **Ms McConaghie:** Yes.
2416. **The Chairperson:** And, as was pointed out early on, you also said that you would not have done that of your own volition; you would have done that under some type of direction. You cannot remember where that direction came from. I did point out, too, that all the other people who gave evidence pertinent to that actually said that it wasn't them. Can you then offer any explanation, or would you have had any personal motivation to change it yourself? Because, if we follow what other people are saying, they didn't do it, so you did it, for some reason or other, so can you give us a reason? Would you have had any personal motivation to change the minute?
2417. **Ms McConaghie:** I have absolutely no personal motivation to change the minute. I would have done it under instruction. There is no reason for me to go in to change it, unless I was instructed to do it.
2418. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you for that. No other members have indicated that they want to speak. Barbara, could I thank you for being here this afternoon to give your evidence? Thank you.

13 March 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Mickey Brady (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Nelson McCausland *Minister for Social Development*

Please note that this is a *fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.*

2419. **The Chairperson:** We have the Minister, Nelson McCausland, here this morning, and, again then, just to advise members then the Minister has requested that he would give evidence under an affirmation. That's correct, Minister, and he's chosen to do that on that basis. Again, I just, I'm formally for the record making everybody aware that these — the affirmation — is as binding as an oath. The Clerk will now provide the wording of the affirmation to the Minister. Minister, you are satisfied that you have read the affirmation and you are —
2420. **Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** Well, I'll read it now.
2421. I, Nelson McCausland, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
2422. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you. That's in the record. I think, Minister, you wanted to — . I mean, obviously, when people are required to give evidence, they are given the opportunity to give a submission in writing to the Committee. I think you've opted; you want to make a brief statement this morning, Minister, in regard to your evidence session.
2423. **Mr McCausland:** No, Chairman. I'm quite content that, in your letter, there were two questions that were raised. I'm happy to respond to those, but individually and in response to questions but not — . I have no initial statement to really make.
2424. **The Chairperson:** OK, thank you, Minister, for that. OK, so if I could just, I mean, bringing all obviously members in to question. Just, I've a couple of questions here initially just to start us off.
2425. You said in the letter to myself on 10 March — this is obviously on behalf of the Committee — that the meeting of 28 June was to discuss your response to the letter received from 'Spotlight' on 27 June 2013 requesting — and this is your words:
- "requesting that I consider an on camera interview. The letter ... which I signed and which was issued on the afternoon of 28 June would appear to be the result of that meeting."*
2426. The letter — . Could I draw your attention then to the letter in tab A of the inquiry pack? Sorry, I'll give you a minute to get that. Tab A of the inquiry pack.
2427. **Mr McCausland:** Oh, yes. Right, OK, got that.
2428. **The Chairperson:** I mean — . I put this because there would be a fair degree of importance attached to the conduct and the content, and so on, of this particular meeting on 28 June. As I said, you had said in your letter that the meeting was to discuss an on-camera interview. I draw to your attention the letter in tab A of the inquiry pack, and could you

- point out anywhere in that letter where you refer to an on-camera interview? It is a lengthy enough letter, but it does not refer at any time to an on-camera interview.
2429. **Mr McCausland:** Well, I don't have the letter immediately to hand but I will look that out and then respond accordingly, Chairman. That's the letter of 28 June to 'Spotlight'.
2430. I think it's important to remember, Mr Chairman, this is one of a series of letters that went backwards and forwards between myself and the BBC at that time. The meeting on the 28th was on a Friday afternoon, a day when I would normally be in my constituency office. I must have come into the Department especially for that meeting, although, to be quite honest, it's quite a long time ago now. Nine or 10 months. Thank you. Like many other things that have happened nine or 10 months ago, I can't remember the exact detail of it. I can't even recall the content of the conversation. The presumption is that it was about that matter because they were pressing us at that point about an on-camera interview.
2431. **The Chairperson:** But, again, I say to you it's a lengthy letter, so it clearly, the meeting discussed more than an on-camera interview, I would suggest, given the response. It is a lengthy letter, so, and, in your response to us, you didn't refer to an on-camera interview, so it seems a bit unusual that you would refer to an on-camera interview when you don't refer to it at all in your letter, which was a lengthy letter back to the BBC.
2432. **Mr McCausland:** First of all, I have said that I can't recall the detailed nature of that conversation that afternoon when I was in the office. It is 10 months ago. The letter is to the BBC; it is there in front of members: that is as far as I can basically go.
2433. **The Chairperson:** Could you give any explanation as to why there were no persons in that room, according to the list of attendees, who would be advising on such matters as on-camera interviews?
2434. **Mr McCausland:** I think it is important also, if members, including yourself, have read the response that I made there, in annex A I do say:
- "I understand that the diary entry records at Subject 'Meeting with Officials.'"*
2435. So, that was in the diary as the subject of the meeting or the nature of the meeting, rather.
- "However, I have now had sight of the documents, forwarded to the Committee on 26 February 2014"*
- that is various drafts and so on —
- "which appear to indicate that the meeting was to discuss my response to a letter received from Spotlight on 27 June ... requesting that I consider an on camera interview."*
2436. You would have the letter of 27 June from the BBC, in which it is stated that they were requesting an on-camera interview. The only conclusion anyone could reach, I think, is that:
- "The letter to Spotlight, which I signed and which was issued on the afternoon"*
- late on the afternoon —
- "of 28 June, would appear to be the result of the meeting."*
2437. That is what I said in my response to you.
2438. **The Chairperson:** I understand that, but it doesn't deal with the question of why there was no reference to an on-camera interview in the letter.
2439. **Mr McCausland:** Well, I wasn't going to undertake an on-camera interview.
2440. **The Chairperson:** Could you tell me, Minister — again, we are all around a long time in politics, dealing with media issues — given the importance, and you said yourself, there was a range of letters back and forth between yourself and the BBC or at least the Department and the BBC, according to that list of attendees there was nobody

- at that meeting who would have been a communications consultant or a PRO or a press person, so, if the meeting was, in your recollection, to deal with an on-camera interview why there would not have been someone there from the Department or your own colleagues for that matter to advise on media issues? It was a media issue in your recollection.
2441. **Mr McCausland:** All I can say is what I've said in there. As you are aware, I am under affirmation and therefore I want to be very particular and precise, as I would normally be anyway, in what I say. I have been advised that my diary indicates the meeting was to include Will Haire, Jim Wilkinson, Michael Sands and Susan McCarty. Whether or not someone else attended from the press section or popped in or out I couldn't recall. I said that I can't recall the details of the meeting. I would have in the course of a day many meetings, and this was one of many, so we are talking about something nine or 10 months ago.
2442. **The Chairperson:** That may well be true, but would there be that many meetings that you would be discussing what could be potentially quite a significant and controversial —
2443. **Mr McCausland:** Well, Chairman, I have said I cannot recall the details of the meeting, and that's as far as I can go.
2444. **The Chairperson:** I am aware of what you said, and that is why I am probing the question and probing the responses.
2445. **Mr McCausland:** Well, if you can't recall something, you can't recall it.
2446. **The Chairperson:** OK.
2447. **Mr Wilson:** Chairman, can you remember how many people were at this meeting five months ago when you were the chairman?
2448. **The Chairperson:** I could actually go back and check before I would make a comment about it, that's what I would suggest. *[Interruption.]* I am going to get back on that. I am sorry, I don't want cross-arguments here. I will bring all the members in, obviously, as they indicate to speak. I have a number already indicated to speak.
2449. **Minister,** going back to the question of your understanding, as you have repeated here, of the nature of the meeting on 16 April, you had suggested to the BBC that their allegations were "scurrilous accusations", that their information — your sources — you were concerned about their sources and so on and so forth and that you would be taking legal action. Subsequent to, certainly recently, you have come back to the Committee and basically said that you had inadvertently misled the Committee; I think that is your words. Was there legal action initiated against the BBC?
2450. **Mr Wilson:** Chairman, can I just ask something before you ask that question? Maybe you would remind us of the terms of reference of this Committee and whether or not we were investigating the glazing contract or whether we're investigating whether or not legal action was taken against the BBC. I can't ever remember the terms of reference mentioning —
2451. **The Chairperson:** We are not actually —
2452. **Mr Wilson:** Maybe if you would read out the terms of reference, it would —
2453. **The Chairperson:** Well, I won't do that.
2454. **Mr Wilson:** All I'm saying is this. All I'm saying is this: if we are going to have an inquiry, let's make sure that the inquiry sticks to the terms of reference that this Committee has agreed and not because you don't get a result in one line, you decide to add something else in.
2455. **The Chairperson:** No, we're not doing that at all. In fact —
2456. **Mr Wilson:** Well, maybe, let's just, before we proceed down this route —
2457. **The Chairperson:** Well I — sorry Sammy —
2458. **Mr Wilson:** I don't understand, I don't understand some of the issues — if we can bring in every Tom, Dick and Harry, kitchen-sink stuff, then, we'll just ask him anything. But, if we're going to stick

- to the terms of the inquiry, let's stick to the terms of the inquiry. That would be helpful.
2459. **The Chairperson:** Actually, that is what we're doing, actually. We have done that rigidly actually.
2460. **Mr Wilson:** Well, what part of the terms of the inquiry referred to legal action against the BBC?
2461. **The Chairperson:** We are dealing with:
"Allegations that the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing."
2462. We're not investigating any particular contract.
2463. **Mr Wilson:** So, I assume that the line that you're taking on this is that the Minister said that he would be taking legal action against BBC — whether he has or not, I haven't a clue — but that is not, quite clearly, that is not, from what you read out there, part of the terms of this inquiry.
2464. **The Chairperson:** It is in the terms —
2465. **Mr Wilson:** No, Chairman, with all due —
2466. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, it is, Sammy.
2467. **Mr Wilson:** Read it out again.
2468. **The Chairperson:** Excuse me.
2469. **Mr Wilson:** No, read it out again.
2470. **The Chairperson:** OK:
"Allegations that the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development" —
2471. **Mr Wilson:** Over what?
2472. **The Chairperson:** — "over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing."
2473. **Mr Wilson:** Over his review. Exactly.
2474. **The Chairperson:** There was a lot to the inquiry, Sammy.
2475. **Mr Wilson:** So, then, stick to that.
2476. **The Chairperson:** Excuse me.
2477. **Mr Wilson:** Stick to that.
2478. **The Chairperson:** Excuse me.
2479. **Mr Wilson:** Stick to that.
2480. **The Chairperson:** Excuse me, Mr Wilson. Excuse me. I'm chairing this inquiry.
2481. **Mr Wilson:** You're not chairing it very well.
2482. **The Chairperson:** This inquiry has been conducted very fairly —
2483. **Mr Wilson:** You're not chairing it very well. You're just wandering all around the place looking for something to have a go at.
2484. **The Chairperson:** Excuse me, Mr Wilson. You will have all the opportunity, like every other member around this table, to ask all of the questions. We are sticking to the terms of the inquiry. We have done so since day one. And, as proof of that, there's not one person who has been a witness in this inquiry has either been making an allegation of unfair treatment. I have rigidly — rigidly — stuck to the procedural fairness principle underpinning this inquiry. Now, there are terms of reference for this inquiry. We're sticking to them. If any witness feels that that is being abused, then they will have the opportunity to challenge that, and that's what they will all have for as long as it takes.
2485. **Mr Wilson:** No.
2486. **The Chairperson:** That is the bottom line.
2487. **Mr Wilson:** We should all rigidly adhere to that. I guarantee that, if I were to ask questions which were outside the terms of reference, you would, as Chairman, bring me to heel about it. I am bringing you to heel about it because of the terms of reference you've read out: whether the Committee was misled in relation to the review of the glazing contract. That's what — well, what are you asking questions then about —
2488. **The Chairperson:** Sorry —
2489. **Mr Wilson:** — legal action being taken against the BBC?
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2490. **The Chairperson:** First of all —
2491. **Mr Allister:** But, Chairman —
2492. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim. One second.
2493. **Mr F McCann:** It's part of the evidence.
2494. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Fra. Can I have a wee second? First of all, Sammy Wilson, there is nobody in this room taking anybody to heel — nobody — neither me, nor you or anybody else. This inquiry will be conducted under the terms of reference of the inquiry. It will be conducted under the legal remit which allows us to do that and, in fact, compels us to do that. That's what we're doing. These are not easy issues to be dealing with. We all accept that. We all understand it. We're all people who are working together on a regular basis. I did a meeting with the Minister on Monday. I reported that to the members early on. Do I feel comfortable having to do this? No. But it has to be done. We're pursuing — the Minister came here —
2495. **Mr Wilson:** It has to be done properly.
2496. **The Chairperson:** And it will be done properly.
2497. **Mr Wilson:** Well, it's not.
2498. **The Chairperson:** Any witness to this inquiry will have ample opportunity to challenge, and I hope that they feel free to do that. I have made it very clear to every person who has given evidence to this Committee that they have every opportunity when they finish their evidence, during their evidence, after their evidence has been given, if they feel that I've done wrong, then they will have every opportunity to challenge that. I will stand over my conduct of the chairing of this meeting. So, there is nobody bringing anybody to heel in here. This is a professional Committee doing a statutorily based inquiry. We have a responsibility to probe. There are gaps in evidence. There are gaps in memory. I think it's appropriate that we pursue the questions that, we feel, are appropriate as long as they're within the terms of reference.
2499. **Mr Clarke:** The difficulty there but, Chair, is: your understanding of the terms of references —
2500. **Mr F McCann:** I have to say —
2501. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Trevor, there's other members —
2502. **Mr Clarke:** — and our understanding of the terms of reference is entirely different. I have to say from the outset I said that you had a biased opinion. You brought your bias to the very first meeting in terms of this investigation.
2503. **The Chairperson:** That's, that's —. You've made that allegation.
2504. **Mr Clarke:** And your bias is continuing today.
2505. **The Chairperson:** I'm sorry but, if you're going to disrupt the meeting, I will adjourn the meeting.
2506. **Mr Allister:** Chairman, could I say, it's quite clear that some members — some of the DUP members — have come this morning to be the human shield in respect of the Minister and are raising all sorts of bogus —
2507. **Mr Wilson:** But we've come, we have come, to make sure you give him a —
2508. **The Chairperson:** Sammy Wilson —
2509. **Mr Wilson:** That's what we've come to do.
2510. **The Chairperson:** Sorry. Sorry. Sorry, gentlemen. Jim, sorry.
2511. **Mr Allister:** They're raising all sorts of bogus issues to try to be that human shield for the Minister.
2512. **Mr Clarke:** Look at the halo over Jim's head, like. He's just Mr Perfect there.
2513. **The Chairperson:** Jim, sorry a wee second, and I appreciate you're trying to — if we don't conduct this inquiry under the guidance of the Chair, I'll adjourn this inquiry this morning.
2514. **Mr Clarke:** All's we're saying is keep it under the terms of reference.

2515. **The Chairperson:** We are sticking to the terms of reference, but I'm making the point I will adjourn. Every member here will have the opportunity in order when they request to speak. Every single member. I've said it to you before, Trevor. There are members here who are here now who weren't during the discussions members of this Committee, which agreed the terms of reference. Go back and read the terms of reference. Study the terms of reference.
2516. **Mr Wilson:** You've just read them out; and doesn't mention BBC.
2517. **The Chairperson:** That is not all the terms of reference.
2518. **Mr Clarke:** And I was there at the time of the terms of reference.
2519. **The Chairperson:** And that's fair enough. Some members weren't.
2520. **Mr Clarke:** And I remember we disputed it for quite a long a time —
2521. **The Chairperson:** I am making that point, Trevor. I am making a point.
2522. **Mr Clarke:** — to get an agreement in terms of what the terms of reference were —
2523. **The Chairperson:** I am making a point.
2524. **Mr Clarke:** And they are broad enough and you're broadening them even further.
2525. **Mr F McCann:** This is a distraction.
2526. **The Chairperson:** Trevor, if people think they're going to here to disrupt the meeting, it's not going to be allowed to happen. It won't happen because I will adjourn this meeting. OK. Mickey Brady.
2527. **Mr Brady:** Thanks, Chair. I think a bit of objectivity, rather than subjectivity, might be applied here.
2528. **Mr Wilson:** It would be a good idea.
2529. **Mr Brady:** And a bit of common sense coming from the members opposite.
2530. **The Chairperson:** Please, just stick to the questions that people want to ask.
2531. **Mr Brady:** Minister, a few questions. In her evidence to the Committee on 9 January 2014, Ms McConaghie stated that she assumed the instruction to change the minutes of the meeting of the 16 April came from either the Minister or special adviser since they were under the impression that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. In your evidence to the Committee on 12 December, you stated:
- “As I, at that time, believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position.”*
2532. In light of this evidence, I would ask you: can you provide any insight as to why Ms McConaghie would have assumed either that you or Mr Brimstone requested these changes? Also, if I could make the point, you, in your previous evidence to the Committee, suggested that you were quite far removed from the private office and indeed from the secretary there or the admin staff there. It seems to me, and as far as I am aware, Ms McConaghie would've worked with you in DCAL and, in fact, requested to move to DSD, so obviously there was a working relationship there. I'm just wondering is there any other ties, because you had said at the time that really you didn't have that much contact at all with the private office or indeed with Ms McConaghie? So, I'm just wondering is there any other, say, church connections, anything like that, with Ms McConaghie, because she —
2533. **Mr McCausland:** I am absolutely amazed —
2534. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, a wee second —
2535. **Mr Campbell:** Chairman, that is out of order.
2536. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, a wee second. Sorry, before you come in — I don't think it's appropriate to ask the Minister does he have any other associations with the person.
2537. **Mr Brady:** Now, right. Well —
2538. **Mr McCausland:** Chairman, could I just say, first of all — and you did say earlier

- a witness could respond on a point — I think the question is absolutely, totally inappropriate. The answer actually to the question would be no, but it should never have been asked in the first place.
2539. **Mr Brady:** Sorry, Minister, could I qualify the reason why because, in her evidence, Ms McConaghie stated that, as far as she was aware, there was only probably three people that could have instructed her to change. The three people involved all stated very clearly that they had not asked her to change. She also stated that she did not do it of her own volition, so that's why the question was asked.
2540. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman, I come back there; just by moving on in the way that the member has done doesn't address the point that I made there. I would ask for your direction. Is it appropriate for that question to be asked?
2541. **The Chairperson:** I've already said it wasn't.
2542. **Mr McCausland:** It wasn't.
2543. **The Chairperson:** I've already said that. I've already told the member it wasn't.
2544. **Mr McCausland:** Could it then be made clear to members that, I think, that's an example of where the thing can go wrong? It was totally inappropriate that that question should've been asked.
2545. **The Chairperson:** Well, sorry, I've —
2546. **Mr McCausland:** But just for the record, I have said the answer is no.
2547. **The Chairperson:** That's OK.
2548. **Mr McCausland:** No church connection. No other connection.
2549. **Mr Brady:** That's fine.
2550. **Mr McCausland:** As regards the final version of the note of the meeting, I had said in my evidence on 12 December that, as is the usual process, the note was drafted and was then amended to more accurately reflect the discussion. As I at that time believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position.
2551. I think if you look at Miss McConaghie's evidence that she gave then in January — I don't have it actually in front of me at the moment — but she did say that she could not recall the full detail of that particular occasion. Her recollection of something that had happened a long time previously. Again, we're talking of something that happened a year and three quarters earlier. She said she could not recall that; it was two years ago almost. She'd no recollection of an instruction but she went on to say that, assuming that the instruction came from — [*Inaudible.*] — that was purely an assumption; an assumption on her part in regard to something that she could not recall. I can't recall it either.
2552. **Mr Brady:** With respect, what she did say was she could not, and would not, have changed it of her own volition.
2553. **Mr McCausland:** That's part of what she said. That's correct.
2554. **Mr Brady:** So, you would have to presume that there was an instruction to change it. That's simply the question that I'm asking.
2555. **Mr McCausland:** Whether there was a direct/indirect, implicit/explicit, assumption/presumption — there are a whole range of permutations — the answer is, "I can't recall." I said that when I came here in November. If I couldn't remember it in November, I'm not going to remember it now.
2556. **Mr Brady:** That's fine. Thank you.
2557. **Mr Allister:** Barbara McConaghie was your private secretary in DCAL, and you moved straight from DCAL to DSD —
2558. **Mr McCausland:** Yeah.
2559. **Mr Allister:** — and she came with you. Was that at your request?
2560. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman, we're getting into an area here again —
2561. **Mr Allister:** I am not criticising that —

2562. **Mr McCausland:** No, no, no, I'm just saying it is utterly, in my view, irrelevant, and I just make the point because I think —
2563. **Mr Allister:** The Chair'll decide that.
2564. **Mr McCausland:** If the member would actually let me speak.
2565. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, I am chairing the meeting.
2566. **Mr McCausland:** Yeah, I'm just making the point —
2567. **The Chairperson:** I chair the meeting.
2568. **Mr McCausland:** I'm just saying, Chairman, it's difficult sometimes to speak if you're being interrupted.
2569. **The Chairperson:** That is OK. I know, I've already asked the member to stop, so —
2570. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you indeed for so doing. The point was, when I had had a very good — I think the private secretary had done a very good job when I was in DCAL. I indeed — she was happy to move across to my Department, and I was more than happy for that to happen.
2571. **Mr Allister:** So, it was the product of a mutual desire?
2572. **Mr McCausland:** Again, Mr Chairman, I would ask for your guidance as to whether this has any relevance as to whether I misled or did not mislead a Committee.
2573. **The Chairperson:** Jim, could you explain what the relevant point is here?
2574. **Mr Allister:** Yes, I can. I can probably —
2575. **Mr Campbell:** If there is one.
2576. **Mr Allister:** I assure the Committee that there is one.
2577. One of the problems that this Committee has to try and untangle is who and why a direction was given: who gave the direction and why the direction was given as to the changing of the minute. Now, we do have very clear evidence from Miss McConaghie that she didn't do it of her own volition. In consequence, she was directed. She has taken refuge in saying she can't remember who it was. I want to establish how long the Minister had known Miss McConaghie as his private secretary and to go on to explore with him whether he found her always efficient, good recall of detail and all of that so that we might balance out and see if there is any light to be shed upon the evidence that she has given us. I think it is wholly germane to the inquiry and something that the Minister — I fail to understand why there would be any reticence in telling us that.
2578. **The Chairperson:** If I could make a point, Minister, that, in your own evidence, you, if memory serves me correctly, and you can check Hansard, but I think you clearly conveyed the impression that your relationship with the private office would have been minuscule. Would have been —
2579. **Mr McCausland:** That, that —
2580. **The Chairperson:** Not minuscule — I'm maybe using the wrong word there — but, you know, you really had little or no contact with the private office per se. That might be fair enough.
2581. **Mr McCausland:** That is; that would be —
2582. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, before you come in and respond. The difficulty is that we are dealing with narrow ground here in so far as that there were a small number of people who could have given such a direction. Mrs McConaghie was very clear in her evidence that, whatever else she said, some things she couldn't recall. She couldn't recall who instructed her to change it. She was very clear in her evidence that she would not have done it other than by direction. What we have to try and tease out here is, well, maybe someone might remember, but what was the relationship within the Department.
2583. **Mr McCausland:** First of all, in regard to — because there were a number of points that Mr Allister raised and a

- number of points that you, Chairman, have raised, so if I miss any, you can draw me back. First of all, in regard to the relationship between a Minister and a private secretary and a private office, I think your description of the nature of that relationship was somewhat inaccurate, in so far as —
2584. **The Chairperson:** I will correct it. I will correct it.
2585. **Mr McCausland:** Oh yes, please do.
2586. **The Chairperson:** It says — in your own evidence, you said:
- “I have very few dealings with the internal workings of the private office”.*
2587. **Mr McCausland:** That’s the point. I have very few dealings with the internal workings. By the internal workings, I meant the details of how the TRIM system works in terms of what’s put onto it or what’s not. In fact, interestingly enough, it was only during preparation for this inquiry that it became clear to me just the amount of material that’s kept on the system. I have no access to that system at all. Ministers don’t have access to the TRIM system, so I’d no idea just the amount of material that’s kept in there or the internal workings, but the private secretary plays a very important role for any Minister because that’s the person who brings correspondence, takes note of a meeting, accompanies you to an event or whatever. So, there is a very strong and important relationship.
2588. There are two people, I think, two people in the room who have been in a Department as a Minister, and they would understand that. It might be helpful some time if other members had an opportunity to explore that and find out about that, but it is a very important working relationship. My reference was very specific and focused. I said I have very little input or connection with the internal workings, so all of the how many copies there are, do they go in triplicate to this person, that person, the other person, I wouldn’t have anything to do with that. I’ve enough on my plate, as any Minister would have, dealing with the business of the Department, dealing with all the issues that are important that you deal with. I don’t have time to get into the nitty-gritty of all the paperwork that is kept there.
2589. The second thing was reference was made again to the fact that — people remembering something. A point has been raised by one member of the Committee, Mr Wilson there, where he said about people’s ability to remember something that happened six months, a year, two years, whatever, ago. I think most people have difficulty recalling something that happened two years ago because, in the course of a day, there are so many meetings, there are so many events, there are so many things going on that you are going in and out of meetings just constantly throughout the day, so one meeting almost melds into another. The question was asked also, I think, by Mr Allister, about the — I suppose that he was really — the professional ability —
2590. **Mr Allister:** I haven’t asked it yet.
2591. **Mr McCausland:** Well, you I think did if we go back —
2592. **The Chairperson:** OK. Sorry, folks —
2593. **Mr Allister:** With respect, I would like the Minister to answer questions that I ask him. I was asked to explain where I was going. I explained where I was going, and now he wants to anticipate where I’m going.
2594. **The Chairperson:** OK. I’ll bring you back in in a wee second, Jim.
2595. **Mr McCausland:** I can’t — it is very difficult when Mr Allister — [*Inaudible.*] — questions at the other end, and we are back and forwards.
2596. **The Chairperson:** You’re not getting questions at the other end.
2597. **Mr Wilson:** It’s very obvious the conclusion he’s drawn already anyway, so I don’t think it really matters.
2598. **The Chairperson:** I haven’t asked any question at the moment, so I’m just trying to moderate this, so Jim was

- asked to explain the rationale. He did. I tried to clarify it a wee bit. I think we have done, and you have given a fairly lengthy response to that there, so I want to bring Jim back again to ask a question, but if you need a —
2599. **Mr Allister:** I'm —
2600. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim, before you do — is there another response you wanted to make?
2601. **Mr McCausland:** No, apparently I had answered the question so I am waiting for the next question.
2602. **Mr Allister:** I'm not at all criticising or questioning the fact that there would naturally be a close relationship between a private secretary and a Minister. I'd expect nothing else. I was suggesting to you that, having found that a satisfactory relationship in DCAL, you and she decided that it would be appropriate and helpful if that continued in DSD. Is that a fair assessment? I am not criticising that.
2603. **Mr McCausland:** If I have found someone doing a job and doing it well, I think it makes good sense to see if that person might transfer across.
2604. **Mr Allister:** Yes, that's right. Absolutely. So you found her to be a trustworthy, loyal private secretary with whom you could work well.
2605. **Mr McCausland:** I think that she had all the attributes of a good private secretary.
2606. **Mr Allister:** And efficient, I think you've said. Could you tell us: did she have a good memory for detail?
2607. **Mr McCausland:** Do any of us?
2608. **Mr Allister:** Now, now, just try and answer the question, please.
2609. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, well, yes, I know, but it's important to understand a question fully, and if the member would — I am sure, Chairman, you'll want to make sure that I get every opportunity to answer the question in my own words.
2610. In terms of remembering detail, yes, and I repeat again what I've said already: can I remember the full detail of something that happened two years ago, which at the time had very little significance? The answer is probably not.
2611. **Mr Allister:** Yes, so —
2612. **Mr McCausland:** The only thing that I do remember very well about the meeting, because it was the one thing that dominated everything else, was the fact that there was the potential to save between £15 million or more in terms of money to the public purse at a time when the projected cost of double-glazing all of the Housing Executive properties looked at one point to be almost prohibitive, and if someone comes along and says not only can we do it for many millions of pounds less, not only can it be done in a way that provides a better service to tenants — and I had seen some examples of poor workmanship in terms of the fitting and disruption to people — it was a matter that was very dear to my heart because, as soon as I came into the Department, it was one of the first initiatives I brought in —
2613. **Mr Allister:** Minister, I understand you're very anxious to repeat all that but that is nothing to do with my question.
2614. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim, a wee second. Minister, I accept entirely what you've said in that regard and that's been said before —
2615. **Mr Clarke:** I didn't think he'd finished.
2616. **Mr McCausland:** I hadn't actually got a chance to finish.
2617. **The Chairperson:** Well, I mean, it's not an opportunity to go into a range of — *[Interruption.]*
2618. **Mr Wilson:** I would've thought the Committee would've been very excited to hear about —
2619. **Mr Clarke:** I was happy to hear about it.
2620. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, members, I do not want to go down this road again.

2621. **Mr Clarke:** — *[Inaudible.]*
2622. **The Chairperson:** That, with respect, is not what we're taking issue with. We're not taking issue with that.
2623. **Mr McCausland:** The point was raised as to what people might remember or not remember.
2624. **Mr Allister:** No, the point was raised: did you find Miss McConaghie had a good memory for detail? *[Interruption.]*
2625. **The Chairperson:** Gentlemen, I'm sorry. Just hold on a second.
2626. **Mr McCausland:** I do find it difficult, Chairman, constantly being interrupted —
2627. **Mr Allister:** You just want to talk it out.
2628. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Mr Allister.
2629. **Mr McCausland:** Chairman, again —
2630. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Mr Allister. Sorry, Minister.
2631. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
2632. **The Chairperson:** OK.
2633. **Mr McCausland:** Chairman, could I ask actually for some direction to the Committee that people do not interrupt?
2634. **The Chairperson:** I do my best.
2635. **Mr McCausland:** I know —
2636. **The Chairperson:** I have already said I will adjourn the meeting if it continues on.
2637. **Mr F McCann:** Try saying it to your party members.
2638. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Fra. Sorry, members.
2639. **Mr Clarke:** You getting excited?
2640. **The Chairperson:** I'm sorry about that. I'm sorry for — . Please, people, do not interrupt when others are speaking. I'll do my best to moderate this, and, if it doesn't work, I'll just suspend the meeting. Simple as that.
2641. Nobody's taking issue with that aspect of it whatsoever, so I'm suggesting that we don't need to labour that.
2642. **Mr McCausland:** All I was simply saying was that there are certain key things that will stick very much in your memory. There are others things that may not.
2643. **The Chairperson:** I'll bring you in in a second, Jim. OK, thank you for that, Minister.
2644. **Mr Allister:** Could I return to the actual question: did you find over your years of working with her that Miss McConaghie had a good memory for detail? Either that's a yes or a no.
2645. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
2646. **Mr Allister:** Yes, right. The problem you see, Minister, for the Committee is this, that when it comes to this issue about the minute of 16 May 2012, the problem for the Committee is, that this lady with a good memory for detail tells the Committee that she can't remember who instructed her to change the minute but she does refine it down to saying it certainly wasn't herself and it was most likely to have been you as Minister or your special adviser. That's the point the Committee's at. Now, can you help us at all about that, since that evidence came to light that your then private secretary can't remember whether it was you or the SPAD? Have you, for example, carried out any inquiries? Did you ask your SPAD? Have you had a discussion with him about, "Well, let's try and cast our mind back here: who might have said what and what might have happened"? Have you tried to do anything like that to help the Committee?
2647. **Mr Clarke:** Chairman, part of the question has been left out. What Ms McConaghie said was that the Minister, the special adviser or another senior official —
2648. **The Chairperson:** I am sorry, Trevor. You will have all the opportunity to come back on that.
2649. **Mr Clarke:** I am glad you are giving them direction —
2650. **The Chairperson:** You will have as long — *[Interruption.]*

2651. **Mr Clarke:** — to take it off on a tangent again in the area that he wishes, but it is clear what —

2652. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Trevor
[Interruption.] Trevor Clarke —
[Interruption..] I wish you just to stop.

2653. **Mr Clarke:** I am sure you do.

2654. **The Chairperson:** I do, and I will insist that members do not continue to interrupt. It is not going to be allowed to continue.

2655. **Mr Clarke:** Chairman, he is misrepresenting Ms McConaghie's statement. We have a copy of it here. It says that there has possibly been somebody from housing — a senior housing official. *[Interruption.]* Did you forget that bit, Jim?

2656. **Mr Wilson:** It was convenient not to remember.

2657. **The Chairperson:** Trevor Clarke, Sammy Wilson, I hereby adjourn this inquiry this morning.

2658. **Mr Campbell:** For how long, Chairman?

2659. **The Chairperson:** I will consult with officials.

2660. **Mr Clarke:** Until Jim gets his memory back.

The meeting was suspended at 10.56 am.

3 April 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Nelson McCausland *Minister for Social Development*

Please note that this is a fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.

2661. **The Chairperson:** I welcome everybody here for this particular session of the business this morning. I am advised that the Minister is, all the witnesses in fact, well, in fact the only one it affects is the Minister, because the Minister was in the middle of giving evidence in the last session, but I am advised that the affirmation has to be taken again. That's my legal advice that you would have to take the affirmation or make the affirmation again. I thought it was unusual myself and I queried that, but I'm advised that's just the procedure. I just would've presumed that, watching TV, that the affirmation or the oath would have been extant, but there you go. I'm advised to the contrary. Kevin, you're happy enough with that advice.

2662. **The Committee Clerk:** Yes.

2663. **The Chairperson:** Cos that's what I've been told. I queried that myself. I thought just we automatically resumed the meeting. So, Kevin, did you bring the —

2664. **Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** I, Nelson McCausland,

do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

2665. Chairman, if I could just point out at the start, when I attended the Committee meeting on 13 March, the meeting was adjourned before I could properly conclude my evidence. Before the meeting was adjourned, Chairman, you had been asking me about a meeting I held with my officials on 28 June 2013. Your letter to me on 28 March — the one that invites me here again today — indicates that you would like to discuss that meeting with me again. I would, therefore, like to begin just by reiterating something that I previously told the Committee on 13 March.

2666. I advised the Committee on 13 March that, around the time of the meeting with my officials on the 28 June 2013, there had been a series of letters that went back and forth between myself and the BBC and that, in relation to this meeting with my officials on 28 June, I couldn't recall the details or the conversation at the meeting. It was 10 months ago, and that is still my position.

2667. I also advised the Committee that, having had sight of the documents forwarded to this Committee earlier this year in relation to the meeting, the only conclusion that anyone could reach was that the letter I signed late on the afternoon of 28 June to the BBC 'Spotlight' programme would appear to be the result of that meeting. That is still my position.

2668. On 13 March, you also questioned me on a number of occasions in relation to my reply to 'Spotlight' on 28 June, as you thought it was unusual that I did not specifically mention the on-camera interview in the letter. However, I don't

- see anything unusual about that. The letter that was issued on 28 June clearly references, in the very first sentence, the BBC's letter dated 27 June, and, if you read the BBC letter, you will see that it asked me to take part in an on-camera interview.
2669. I had also been previously asked by the BBC, for example in their letter to me on 7 June, to consider an on-camera interview, and you will note from my reply to that letter on 26 June that I did not specifically refer to the request for an on-camera interview. There was no need to, as I wasn't prepared to do an on-camera interview. I have, therefore, nothing further really to add in relation to the meeting with my officials on 28 June last year.
2670. Chairman, also in your letter to me on 28 March you indicate that I have been asked to take an affirmation today in light of the apparent contradiction in the evidence provided by my former private secretary on 9 January 2014 and my evidence previously to this Committee on 12 December last year. This relates to the revisions to the note of the meeting on 16 April 2012. In my briefing to the Committee on 12 December, I said:
- "I did not see the note until much later. I had no input into it. I do not know anything about whatever changes were made."*
2671. In my former private secretary's briefing to the Committee on 9 January, she said:
- "Well, I'm assuming that the instruction came from either the Minister or special adviser since they were under the impression that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation."*
2672. I advised the Committee on 13 March that, in relation to Ms McConaghie's statement, she had said that she was "assuming" and that she also had repeated on a number of occasions in her evidence on 9 January that she could not recall this incident at all.
2673. I have, therefore, nothing further to add to my briefing to this Committee on 12 December last year, when I advised the Committee that I only became aware of the various drafts and the fact, indeed, that there were actually drafts in the few weeks before I came to the Committee in December. I had never seen those earlier drafts, I was not aware they even existed and I had no input into the drafts of the note of the meeting on 16 April 2012. Thank you, Chairman.
2674. **The Chairperson:** Thank you. At the last session, when we concluded the last session, Jim Allister had the Floor, so we will just resume with Jim Allister.
2675. **Mr Allister:** OK. Minister, just to pick up, on the last occasion I had been — we had established that Ms McConaghie, who had been your private secretary for many years very successfully, had a good recall for detail and then I was putting to you that that was the source of the difficulty that the Committee had to try and disentangle: that she told us that, nonetheless, she couldn't remember precisely who told her to change the minute, though she was very clear she didn't do it of her own volition. She said that — she mentioned three possibilities and of her own evidence essentially dismissed one of them and said that she assumed that the instruction came from either you or from the special adviser. I was at the point of asking you: given that that evidence had been given to the Committee, had you, in any intervening time, had a discussion, for example, with your special adviser to see if, together, you could cast any light on that, as to whether it was one or the other of you that had given that instruction? Have you had any such discussions?
2676. **Mr McCausland:** Well, Mr Chairman, the special adviser has given his evidence to the Committee. I have given my evidence to the Committee. The members are well aware of what the special adviser said. They are also very much aware of what I have said; that I have no recollection of changes to the aide-memoire. And I've really nothing to add to that.
2677. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but, Minister, my question is not about that. My question

- is: in an effort to get to the bottom of this, have you had any discussions with your special adviser to see if, collectively putting your recollections together, you could shed any light on this?
2678. **Mr McCausland:** There are no recollections to put. I've stated quite clearly I have no recollections.
2679. **Mr Allister:** Well, have you had any discussion with your special adviser to see if collectively you could shed any light on it?
2680. **Mr McCausland:** Well, I would direct members to what the special adviser said to the Committee, and I'm quite happy to allow him to speak for himself.
2681. **Mr Allister:** Do I take that as a no, that you have not had any discussions of that nature?
2682. **Mr McCausland:** He simply reiterated to me what he said to the Committee, and that is his recollection, as best he can, of matters. I have said my position very clearly to the Committee. So, there's no — nothing really to discuss, because I've no recollection of it.
2683. **Mr Allister:** Well, Minister —
2684. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman, I think there's a point comes where you have answered a question, and —
2685. **The Chairperson:** There are questions being asked, so —
2686. **Mr McCausland:** Yeah, but I think there is a point, Chairman, that, in regard to inquiries, it is normal practice that, if you answer a question, the thing moves on to something else rather than —
2687. **The Chairperson:** Well, the member is entitled to probe a response.
2688. **Mr McCausland:** Indeed, he is entitled to probe, Chair.
2689. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, but the member is entitled to probe a response, and that is what he is doing. So, let's just keep this —
2690. **Mr Allister:** Minister, do you not want to get to the bottom of that, as to who gave the instruction to make the change?
2691. **Mr McCausland:** There are many things that one might want to know, but I've nothing really to add to it, because, as I say, I don't know that one would ever get to the bottom of it. I've no recollection, and I have said that clearly. The special adviser has made his position absolutely clear. My private secretary's position was also — she said she did not recall. And there the matter sits.
2692. **Mr Allister:** But you told us on a previous occasion that some things in life remain unknown. You seemed to happily tell us that. So, it seems that now that you don't want to get to the bottom of who gave that instruction to change a minute to your private secretary, nor do you want this Committee to get to the bottom of it. Is that fair?
2693. **Mr McCausland:** I think the position in regard to all of this was made fairly clear in my initial statement to the Committee, which was back in December, on 12 December, when I gave my evidence. And, again, I've really nothing to add to that. I think the position there was set out very clearly in the evidence to the Committee on 12 December.
2694. **Mr Allister:** Minister, is it can't help or won't help?
2695. **Mr McCausland:** Well, I'm not quite clear what that question [*Inaudible.*] spell it out.
2696. **Mr Allister:** Well, let's be very clear. Are you, are you, deliberately trying — is it that you can't help this Committee unravel that mystery of who gave that instruction or that you won't help this Committee unravel?
2697. **The Chairperson:** I would ask members to be very, very mindful about straying into subjective commentary. There are appropriate questions to be asked and probed, and I would ask members to stick to a line of questioning.

2698. **Mr McCausland:** I can only give the facts as I know them. If I don't know something, I'm not going to invent it.
2699. **Mr Allister:** See you told us in December that you only — you told us that it was only about December you became aware that there'd been various drafts of the minutes.
2700. **Mr McCausland:** That would be correct. I'm not sure of the exact date, but around the winter period, yes.
2701. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And you told us that — I'll get you the quote if I can —
2702. **Mr McCausland:** Presumably it's a quote from Hansard.
2703. **Mr Allister:** Presumably it is, except I have misplaced it. As I recall, you told us that:
"As I, at that time, believed the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing —"
2704. **Mr McCausland:** Could I ask where in Hansard this occurs so that I know exactly what I am referring to? Rather than —
2705. **The Chairperson:** No, I know. It's very appropriate.
2706. **Mr Allister:** I will get you that. Bear with me one second.
2707. **The Chairperson:** We are just looking for that now. Do you not have the Hansard folder on your desk?
2708. **Mr Campbell:** Do we need a short adjournment, Chairman, no, to find this?
2709. **The Chairperson:** It's always possible.
2710. Page 2 of Hansard.
2711. **Mr Allister:** *[Inaudible.]*
2712. **The Chairperson:** Just a second now. Claire, can you indicate that to the Minister, please, when you are on your feet? Thank you.
2713. **Mr McCausland:** I have got the note here. Which page? Page 2. Right. OK.
2714. **The Chairperson:** Got that?
2715. **Mr Allister:** Do you remember telling the Committee:
"The Committee has been provided with a copy of the note of the meeting. This was an internal note that my private secretary prepared in order to keep some degree of an internal private office record of the meeting. As is the usual process, the note was drafted and was then amended to more accurately reflect the discussion. As I, at that time, believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position."?
2716. I think we now know, if I recall correctly, that happened in the month of May that the note was finalised. Now, when you said:
"As I, at that time, believed that the attendees were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, the note was finalised to reflect that position."
2717. How would your private secretary have known to alter the note to reflect your belief that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation?
2718. **Mr McCausland:** I have been very clear with the Committee and with the Assembly, and I made that position very clear in my evidence on 12 December that, at the time, I mistakenly believed that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Subsequent to the evidence presented by Mr Young and Mr McKeag, I realised that that was incorrect. I accept that I was wrong in my assumption, my belief that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. However, at the time, that was my belief. As to how that note was finalised to reflect that position — all we know is that it was finalised to reflect that position. As to how that happened, I have no knowledge; I couldn't comment because, as was stated earlier, I am under affirmation, I will be very precise in what I say and I am not going to speculate.
2719. **Mr Allister:** But, would you agree that, if the note was changed to reflect your position, that would strongly suggest that you had a hand in the changing of it?

2720. **Mr McCausland:** No. That is not an assumption that one should draw from that.
2721. **Mr Allister:** But —
2722. **Mr McCausland:** I know the Member — Just pause until I actually get —
2723. **The Chairperson:** Just deal with it —
2724. **Mr McCausland:** — to speak without being interrupted.
2725. **The Chairperson:** OK.
2726. **Mr McCausland:** The position was that, as the Minister in the Department and therefore responsibility at the top of the Department, I was under the impression that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. That then obviously became what I would describe as the accepted narrative, and the note was finalised to reflect that. As to how that happened, I have stated, Chairman, on a number of occasions, that I do not know how that happened. There's no point in members quizzing me about something when I can quite clearly say I have no knowledge of how that happened and, likewise, the private secretary could not recall how it happened. So, the Committee could go round for a long time in circles. I've apologised to the Committee. I've made it clear that I was wrong. I accept that I was wrong. It was a mistake. It was a genuinely inadvertent mistake, and there the matter rests.
2727. **Mr Allister:** But we know that departmental officials didn't think the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. We know that two people did think it was, namely yourself and your special adviser. So, if the minute is changed to reflect your position, that it was with the Glass and Glazing Federation, is that not very strongly suggestive that the instigator of that change had to be yourself or the special adviser, the two people who held that view?
2728. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman, the word in the question there that strikes me is the word "suggest". I'm not going to speculate, and I've repeated that on a number of occasions, about something of which I have no clear knowledge and recollection.
2729. **The Chairperson:** That's fair enough. Obviously, you're entitled to give the response that you deem to be accurate and appropriate, and that's as one would expect. The issue here that we have, we are dealing — Members will, and there are other questions, members are entitled to identify dates or times or evidence which might then — disparity of evidence, if you understand. So, these are relevant questions, and you will answer, obviously, as you feel appropriate to yourself. And that's the only way we can conduct the business.
2730. **Mr Allister:** But you do see my point, Minister, do you not, that if there is only two people, it seems, who think the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation, and the minute is altered to reflect that view, it has to be almost inevitable, does it not, that the instruction to make that change came from one or the other of the people who held that view?
2731. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman, I've already given my answer.
2732. **Mr Allister:** You can't remember.
2733. **Mr McCausland:** Well, it is quite clear that the member's memory is somewhat limited as well, because he can't recall the fact that I've already stated that on a number of occasions.
2734. **The Chairperson:** OK, so —
2735. **Mr Allister:** I can well recall that. I also am very well aware that "can't remember" is the frequent refuge for the dissembler. I am aware of that as well.
2736. **The Chairperson:** OK, so we are dealing with — sorry —
2737. **Mr McCausland:** Mr Chairman —
2738. **The Chairperson:** Sorry. I am sorry, Mr McCausland. I'm just going to make a ruling here on this. We appear to have exhausted that line of questioning.
2739. **Mr Allister:** Can I move on?

2740. **The Chairperson:** Yes.
2741. **Mr Allister:** You told the Committee that:
“No one had come forward earlier with information to the contrary.”
2742. Earlier than when you realised you’d made a mistake. No one had come forward earlier with information to the contrary that the meeting in fact wasn’t with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Do you recall that?
2743. **Mr McCausland:** I would ask again if the member could direct me to the quotation.
2744. **The Chairperson:** Page 21.
2745. **Mr Allister:** Page 21 of the Hansard of 12 December. Do you see that?
2746. **Mr McCausland:** I do indeed, yes.
2747. **Mr Allister:**
“No one came forward to me earlier with any information to suggest anything to the contrary.”
2748. But, in fact, you had had four letters, I think it was, from the BBC suggesting to the contrary. You’d had the programme itself. You had the Northern Ireland Housing Executive FOI information. So, there’d been lots of people had come forward with information to the contrary that the meeting had, in fact, been with Turkington’s, were there not?
2749. **Mr McCausland:** First of all, I did not dispute the fact, and I made it clear in an answer to the Assembly — The member had an opportunity to peruse some papers there, so I would just also take the opportunity. The programme went out on 3 July. There was no firm evidence, in my view, on the matter. I saw — I have seen since, rather, a note taken by one individual in regard to the meeting. There were suggestions here and there, but there was nothing firm about this until after the programme — a considerable time after the programme, in fact — until the point where Mr Young and Mr McKeag came to the Committee and stated it clearly. And I accept their word.
2750. **Mr Allister:** But I’m just pointing out to you, that to say no one had come forward with information that, in fact, it was with Turkington’s not the Glass and Glazing Federation. The BBC has long been making that allegation to you in letters. The programme and the FOI Housing Executive information—
2751. **The Chairperson:** Sorry.
2752. **Mr McCausland:** The correspondence between myself and the BBC dated back to November 2012. Then there was a raft of correspondence there: 7, 20, 26 and 27 June, then finally 1 July. This particular issue only arose there at that late point: the issue of the meeting with Turkington’s only arose there in June. It was not raised at the very early stage. It was something that was thrown in at the very end. It did not seem to be particularly important, in so far as the only thing that mattered for me was the fact that, at that meeting, whoever it was with, there was the opportunity to save a substantial amount of money that we now know to be around £15 million of savings to the public purse and also get a better outcome for tenants. If the request for that meeting had come in from Turkington’s, as indeed, we now know it was, and I had realised that at the time, I would still have held the meeting because the important thing is to have the best service for tenants and the best value for money.
2753. **Mr Allister:** So, for example, when your special adviser, in his evidence, told us that he was shocked in July to find that, when he saw the Turkington letter, that in fact the request was for a meeting with Turkington’s, did he not draw your attention to that, in July? He was shocked by it. Did he not go to you as Minister and say, “In fact, Minister, it looks like, contrary to what we thought, this meeting was not with the Glass and Glazing Federation, it was with Turkington’s.” Did he leave you in the dark about that?
2754. **Mr McCausland:** The evidence, and I have spoken to my special adviser, and I am sure the member and others will question the special adviser in due

- course this morning. The member, or sorry, the special adviser has made the point to me that, on reflection, the word “shocked” might be better “surprised” because he was under the impression that there was going to —
2755. He was under the impression that there was going to be a request made, that is in the light of his earlier meeting, that there was going to be a request from the Glass and Glazing Federation. There, that is really all I can add.
2756. **Mr Allister:** But whether he was shocked or whether he was surprised, he’d made a discovery, which was in conflict with what he and you to that point believed. Are you telling the Committee that he never drew that discovery to your attention and left you, as the Minister, in the dark on that? Is that what you are telling us?
2757. **Mr McCausland:** Could the member advise me of what date, or at what point, the special adviser was surprised?
2758. **Mr Allister:** Well, he told us that, in July 2013 — I don’t think he specified a date — in July 2013, he discovered, he saw, the letter from Turkington’s and was “shocked” to realise that it, in fact, was a letter from Turkington’s. Simply, did he never draw that to your attention?
2759. **Mr McCausland:** I was — we were aware that the letter was on Turkington notepaper. That’s quite clear. I’ve never sought to deny that. I wouldn’t attempt to: it’s quite obvious that that’s the case. But when you read the letter at the time, I believed that it was indeed from people who were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. That was my assumption.
2760. Chairman, could —.
2761. **Mr Allister:** We’ll not go down that road. But, just, it was sufficient shock for the special adviser to discover something that you apparently already knew.
2762. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry —
2763. **Mr Allister:** It caused him to be greatly surprised, and he didn’t discuss that with you. And drew nothing to your attention in terms of how he interpreted it.
2764. **Mr McCausland:** The member seems to delight in mulling over and over again this word “shock”. I have said already that I think the special adviser, when he comes to give evidence, will say that, in reflection, he would prefer to use the word “surprised”. I don’t think the word “shock” was appropriate. He doesn’t think it’s appropriate. It was really the word “surprised”.
2765. **Mr Allister:** So —
2766. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, I know —
2767. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Minister McCausland. I mean the key point here is that your special adviser discovered that he had been mistaken, or his understanding was that —
2768. **Mr McCausland:** He was surprised that the —
2769. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, let me finish, because the key point here — the salient point is here: did the special adviser at any time express that new understanding to yourself? That’s the key — that’s the question, whether we term it “shock” or “surprise”, so that it’s a direct answer to yourself. I mean, the special adviser will answer it himself, but you’re being asked, if I am correct, Jim Allister, just a simple question: did the special adviser, on his becoming aware that his —
2770. **Mr McCausland:** All I can say is that we were under the impression still, until that late point, where Mr McKeag and Mr Young gave their statement to the Committee, we were under the impression that it was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2771. **Mr Allister:** You see, Minister, I want to suggest to you that, when you said that no one had come forward to you earlier with information to the contrary till you read the evidence from Turkington’s in December, and you said no one had come forward earlier with that information to you, that is untenable, because you had the BBC letters, you

- had the programme, you had the FOI information —
2772. **Mr McCausland:** I am happy —
2773. **Mr Allister:** Now that your special adviser in July —
2774. **Mr McCausland:** I would be happy —
2775. **The Chairperson:** Minister, let the question be put.
2776. **Mr Allister:** You now had the special adviser in July discovering the error in that regard. So, how can you say that no one had come forward to you earlier with information to the contrary that the meeting wasn't with the Glass and Glazing Federation?
2777. **Mr McCausland:** The letter was, on paper, from Turkington's, and was, I now know, from Turkington's, but it made a number of references to the Glass and Glazing Federation, and the nature of the conversation at the meeting led me to that belief. As regards evidence that I was mistaken, the only clear evidence — the only firm evidence — is the evidence that came from the lips of Mr Young and Mr McKeag. I don't necessarily believe everything that I hear from the BBC, and I'm sure the member doesn't either.
2778. **Mr Allister:** So, you told us that your mistake was inadvertent, unintentional. Does this saga of knowledge and means of knowledge, of changing answers to delete "Turkington's" and insert "Glass and Glazing Federation", does that not all suggest that your mistake was anything but inadvertent and unintentional, but that you simply had run out of road come December when the people who you claimed you'd met as Glass and Glazing Federation had told this Committee no such thing, "We met him as Turkington's"? You'd run out of road, Minister, and then you take refuge in things like "inadvertent" and "unintentional", but you were a Minister very determined throughout those months to create the impression the meeting was with Glass and Glazing Federation, to the very point of having draft answers changed in the Assembly to say that.
2779. **Mr McCausland:** The member can make all the assumptions and assertions and suggestions that he wishes. All I can do is stick to the facts.
2780. **The Chairperson:** Yeah. Again, I'm going to counsel members against straying from asking questions. People may want to make assumptions or draw conclusions. They can do that at a later stage. I'd prefer, and I want — I will ensure that people ask direct questions, clear questions, and it'll also require that those questions be answered. So, again, I want to just sort of advise people not to be straying into subjectivity. It may well be a bit difficult, and there has to be a certain amount of latitude, but I think we all know that there are lines over which we're not going to cross.
2781. **Mr Allister:** OK. Can I move on? You told us that, if other companies —
2782. **Mr Campbell:** Chairman, just, is there —
2783. **The Chairperson:** Sorry.
2784. **Mr Campbell:** — a limit on the number of questions? It's just there seems to be a prolongation of this questioning —
2785. **The Chairperson:** There's no —
2786. **Mr Campbell:** — about the assertions.
2787. **The Chairperson:** There's no limit on the number of questions, but what I will do, I mean, I'm mindful of wanting to make sure that other members get in, so what I'm —
2788. **Mr Campbell:** It's just I didn't get in at the last meeting, Chairman, and I made it very clear —
2789. **Mr Allister:** Well, I'm happy to wait till later. I have a couple of other questions.
2790. **The Chairperson:** There's not a difficulty. I mean, if members are probing a particular line, I think it's fair enough that we allow that member to ask a number of questions.
2791. **Mr Allister:** I've finished that line.
2792. **The Chairperson:** Fair enough, and I thank you for that. I'm just going to

make just a general observation here in terms of the conduct. If someone is following a particular line, then there may be a number of questions attached to that, and that's fair enough. But, I am very mindful that other members will want to come in. So, no member — and Jim has willingly accepted this before I even make the ruling on it — but no member will just have the whole meeting to themselves. This inquiry will take as long as it takes, and I will want to make sure that every member gets in as often as needs be. Again, I will allow a certain latitude if people are probing a particular line, but then I will want to move on to other members, and that will not stop me, obviously, coming back to members when they want to come back in again with a particular, maybe different, line of questions or even if they want to follow on some of that at a later stage. So, if, Jim, you are finished that particular line, then I want to move on to the next member, which is Gregory.

2793. **Mr Campbell:** Yeah. Just, I want to bring everybody back to the issue of requests for meetings with Ministers, and a number of members, but certainly not all, would have had previous ministerial experience and would know the number of requests, but can you give the Committee a rough idea? I know there is no such thing as an average day, but in a week, how many requests would there be for meetings, on average, if there is such a thing as an average week?
2794. **Mr McCausland:** I think it's helpful for members, because, with the exception of two on this Committee, the rest have not held ministerial office, but I think it's helpful just to give a sense of the scale of the workload. And, in that context, taking that particular month of June 2013, I had in the course of that month 69 different meetings and events. There were 98 Assembly questions that were dealt with. There were 271 submissions, invitations, correspondence, and I think that gives some sense of the scale of the work within the Department in the course of a single month. And, some of those submissions would be very, very lengthy documents as well, and members will appreciate that, in addition to ministerial responsibility, we all have a constituency responsibility. They will know the amount of work that they do in their own constituency, and they will appreciate, therefore, that, on top of what I have listed there, I was also carrying out my own constituency work. But, in the course of the month there, I had, in terms of meetings and events, 69.
2795. **Mr Campbell:** Just, if we stick with that month, and, obviously there were a period of months between the actual meeting that's being referred to and then you being asked to recall with whom it was and what was your understanding. For example, that 69. Would there be pre-briefs involved in all of those or most of them?
2796. **Mr McCausland:** For most meetings, yes, there would be. If you're meeting an outside group, there would normally be a briefing and normally two. Even if you're just meeting officials in the Department, there would be a briefing as well.
2797. **Mr Campbell:** So, would it be the case then that, if we just take 60 or 70 for that month and then multiply it by the number of months, if you have pre-briefs for most of those events and then the meetings themselves, in my view anyway it would stretch credulity to expect people to remember each and every event, what was said at the pre-brief as well as what was said at the meeting. Do you have a clear recollection of every meeting and every pre-brief?
2798. **Mr McCausland:** Unless you were omniscient, you wouldn't have that.
2799. **Mr Campbell:** Yeah, I thought that. The issue, and this keeps coming up, Minister, and you have answered as clear as you can. But, the issue of Turkington's being members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. At the time of the meeting, between that meeting and the programme going out, had there been any approach to you by anyone wanting to know was there a meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation?

2800. **Mr McCausland:** The — I will just refer here — substantial amount of paperwork around here. There were questions. There would have been — I thought I had — . There were questions that came in in the form of written questions, and there were responses to those.
2801. **Mr Campbell:** I think I remember questions from a North Antrim Sinn Féin MLA.
2802. **Mr McCausland:** Yes. I thought I actually had those to hand. I don't seem to, but there were a number that came in.
2803. **Mr Campbell:** From recollection — I haven't got them to hand —
2804. **The Chairperson:** We might be able to draw it down. If you just wait for a second, we should be able to locate those. Sorry, we're struggling.
2805. **Mr Campbell:** OK. I vaguely remember. They were quite general in nature, from what my recollection is. So, did that — I mean was there any sort of approach following that? Sometimes whenever questions are posed and then the answer is given — I know I do — you then see information, which you weren't aware of, and you then follow that up. Was there any sort of rigorous pursuit following those public questions, public responses in the public domain?
2806. **Mr McCausland:** No. The answers were given out and they made clear that we were — of course we put them out saying that we were meeting members of Turkington's who were there, as we believed, representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, but there was nothing came back subsequent to that other than the questions being asked and answered.
2807. **Mr Campbell:** OK. Another question, Minister. Obviously there is a completely different context now compared to at the time because of the intervening programme. Can I ask you what — I mean, what is your view regarding the Committee's processing of this inquiry and what you think, in terms of your recollections, should be the outcome of the inquiry, in terms of what you've said, the intensity of the meetings, you can't recall the precise nature of the meetings being specifically referred to and the duration of the inquiry as it obviously goes on, now into its ninth month, I think?
2808. **Mr McCausland:** In the period between all of those events and then the current date, if you bear in mind that, in the course of one month — and I've outlined there the number of items of correspondence, submissions, meetings etc. As the months go by, the amount of activity that has happened in the interim increases very considerably, month on month. I can only say that, for me, a tremendous amount of scrutiny is being given to something which, a meeting which, really, was extremely beneficial. About the details of it and the precise nature of everything that was said at that meeting and subsequently, I've already set out what I can remember and what I can't. And it's not surprising, in view of the amount of time that has passed and the number of events that one would attend during that period. You tend to remember the key things that are going to be beneficial, and that was where the savings came in.
2809. **Mr Campbell:** Just a final question, Chairman.
2810. **The Chairperson:** I would just draw your attention, just for your information, for the record, in your revised timeline of known events — it's in tab 2 of your pack — there is a reference from 10 May 2012, a question from Daithí McKay to ask the Minister, so —
2811. **Mr Campbell:** Yeah, I thought that was it. OK.
2812. Just in terms of the concentration of time in relation to the inquiry, Minister, obviously your former secretary in the private office was asked to give evidence. You have now returned again. Your special adviser was asked and has returned again. The permanent secretary likewise. Can you give us an indication of the length of time that it has taken to

- prepare for each of these sessions that you've come before the Committee?
2813. **Mr McCausland:** Yeah. To source out all of the paperwork that has been put to the Committee, and members will be aware of the amount of paperwork that they have received, and I assume that they are still receiving paperwork in regard to later stages of this inquiry. That is a very time-consuming piece of work that diverts people away from other work that they would otherwise be doing in the Department. On the value or otherwise of that, people will form their own opinion, but it is very considerable and is, in a sense — I found it to be — an unnecessary diversion.
2814. **The Chairperson:** Dolores Kelly.
2815. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thanks, Chair. Minister, It is just — I think I'm right in saying that in Mr Brimstone's evidence he said he was shocked in July 2013 that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation and not Turkington's, so how does that explain all of those amendments from May 2012 on the back of requests? I mean, I find it quite surprising that nobody lifted the phone to Turkington's and said, you know, "Could we just clarify here, before we go into all of these amendments to minutes, to memoires, AQs, letters to the Committee Chair, just for the point of clarity, who that is with"? I mean, it's just surprising that no one did that.
2816. **Mr McCausland:** The member may be surprised: I'm not, because it was my firm belief that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2817. **Mrs D Kelly:** And yet, the headed notepaper, as you said yourself, was from Turkington's; all the pre-meeting in the Radisson Blu hotel with Mr Brimstone was with two representatives of Turkington's, and yet questions suggested that they were all around — everybody else believed they were Turkington's. The only people that appear to have been kept in the dark was yourself and your special adviser.
2818. **Mr McCausland:** I dispute the phrase or think it inappropriate to use the phrase "kept in the dark" to suggest that somebody was wilfully keeping someone in the dark. There was a misunderstanding on my part.
2819. **Mrs D Kelly:** Just on your part? So, did you have a conversation, then, with Mr Brimstone, as Mr Allister asked, subsequent or in preparation for the inquiry, in relation to how this misunderstanding came about?
2820. **Mr McCausland:** I have already, I think, made the point on several occasions that — I'm sure Mr Brimstone will make the point himself in due course — on reflection [*Inaudible.*] I suppose, we were looking at the matter there and talking about it in more recent days, he would suggest the word "surprised" was probably a more appropriate word than the word "shocked". But, there was nothing to suggest that the meeting was not — He had not been at the meeting. He was off on paternity leave, as the member would be aware, at that time. I was at the meeting. I left the meeting with a particular conclusion. It was incorrect, and I have apologised for that.
2821. **Mrs D Kelly:** But, you see, the problem is, in earlier statements, you've said that it was December 2013 before any clarity was sought, and yet, throughout the latter part of 2012 right through to 2013, there were numerous opportunities to seek clarification, but no one did that. Given the significance of this and the fact, Minister, that other MLAs, on behalf of companies within their constituencies — Mrs Overend's letter, for example: the people whom she sought to represent stated that the proposals, if I am correct, put forward in relation to the hinges and the cost savings were not accurate, and they had major concerns about them. So, are those other companies, then, not also members of the Glass and Glazing Federation? I am just wondering, you know, how do three firms writing to you and contradicting the evidence presented to you by Turkington's or, as you believe it to be, the Glass and Glazing Federation, and saying that those savings actually weren't cost-

- effective, that there was no, you know — there just appeared to be no —
2822. **Mr McCausland:** There are two points there that I'll pick up on. The first is that I don't know whether particular companies are or are not members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, because it was made clear by the people who are members of staff at Turkington's that their company was most definitely a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I couldn't comment on the others; I don't know their Northern Ireland membership.
2823. The second thing is that, if someone comes and says to me, "I think you can save £15 million" — or whatever figure it be in terms of millions of pounds — "by following Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines", I'll have a meeting about that, because, I think, to me, that is something that it would be totally inappropriate for me not to have a meeting about. If I couldn't — if I passed away an opportunity to save money — the members of this Committee and others would be very much, I would say, fairly irate about the fact that I hadn't taken that up. So, it is right and proper that I should take that up.
2824. There was — it is worth just reiterating again — at that meeting, the Housing Executive were represented, officials from the Department were there. The issue before us at the meeting was largely around the savings to be made around fitting windows whether you do it internally or externally and whether you can save on redecoration grants. That was the big saving. I simply said — at the time to myself — "I have no expertise in this field. It is a matter for officials in the Housing Executive and my own officials. They are the people who are the housing experts. You go away and look at it". And so they did. In fact, if the members recall, at the meeting, the Housing Executive — I think it's in their evidence to this Committee — at the meeting, they made clear that it was something that they were already looking at, because Turkington's had already approached them prior to that meeting.
- So it was not something new. I wasn't saying, "You must do this". I don't have any role in awarding contracts or anything like that.
2825. **Mrs D Kelly:** But, Minister, at that meeting, it now transpires that you and your special adviser were the only two people in that room who believed the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation and not Turkington's, and you have just stated that Turkington's had already approached the Housing Executive in relation to the specification and, when they were unsuccessful, then went to yourself.
2826. **Mr McCausland:** Look, first of all, could I correct the fact? The special adviser was off on paternity leave, so he couldn't have been at the meeting.
2827. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, is this the 16 April meeting? I mean, I don't want to be letting the meeting go off on a diversion here, but there would appear to be a conflict here now, because all of the evidence to date tells us that Stephen Brimstone was at the meeting.
2828. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, at that meeting, the 16 April meeting.
2829. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes, yes, yes.
2830. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, my meeting — I wasn't at the first meeting.
2831. **Mrs D Kelly:** No, no, no, not the prebrief.
2832. **Mr McCausland:** You were implying — your question suggested that both of us were at the same meeting.
2833. **Mrs D Kelly:** At the 16 April meeting.
2834. **Mr McCausland:** The 16 April meeting was — my meeting was with Turkington's on —
2835. **The Chairperson:** 16 April.
2836. **Mr McCausland:** 16 April. Yes. And on the 16 April —
2837. **Mrs D Kelly:** Mr Brimstone —
2838. **Mr McCausland:** — Mr Brimstone was on paternity leave.

2839. **Mrs D Kelly:** So, you —
2840. **The Chairperson:** No, he was at the meeting.
2841. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, at the meeting that I had with Turkington's.
2842. **The Chairperson:** That's 16 April.
2843. **Mr McCausland:** Members, I think *[Inaudible.]* — I haven't got the — My meeting with them was on 16 April.
2844. **Mrs D Kelly:** With the Housing Executive —
2845. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
2846. **Mrs D Kelly:** — yes, and the others that you outlined.
2847. **Mr McCausland:** And at what point was Mr Brimstone on paternity leave.
2848. **Mr Allister:** You told us April.
2849. **The Chairperson:** It was February.
2850. **Mrs D Kelly:** February he was on paternity leave.
2851. **Mr McCausland:** Right —
2852. **Mrs D Kelly:** It was the last week in February, I think, beginning — running into early March.
2853. **Mr McCausland:** I don't even — well, I should have it — if I look at the note, what does it say as — sorry, we are getting into so many different meetings, to be quite honest.
2854. **The Chairperson:** I think the issue here is that, at the meeting on 16 April, because it is an important point —
2855. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, if I have — I am looking here for the minute — the note, rather — of the meeting on the — which I don't have with me. The note of the meeting in April with Turkington's. Sorry, if the member could just go back over the question again — the actual question.
2856. **Mrs D Kelly:** Well, it really. Minister — it transpires now that the aide-memoire or the minute of the meeting of 16 April was changed up to six times. I think some of those were fairly elementary changes. However, subsequent to that, the minute was changed to reflect who actually was in attendance, with handwritten amendments by your special adviser and a direction to Mr Sands and others to change the minutes. As a consequence of that, Assembly questions were changed to reflect that it was not with Turkington's but with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2857. **Mr McCausland:** First of all, the —
2858. **Mrs D Kelly:** I think it was 16 April.
2859. **The Chairperson:** Could I just draw your attention, Dolores Kelly, that the previous references to the letter being changed by Stephen Brimstone, I think in his earlier evidence — we can check that later on — not the minute/aide-memoire.
2860. **Mrs D Kelly:** The aide-memoire — yes, it was to it.
2861. **The Chairperson:** Stephen Brimstone wasn't — It wasn't suggested that he changed the aide-memoire. It was the letter.
2862. **Mrs D Kelly:** Oh, the letter. OK, sorry. It was the letter.
2863. **The Chairperson:** Changed the one with the handwriting on the single letter, if you remember correctly.
2864. **Mr Campbell:** It's the passage of time, you see, Chairman.
2865. **The Chairperson:** The key issue here was in the question put, which is why I had to draw your attention to that because I didn't want, by default, incorrect evidence being regurgitated, even by default. So, that's why I drew to attention that Stephen Brimstone was at the meeting on 16 April. The question that you had put was that, with the exception of yourself and Stephen Brimstone, all the other participants —
2866. **Mr McCausland:** Chair, can I have a copy of —
2867. **The Chairperson:** Let me finish the point.

2868. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, apologies.
2869. **The Chairperson:** — with the exception of all the other attendees, the two people — yourself and the special adviser — were working on the basis that it was the Glazing Federation. That was the point.
2870. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yes.
2871. **Mr McCausland:** Would it be possible to get a copy of the final note of the meeting in April?
2872. **The Chairperson:** We'll see what we have.
2873. **Mr McCausland:** Right, I've got the note in front of me now. The member's question I am happy to take now.
2874. **Mrs D Kelly:** It was just really a point that I was making that everybody else who attended the meeting, with the exception of yourself and your special adviser, were clear that the meeting was with Turkington's and not the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2875. **Mr McCausland:** First of all, could I just apologise, Chairman, there? Questions can become convoluted in the asking. They tend to steer round quite a lot of ground. If you don't have the paperwork in front of you, it is, as I'm sure members will understand, complex at times remembering all the details of everything that happened and the sequencing of events.
2876. The position there was that at that meeting on 16 April — I have it here with me. I do apologise: I was in error in what I said earlier about who was at what meeting. I was not at the first meeting, which was the meeting with Turkington's that the special adviser had. At the second meeting, on 16 April, the list of people there — yes, Stephen Brimstone was at that meeting. I apologise for that error, that mistake there. The meeting was focused very much on just the issue of savings. At that stage and I hadn't the figure in front of me earlier on the figure they were quoting was, over 40,000 homes, could be a saving of £26.8 million.
2877. But I had no role whatsoever in the awarding of any contracts. I simply sent officials off and said, "You're the experts. You go away and look at it". That was the end of the matter as far as I was concerned.
2878. **Mrs D Kelly:** Except that other MLAs wrote on behalf of some of the firms within their constituency who were contractors to the Housing Executive and stated that their information was wrong and had requested meetings but failed to get a meeting, except much later on, whenever Mrs Overend, representing Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, had not been requested a meeting, but whenever they went to Mr McCrea and Dr McCrea, they were requested — were granted a meeting. In fact, it states that the special adviser decreed that a meeting be granted. I think that is an interesting choice of word.
2879. I was just wondering why this didn't ring any alarm bells, that you had established contractors to the Housing Executive and some saying that you're going to save a huge amount of money and others saying that you weren't —
2880. **Mr McCausland:** I think it is important to remember there are two elements to savings. One is around the method of fixing the windows or installing the windows; the other was around hinges. I think this is something that I touched on at some length in the initial evidence I gave. The large saving was purely in terms of how the windows were installed, internally or externally, and the saving in redecoration grants. That was why, when the meeting was requested with Turkington's, it was clear to me that, if there is a way of installing windows that's better than the current method, has a better outcome, well, let's hear about it.
2881. When you come to those other requests, they were about a very specific thing, and, in fact, if the members bear with me for a moment, I should have here the correspondence in that regard. Oh, yeah, there it is. In reply to an Assembly question about this matter, I did say:

"In June 2012 Mrs Sandra Overend, MLA, requested a meeting on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd to discuss the situation regarding the company's double glazing contracts. However, as I had previously written to Mrs Overend MLA, on 31 May 2012, confirming that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd could proceed,"

— and that was the purpose of the Super Seal meeting —

"I decided that a meeting would not be required at this time." —

2882. There was no point having a meeting about something that had already been resolved, and it's been made clear to the company that their work would proceed.
2883. I subsequently then received a request to meet with Super Seal from Dr McCrea. I agreed to this, as this was to discuss, not the other matter of whether the six contracts would proceed or not, but the review of the specification and savings relating to the alternative type of hinges and casement windows, which were being proposed. That was put on record away back there in —
2884. **Mrs D Kelly:** May 2012.
2885. **Mr McCausland:** That was on 21 January 2014.
2886. **Mrs D Kelly:** OK. Thank you.
2887. **The Chairperson:** Thank you. Sammy.
2888. **Mr Wilson:** So far, the session seems to have been centred on this fixation about who was the meeting with. What relevance that is, I'm not quite sure. I think that it would be better, maybe for the record, if we could have some discussion or some information from you, Minister, as to what was the meeting actually about?
2889. **Mr McCausland:** The meeting was about the potential to have a better method of installing double glazing, because, when I came into the Department, I actually had made it a priority that we had double glazing installed in all social housing, all Housing Executive properties, by 2015. The Housing Executive had said that they could not complete that work until 2021. I said I wanted it done by 2015, and that will be achieved.
2890. The issue then arose about the cost, and they said that there would be a very, very high cost, and, when I heard, therefore, that there was a way of doing it more cheaply and more easily, I was impressed by that possibility, particularly as I had seen a number of examples of windows being installed in Housing Executive properties in a way that was not particularly good. It was very disruptive to tenants, particularly if the work was being done in cold winter weather, and the impact on them if you could do this work in a better way and avoid the need for all sorts of plaster work and so on, redecoration grants, if all of that could be done, then you were in a situation where you had a better outcome for tenants, better value for money, and that was the sum and substance of the discussion. At that point, I said, "Well now look, I'm not" — I would say on all of these occasions — "I'm not a housing or building expert; the officials are there in my Department, the officials are there in the Housing Executive, go away and look at this and see what you make of this". And it was a matter that was left then to the Housing Executive.
2891. **Mr Wilson:** Would it have had any more significance if that meeting had been requested by Turkington's as an individual firm or people from Turkington's as representatives of the glass and glaziers federation?
2892. **Mr McCausland:** It wouldn't have mattered who came and brought the information at all. It would've had no impact whatsoever. Made no difference at all, because the key thing was the information that there was a general guidance issued by the federation, which seems to be the general practice within the trade. I know that it's the way that most people have the windows installed in their homes and therefore it made no difference who came, whether it was Turkington's, the federation or any other company or any other individual.

2893. **Mr Wilson:** Would any individual firm have benefited from this? I mean, the kind of things that were being discussed would have been of benefit, in particular, for example — would Turkington's have had particular benefit from this? Or any other firm?
2894. **Mr McCausland:** No firm would have had any benefit over anybody else. In fact, Turkington's didn't benefit from it.
2895. **Mr Wilson:** Why do you think there's this fixation about whether it was Turkington's that asked for the meeting or the Glass and Glazing Federation that asked for the meeting?
2896. **Mr McCausland:** Now, that's drawing me into an area of opinion and speculation. I can only stick to the facts as I know them and state categorically that it would have made no difference whether it was company A, company B, company C or a federation — no difference at all. The question as to why some people have a fixation about it, I think, is probably better directed to the people with the fixation.
2897. **Mr Wilson:** But, given the records that you would have had in the Department and, indeed, the records which we have here, the letter and the briefings for the meetings etc, it'd be correct to say that there was never any attempt to hide who was involved in the meetings.
2898. **Mr McCausland:** That is correct. In all of this, it's quite clear that the people were members of staff at Turkington's. There was no attempt to hide that. The only issue was around in what capacity they were there.
2899. **Mr Wilson:** So, really — this all comes down — the last hour of questioning all comes down to what is the interpretation of who the people were actually representing — an individual firm or an organisation.
2900. **Mr McCausland:** That's correct.
2901. **Mr Wilson:** Maybe just explain to us again, in terms of the relevance of this to your Department, did it make any difference whether they were representing a firm or whether they were representing an organisation?
2902. **Mr McCausland:** It made absolutely no difference whatsoever in what capacity they came — none at all.
2903. **Mr Wilson:** What was the outcome of all of this?
2904. **Mr McCausland:** That the officials from my Department and the Housing Executive went away and looked at this and concluded that the installation method used in the guidance was the better way to do it. It would result in significant savings, and that's now how the work is done.
2905. **Mr Wilson:** And the savings have been — for the record.
2906. **Mr McCausland:** There was a figure quoted at one point of £15.1 million, which I think is a worthwhile saving.
2907. **Mr Wilson:** And did the firm which made representations to you gain anything from this?
2908. **Mr McCausland:** No, they are not one of the companies that install windows, so they have gained nothing — not one penny. The only gainers — the only winners — are tenants and taxpayers.
2909. **The Chairperson:** OK, Sammy. Thank you for that.
2910. **Mr Copeland:** Thanks, Chair. Thank you, Minister, for your answers. You said just a few moments ago that the savings had been £15-odd millions. Is that up to now, or is that by the time the entire window replacement scheme is done?
2911. **Mr McCausland:** I would need to come back to the members on that. I think — well, I would rather not speculate. They would only really probably have the figures up to the present time. I will come back to members on that.
2912. **Mr Copeland:** Thank you. You have been round the block a long time with the public service and elsewhere, and, when people come to you with a proposal that sounds, on the face of it, to be very laudable and very worthwhile,

- experience sometimes teaches that there is always a downside. Were there any examinations or discussions at the meeting, with whoever it was with, as to any potential downsides or any potential difficulties that might arise should the method of replacing windows be shifted to the new method as opposed to the old one?
2913. **Mr McCausland:** As I have indicated already, I am not a building expert —
2914. **Mr Copeland:** No, no, I know.
2915. **Mr McCausland:** — and, therefore, there would be no point in having a detailed discussion about the methodology etc. The point was that I immediately said to officials from the Housing Executive and the Department, “Go away and look at this. You’re the people who know. You go away and have a look at it, and ultimately the Housing Executive will make their decision”.
2916. **Mr Copeland:** But, wearing your other hat as an elected representative in an area that has substantial deprivation, you would be aware, as well as I do, that there had been an expectation that, when work was carried out to your home, if your home suffered any material damage, that there was an expectation that you would be compensated. Because the Executive, for the very laudable reasons led by yourself to aid the public purse, that doesn’t necessarily mean that putting the windows in the new way would lead to the removal of that expectation. And within the Executive, are you aware of any discussion that took place that would smooth the changeover?
2917. **The Chairperson:** I mean —
2918. **Mr McCausland:** I think we are wandering away from —
2919. **The Chairperson:** I am sympathetic with you, Minister. I mean, Michael, at the end of the day, Sammy has put it on the record with the Minister this afternoon again — or, this morning again — as appropriate. I mean, part of that overall consequence of some of this work was savings to the public purse. The needs of the contract and so on is really not —
2920. **Mr Copeland:** What I am really asking you is: was there ever any notion that money that had been previously paid to, almost on demand, to people who had double glazing fitted using the old method that there would be claims arise even using the new method and that it wouldn’t be —
2921. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Michael. You really are straying way off —
2922. **Mr Copeland:** I will put them as AQs.
2923. **The Chairperson:** — the agenda. The Minister is making that clear. The Minister has given a full response in terms of making as best he could do. In fact, he said he would give further information in regard to savings as — get them up to date. So, I appreciate that.
2924. **Mr F McCann:** Some of the questions that I was going to ask have been answered. I know the Minister has said that there, I think, it was £15.1 million savings, and, again, it would be interesting to find out if that is over the lifetime of the contract, but most of the savings was due to the denial of redecoration grants to people that normally would have, as Michael said, been able to apply for the thing. I think that probably run into multimillions and made up the bulk of the savings —
2925. **The Chairperson:** It’s already been covered, Fra, so —
2926. **Mr F McCann:** I have to say that Sammy had opened the door by coming in and asking what the savings were for, when I am trying to say how the savings took place. I know they are saying that it had stopped, but there are some that still get paid, but the bulk of it — In terms of the meeting with Turkington’s, again, Sammy had also said — I think the reason we are sitting here is on the back of the BBC ‘Spotlight’ programme. I think in the ‘Spotlight’ programme —
2927. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Fra. Can you move to questions? I mean, we are here

- because it is a statutory inquiry. We have terms of reference. We're giving a certain amount of latitude with respect to everybody as best we possibly can do. So, we know why we are here, so try and direct the questions to Mr McCausland.
2928. **Mr F McCann:** Why were you so convinced that the people from Turkington's were meeting you as members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, given that they're a well-know company that provide that type of work, and secondly, from what has now transpired that they were also subscribers and supporters of the DUP?
2929. **Mr McCausland:** I dealt with that final point at the previous — or the initial — session back in December. There are certain things that I would have no knowledge of in terms of that. As regards the fact that they are members of a trade body — the Glass and Glazing Federation — a trade body, by its very nature, is made up of people from companies. So, the fact that people are from a company would not raise any questions in my mind. If I was meeting the Quarry Products Association, there would be people there from company A or company B or whatever. That would not occur to me at all as unusual. It would be expected; in fact, it would be natural that people are from companies. So, I think the general thrust of the question around what led me to believe that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation, that is something that I have answered, I think, quite fully back in December. It was around the fact that, as noted, they said they were members of the Glass and Glazing Federation. They talked about the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines, and I believed, on that basis, that they were there representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2930. **Mr F McCann:** Chair, they said they were also members, and there were some questions raised about that at the time. But, to move it on, in your letter of 28 June to the BBC, you accused them of telling lies and, I think, also in a letter on 26 June, you said that, unless they withdrew their allegations, that you would initiate legal proceedings against the BBC, and especially given the level of allegations that had been made in the programme. Did you take legal action?
2931. **Mr McCausland:** There was no need to take legal action. I think if you look carefully at the — The Member obviously has the correspondence in front of him; I'm just looking for it here now. 26 June. In their letter to me on 20 June, twenty sixth —
2932. **Mr F McCann:** Twenty eighth maybe.
2933. **Mr McCausland:** I am trying to find — I think it's — There were letters on the twentieth, twenty sixth, twenty seventh from me and then letters from them on the twenty sixth, two letters on the twenty sixth. Sorry, we received letters from them on the seventh, the twentieth, the twenty sixth and the twenty seventh. Now, just go back to your point again: which letter are you referring to?
2934. **Mr F McCann:** On the twenty sixth and on the twenty eighth, you threatened —
2935. **Mr McCausland:** Wait just a moment — If the Member —
2936. **Mr F McCann:** — to take legal action against the BBC.
2937. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry. Just until I find the letters.
2938. **The Chairperson:** Let's get it clear which one we are referring to.
2939. **Mr McCausland:** There was a letter from the BBC dated 26 June. Yes.
2940. **Mr F McCann:** There was two letters advising the BBC, unless they withdrew the allegations, that you were going to take legal action against them.
2941. **Mr McCausland:** I conclude that there was no need to take any legal action.
2942. **Mr F McCann:** Why was that?
2943. **Mr McCausland:** I don't think that that's of any relevance to this particular Committee. That's a personal —
[Inaudible.]

2944. **Mr F McCann:** But if they're making strong allegations, Minister, I have to say that you would think that, after you make the threat of legal action to get them to refute the allegations, that you would follow through with it.
2945. **Mr McCausland:** If I felt that there was need to do something, I would decide to do it. If I don't, I decide otherwise, that's personal matter. It's not within the remit of this Committee.
2946. **The Chairperson:** To be fair, that —
2947. **Mr F McCann:** Could I just ask — I would have thought that, given the allegations that have been made in the programme and the fact that you said to them that they were all lies in the correspondence, that that would be the logical course. But if you have said that — I just can't understand why you didn't follow through given the level of allegations.
2948. **The Chairperson:** He has given the — The answer has been given. So.
2949. **Mr F McCann:** The other thing, and it goes back to the meeting with Turkington's or the Glass and Glazing Federation, that you —
2950. **Mr McCausland:** I was just going to make the point — It is worth noting that, in the actual programme, the presenter did say it's possible Mr McCausland thought that the men from Turkington's were there as representatives of the federation. So, the programme itself actually acknowledged that that was a distinct possibility.
2951. **Mr F McCann:** Anything's possible. Do you see in terms of the savings that Turkington's or the Glass and Glazing Federation brought in terms of the type of hinges, the fitting of the hinges, were they asked what type of guarantees would be given on the hinges over their lifespan? Because I think one of the other things, Chair —
2952. **The Chairperson:** We're straying into something which is nothing to do with this inquiry.
2953. **Mr F McCann:** But Chair, I have to say that the Minister has said here that it led to £15 million worth of savings. There were other companies — another member had raised this — that had wanted to come to refute that those savings could be made and that they were saying that they were fitting superior hinges with guarantees. Those meetings were denied, and yet there were two meetings that took place, one with a company that had subscribed to the DUP and the other at the request of a DUP member when other companies were refused that same request.
2954. **The Chairperson:** I take your point, but to me those questions have been answered in this session. You may not like the answer, but the answer has been made. I am just making that point. We are not going into "What was one contract about?". The issue of whether those savings are substantive or will be realised by the end of the contract is something that we will evaluate at a given time.
2955. **Mr F McCann:** Are we going to get an opportunity to pursue that?
2956. **The Chairperson:** The Committee will have an opportunity to pursue that, but it's not part of this inquiry.
2957. **Mr F McCann:** It's part of the inquiry, and it's been emphasised on a number of occasions that there were £15 million of savings. There are people who would say that, over the lifetime of a hinge, there would be far more savings because there were certain guarantees given them hinges.
2958. **Mr F McCann:** It is fair enough to make that point, Fra, but I'm just saying, by the time you get to the end of a contract, then obviously there will be evaluations of the contract, whether the work was done, whether there were savings and so on and so forth. It is another day's discussion. It's a very valuable discussion, and you have made it on the record, so we are happy enough that that point be made. Have you another question, Fra? No. Stewart, were you looking back in — or in, rather?

2959. **Mr Dickson:** Yes, Chair. Thank you. Minister, you helpfully described to us what a month is like in terms of your hours and time and the number of things that arise. How many ministerial months would there be when an outside organisation would come to you and say to you that they could make these savings? I mean, would you get many £15 million savings offers coming in off the street to you?
2960. **Mr McCausland:** I wish I was getting more opportunities to save £15 million. There are companies and trade bodies that would come periodically. I don't have in front of me the details of how many or how frequently, but periodically companies come up and say, "This would be a better way of doing it than another way".
2961. **Mr Dickson:** But £15 million is a substantial amount of money.
2962. **Mr McCausland:** That was indeed why I agreed to the meeting, because it would have been remiss of me not to do so.
2963. **Mr Dickson:** And at that meeting, presumably they explained and you listened to the explanation of how that £15 million could be achieved.
2964. **Mr McCausland:** The —
2965. **Mr Dickson:** Or thereabouts.
2966. **Mr McCausland:** Yes.
2967. **Mr Dickson:** Given all of that, that is a significant amount of money, it is a significant conversation. I'm really coming back to the point that Mr Allister was trying to get at: if you didn't change the note, Mr Brimstone didn't change the note, Mrs McConaghie says that it could really only be a ministerial instruction, can you help us by suggesting anyone else who could've changed the note?
2968. **Mr McCausland:** I think it is important not to paraphrase what Ms McConaghie said.
2969. **Mr Dickson:** Let me see what she said. She had no recollection as to why the aide-memoire and diary were never —
2970. **Mr McCausland:** Correct. That's the key point. The member left out that bit: she had no recollection.
2971. **Mr Dickson:** Yes. But, she did also say that —
2972. **Mr McCausland:** I merely make the point it's important to —
2973. **Mr Dickson:** She would not have changed any of these documents of her own volition and she assumed the instruction came from either the Minister or the special adviser. If it wasn't you and it wasn't the special adviser, can you perhaps tell us who it was?
2974. **Mr Clarke:** You've still left a bit out.
2975. **Mr McCausland:** I don't know how frequently I've had to repeat it, but I will repeat it again in answer to the question: I cannot recall. I have said that very clearly and made that point many, many times. And Chair, it is —
2976. **The Chairperson:** The question has been asked and answered several times this morning.
2977. **Mr McCausland:** Indeed. More than several, I think.
2978. **Mr Dickson:** It is just, Chair, the sum of money is a substantial sum of money, it was a significant meeting and it is difficult to understand why, in those circumstances, three key and important people cannot help us reach a conclusion as to how the note was drafted.
2979. **The Chairperson:** Well, I just draw your attention to —
2980. **Mr McCausland:** Could I respond, Chair, to the —
2981. **The Chairperson:** Well, actually, you don't need to respond in so far as, obviously, a number of questions have been put to yourself, some repeatedly —
2982. **Mr McCausland:** If —
2983. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, let me finish making the point and the ruling. You've answered the questions. Members will

- draw their own conclusions, but they'll not be drawing them in the middle of a meeting, because this is an evidence session and a question-and-answering session. People are given a little bit of latitude. You have rightly said you have answered those questions on a number occasions this morning under affirmation, and I intend to leave it at that point, because, as I say, the questions have been answered. Anybody wants to draw inferences or conclusions, they'll have to do it at a later stage, in a considered manner, with the rest of the members.
2984. **Mr McCausland:** Could I just make a factual point, Chair, which may be helpful? The member said it is an important issue and an important meeting. When you have a Department whose remit covers the entire welfare system — the Social Security Agency — and also covers all of the work of the Housing Executive, social housing and other matters related to housing, and urban regeneration, and dealing with neighbourhood renewal and deprivation, and social policy, there are many, many important meetings. This was important, but it was only one of many important meetings.
2985. **The Chairperson:** That's a fair point.
2986. **Mr Dickson:** And, Chair, all I was attempting to get at was at how many of those meetings would an outside body approach the Minister with a very important issue which would save the Department £15 million? I'm trying to differentiate between — I wholly accept the absolute importance of all your ministerial remit, but I'm just trying to get an understanding of how many occasions when you would have a meeting of this nature, when an organisation or an individual or someone from outside the Department would approach you with a scenario where a substantial sum of money could be saved.
2987. **Mr McCausland:** I've answered the question.
2988. **The Chairperson:** The question has already been answered, Stewart, OK? So, Jim Allister.
2989. **Mr Allister:** Yeah. Just a couple of points I wanted to particularly pick up on. Three or four times this morning, Minister, you asserted that the meeting you had with Turkington's — that your special adviser wasn't at it.
2990. **Mr McCausland:** Chairman, I corrected that. It was a — the question I was asked by Mrs Kelly, with respect — I'm not in any way being disrespectful — was quite convoluted, and in answering it, I — and I corrected that.
2991. **Mr Allister:** I don't think it was at all convoluted. Mine might have been, but —
2992. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim. Sorry, folks.
2993. **Mr Allister:** Can I ask you this?
2994. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim, just a second. Everybody just hold on a wee second. We are doing well here this morning. Again, just to remind people, no subjectivity; just put the question to the Minister.
2995. **Mr Allister:** OK. Had you any meeting with Turkington's at any time that your special adviser wasn't present at?
2996. **Mr McCausland:** I have stated in a previous session — the Member is well aware of it — that I only ever in this regard had this one meeting with Turkington's when they were — there was a meeting, to which I referred — I don't have the details of it in front of me at the moment — along with a number of other Ministers in regard to a totally different matter. But, in regard to this and similar matters, it's the only meeting I have ever had.
2997. **Mr Allister:** In terms of —
2998. **Mr McCausland:** Can I just — if the member wants to check that back, it's in Hansard from the first session.
2999. **Mr Allister:** Well, I know what you said at the first session. I'm just looking reassurance in light of what you said

- this morning: that, in fact, you only had one meeting.
3000. **Mr McCausland:** I only had one meeting, and I've made that clear, and —
3001. **Mr Allister:** Yes. In terms of a situation where a contractor to the Housing Executive comes along with ideas which produce savings, is there an arrangement of recompense with a contractor, whereby they secure some gain from that?
3002. **Mr McCausland:** Chairman, that is a question which was asked at my initial session in December, but I know the member is very careful at producing every detail for everything; I thought he would have recalled that. I can — I think I'm probably not the only person in the room who can remember it being asked back in December.
3003. **Mr Allister:** Help me, if you would. Indulge me, Minister, by reminding me.
3004. **Mr McCausland:** Well, if the Member obviously can't remember back to December, well, I can on that regard, because I actually read Hansard. And Hansard was very clear that there is no recompense at all for any company.
3005. **Mr Allister:** So if a contractor saves money, there's no recompense at all.
3006. **Mr McCausland:** And the answer to that, which I've just given, was no, just as I gave the same answer in December: no.
3007. **Mr Allister:** And, just for the record, Turkington's, at the time they saw you, were in fact subcontractors to Mascott, who were Housing Executive contractors. Isn't that right?
3008. **Mr McCausland:** The member may well be right; I'm not clear. I can't recall their exact role in —
3009. **Mr Allister:** You can't recall that.
3010. **Mr McCausland:** But I can remember the fact that — as I've said there. But I don't see the relevance of that particularly.
3011. **Mr Allister:** Something totally different —
3012. **The Chairperson:** Now, Jim, before you go off that, I just want to keep the thread on this here. As I understand it, I think that we were advised that there are — I'm not suggesting that this impacted in any way with Turkington's — but I do understand, in terms of some of the contractual arrangements, there is an incentivisation for companies if they can provide savings by different methodologies.
3013. **Mr McCausland:** That may be in regard to something else, but in regard to this, there is none and there hasn't been any.
3014. **The Chairperson:** OK. It's just that I do believe there is —
3015. **Mr McCausland:** I was informed by the Housing Executive that there weren't — sorry; by my officials that there weren't.
3016. **The Chairperson:** We'll establish that later on again, but it was introduced into evidence prior to this, but that's no problem.
3017. **Mr Allister:** Just to be sure on that; there can be an incentivisation arrangement, but you're saying it didn't apply at this time to Mascott's?
3018. **Mr McCausland:** Well, they didn't come to see me: it was actually Turkington's.
3019. **Mr Allister:** Yes, their subcontractor came to see you. Was there an incentivisation arrangement with Mascott's at the material time from which they would benefit if, through their subcontractor, there was a saving of x million pounds?
3020. **Mr McCausland:** No.
3021. **Mr Allister:** Absolutely not?
3022. **Mr McCausland:** I simply told officials — I repeat this again: I simply told officials to go away and look at the method by which windows were fitted and I left it there to get back a report in due course from those who are the experts in the field.
3023. **Mr Allister:** So, we're quite clear: no incentivisation, reward, to Mascott's

- on whatever contracts they had at this material time.
3024. **Mr McCausland:** I was informed by officials that there was nothing paid to either Turkington's or Mascott in regard to this matter at all.
3025. **Mr Allister:** Or to be paid?
3026. **Mr McCausland:** Or to be paid. That is my understanding of it.
3027. **Mr Allister:** OK.
3028. **Mr McCausland:** I can only go on what — I haven't gone away to check people's bank balances. I just don't know their details. All I can say is that I've been informed by my officials that that's the case and that is what I would presume to be the case.
3029. **Mr Allister:** But you are aware of and have heard of incentivisation?
3030. **Mr McCausland:** The first I heard that particularly was in regard to what the Clerk raised this morning.
3031. **Mr Allister:** Just now? I see. OK.
3032. Can you tell us who drafted the replies to the BBC?
3033. **Mr McCausland:** Replies are normally drafted by a number of people who would have input into them and then it comes to me and I put my signature at the bottom; therefore it's my reply.
3034. **Mr Allister:** Yes. Would the permanent secretary have been involved in the drafting of the replies to the BBC?
3035. **Mr McCausland:** A number of people would be involved in drafting replies. I don't know and I couldn't comment on who was involved in drafting individual replies.
3036. **Mr Allister:** You don't know that?
3037. **Mr McCausland:** Well, I've just said that.
3038. **The Chairperson:** OK?
3039. **Mr Allister:** Thank you.
3040. **The Chairperson:** OK. There are no other members indicating to ask a question, so I just want to try to summarise this for my own sake here and for the inquiry as a whole.
3041. **Mr Campbell:** I'll look forward to this, Chairman.
3042. **The Chairperson:** There's a number of — well, I'm entitled to ask questions myself. We're doing well.
3043. **Mr Campbell:** No, I understand that. It's the summary.
3044. **The Chairperson:** We're doing well. Well, it's actually questions because, as I say, like everyone else, I will not make my mind up until we conclude all of this. But, what I'm trying to work out is the essence of all of this for myself, to try to come to terms with and to rationalise, is the information that I have looked at and heard evidence on. It really settles around the meeting on 16 April and the meeting on 28 June and then the letter which came to myself on behalf of the Committee in mid-May, late May, and I'll just put this to yourself, Minister, that — I know obviously you've answered some of these questions before in different formats — but for me to try to rationalise in my own mind all of the written evidence, the letters, the correspondence, the emails and the evidence, including from Michael Sands in his previous evidence session, was clear that the meeting was in respect of and with Turkington's with the exception of yourself and your special adviser. You're saying that you believed it was the federation. I'm just trying to work out how is it against the evidence that we have in front of us in terms of written, oral and electronic, including from Turkington's themselves, that yourself and your special adviser were firmly of the view that the meeting was with the glazing federation. There was quite some activity generated to make sure that minutes and aide-memoires, and so on, and the letter to me reflected the glazing federation as opposed to Turkington's. That's further compounded in my mind the difficulty around this, when Stephen Brimstone, in his own evidence, said that he was surprised when he made a discovery — let's put

- it that way — that his information or his understanding was wrong. I am trying to work out, with the exception of Michael Sands who, in his evidence, said that he had tried to point out that the meeting was with Turkington's not the glazing federation. That was in respect of the letter. I am asking you this: did nobody else, including your special adviser, nobody, any official, any other person, advise you at any time post 16 April to 28 June, putting a letter together for the 20-odd of May? Did no one advise you, at any time, until when you came to this Committee recently and said that you had inadvertently made a mistake? So, I am just trying to put this formal question: at no time did anybody go and try to correct your understanding of that?
3045. **Mr McCausland:** Perhaps it would be helpful, Chair, if I just made a couple of closing remarks addressing that and one other point, if I may.
3046. **The Chairperson:** I would like you to give the response to the question.
3047. **Mr McCausland:** OK. No. That was the position. I believed it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. I did not pay that much attention to who it was with at the time, particularly because the key point for me was the financial saving, but I was of the view that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. Whilst I did not attempt to conceal the fact in any way that the people were members of the staff at Turkington's, my belief was that they were there representing the federation. I was wrong in that assumption.
3048. **The Chairperson:** Yes, but the question is this: did nobody else tell you that you were wrong in that, other than Michael Sands?
3049. **Mr McCausland:** If somebody had come to me with evidence, saying that there is clear evidence that you are wrong there —
3050. **The Chairperson:** Well, Michael Sands did, in his correspondence.
3051. **Mr McCausland:** I — Mr Sands, at the moment, is ill in hospital. I have not been talking to him about that, so —
3052. **The Chairperson:** No, but I am making the point that, in his toing and froing around the letter —
3053. **Mr McCausland:** I would need to go back and look at exactly what he said.
3054. **The Chairperson:** He did make it clear. I am just saying that it is on the record. He did make it clear that he had pointed out that the meeting was with Turkington's, not the glazing federation. He made that clear in his evidence.
3055. OK. I have just asked the question. You are saying that no one else has told you.
3056. **Mr McCausland:** No.
3057. **The Chairperson:** Fair enough.
3058. **Mr McCausland:** Could I —
3059. **The Chairperson:** Yes.
3060. **Mr McCausland:** I am sorry. If we are concluding, can I just pick up on a couple of things that I think are important?
3061. My special adviser told me that he had the meeting earlier with Turkington's about the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. The point of that was that there appeared to be a more efficient and economic way of fitting double glazing that could provide significant savings and a better service to tenants. He told me that he understood that the Glass and Glazing Federation were going to write to request to meet me. At that point, as I said earlier, he was then off on paternity leave.
3062. The meeting was arranged. A departmental official and the Housing Executive's chief executive and the Housing Executive's head of procurement attended. At the meeting, we discussed the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines and after the meeting my technical officials were asked to look at these and the Housing Executive were asked to review their specification.

3063. In the following months, I answered correspondence and Assembly questions and advised that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation. So that was my clear understanding at that time. I never sought to hide that Turkington representatives were at the meeting. Indeed, I advised of this in an Assembly question in September 2012. However, on foot of this inquiry and the evidence provided by the Turkington representatives in November, I realised that I was wrong in my assumption that they were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. I came to this Committee in December and told the members of the Committee that I acknowledged that I was wrong. I then took action to correct all the Assembly questions that I had previously answered in relation to the meeting on 16 April 2012.

3064. Mr Chairman, I do not believe that there is anything more that I can do in relation to this matter. I am not clear why, after having given evidence back in December, some four months later the inquiry is still considering the matter. Indeed, I think, even if the Committee reflects on the ‘Spotlight’ programme that was the genesis for this inquiry, the lead reporter in that programme commented in relation to this matter:

“It is possible Mr McCausland thought that the men from Turkington’s were there as representatives of the federation.”

3065. I have to say that is probably one of the few elements of accurate analysis in that programme, and it was absolutely right: it was possible. It is what I believed at the time. I acknowledged that it was incorrect, but the matter has now been clarified and corrected. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

3066. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you. I just want to draw attention to, since we are in the public session, just while you are here, Mr McCausland, it doesn’t directly affect you, but it’s just to make everybody aware that we had a letter in from the Department posing a number of questions about the procedures and

so on around this inquiry. We also had a letter from Turkington’s as well. The Committee considered those matters in closed session, and we agreed a response, but, in that response, we agreed to continue on with the evidence session. So, I’m just letting people aware of that in the public session. That was the basis of the conversation that the members had this morning.

3067. So, could I thank yourself, Mr McCausland, for your presence here this morning —

3068. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you.

3069. **The Chairperson:** — and your evidence here this morning? Thank you for that.

3070. Could I suggest a five-minute adjournment just for a comfort break before we move into the next evidence session?

3 April 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Gregory Campbell
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Stewart Dickson
 Mrs Dolores Kelly
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Stephen Brimstone *Special Adviser
 to the Minister
 for Social
 Development*

Please note that this is a fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.

3071. **The Chairperson:** We are once again in evidence session. I want to welcome Stephen Brimstone, special adviser to the Minister for Social Development, here. Stephen, you are very welcome. Again, just to remind yourself then that, because of the Committee's procedures, that you have been requested to give evidence under oath or an affirmation. I understand you have chosen to give evidence under an affirmation, and you understand obviously all of the implications around this.
3072. Could I ask the Clerk then just to provide Stephen — yourself — with the wording of the affirmation, please?
3073. **Mr Stephen Brimstone (Special Adviser to the Minister for Social Development):** I, Stephen Brimstone, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

3074. **The Chairperson:** OK, Stephen. Thank you for that.
3075. **Mr Brimstone:** Please, Chair —
3076. **The Chairperson:** Are there any remarks that you want to present to the Committee before you start and before we open it up to members?
3077. **Mr Brimstone:** Thank you, Chairman, for the opportunity to make some opening remarks. I previously attended the Committee inquiry session on 9 January earlier this year. In the letter dated 28 March, requesting me to attend today, there are a number of issues listed in which the Committee believe the additional written and oral evidence received by the Committee may contradict the evidence I previously gave. I would like to cover these issues in my opening remarks.
3078. Firstly, in my evidence to the Committee on 9 January 2014, I stated that:
"I had no role in changing that note",
3079. referring to the changes to the note of the meeting on 16 April 2012. In her evidence to the Committee on 9 January, the Minister's former private secretary stated:
"Well, I'm assuming that the instruction come from either the Minister or the special adviser since they were under the impression that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation."
3080. In relation to the amendments to the note of the meeting held on 16 April 2012, I have nothing further to add to my evidence on 9 January, and I advise the Committee that I had no sight of any of the drafts and I had no recollection of having made or requested any changes to the private office meeting.
3081. Secondly, the Committee's letter to me on 28 April states that, in my evidence to the Committee on 9 January in relation to the request to the Minister

for meetings from Sean McCaughan, Sandra Overend and Daithí McKay, that I did not see any of the requests for meetings with the Minister, which were subsequently turned down. As I said on 9 January:

“none of that came through me.”

3082. However, evidence subsequently received by the Committee indicated that all responses to the requests for meetings were sent directly to me for approval. When I said in my evidence on 9 January that:

“none of that came through me”,

3083. the context of my statement was that, in relation to the meeting with the Minister on 16 April 2012, I was approached in the first instance by a representative of Turkington Holdings, who asked to meet me. I met with them in January 2012, and the outcome of that meeting was that I agreed it would be appropriate that a meeting with the Minister should be requested. However, in relation to the meetings requested by Sean McCaughan, Sandra Overend and Daithí McKay, they did not contact me in the first instance in the same way Turkington’s did. Their requests for a meeting were sent to the Minister in the first instance.

3084. It is also not correct to say that all the responses to the requests for meetings with the Minister were sent directly to me for approval. That is not the case. These were sent to the Minister to consider and approve. Departmental procedures are that requests for meetings with the Minister are forwarded to officials for advice. Departmental officials’ advice is then forwarded to the Minister, through me, in line with my role as special adviser, which includes reviewing papers going to the Minister and providing advice on any aspect of departmental business. The Minister then makes his decision. Evidence of this has already been provided to the Committee, including submissions from officials to the Minister, which are headed 1. Stephen Brimstone and then 2. Nelson McCausland, as well as the private office pro formas, where I

record my advice to the Minister, and the Minister records his response.

3085. In your letter on 28 March, the Committee has also raised that, in my evidence to the Committee on 9 January 2014, I stated that I had no powers to give instruction to the Department, yet evidence received from the Department in respect of the proposed meeting between Dr McCrea, Super Seal and the Minister stated that the special adviser has decreed — or had decreed — that the meeting with William McCrea goes ahead. I have already detailed to you today the process in relation to *[Inaudible.]* Minister for meetings in my role as special adviser. My advice to the Minister in relation to this request is recorded in the private office pro forma, which was copied to the Committee on 4 March. It was the Minister’s decision that this meeting should be arranged. I did not decree that the meeting should go ahead, and I am not responsible for the choice of words used in the email referred to.

3086. Finally, I understand that the Committee also wishes to discuss today that, on 9 January 2014, I confirmed to the Chair that at no point had I sought to change any references to Turkington’s to refer to the Glass and Glazing Federation and that further evidence received suggested that on, 24 May 2012, I did request that, in the draft response to Mr Daithí McKay’s Assembly question, that the reference to “Turkington Holdings” be removed and replaced with “representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation”. That is correct. I did request that this change was made in line with my role in reviewing documents before they go to the Minister for approval. This change was made to reflect the Minister’s stated position at that time, which was that the meeting was with the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. I am content to take Committee’s questions, Chair.

3087. **The Chairperson:** OK, Mr Brimstone, thank you for that opening remarks. I have, I suppose, just for me, just a single question, really, and it’s against

- the backdrop of, as I have said early on to the Minister in the previous session, but in respect of yourself, I mean in all of the correspondence that we had received, I mean starting off your contact by request from Turkington's, who phoned you to do a meeting, if I remember correctly, January in the Radisson's hotel. The meeting was requested by Turkington's through yourself with yourself. That was held.
3088. So, from that, if you like, opening gambit in all of this to the very end, with the exception of, however, of your saying that you became aware in July 2013 and you described your response as to be shocked by it. But, nevertheless, however that's characterised, you were aware then in July 2013 that the meeting was, in fact, with Turkington's. And, given that the central allegation or the central argument around all of this, the central allegation is that the Committee was misled around who the meeting was with and so on and so forth and perhaps [*Inaudible.*] people have to draw conclusions on that themselves.
3089. The direct question I have for yourself, Stephen is that, in your own words you are saying in July 2013 you became aware formally that it was Turkington's. I cannot understand — I'm trying to work out why at no time was the Minister then advised that his interpretation of the meeting was incorrect, given all of the controversy. In fact, the allegation that the Committee had been misled has actually led to this inquiry. So, I just — I mean you are asking — Are you telling us that at no time did you then advise the Minister, even post-July 2013, that his assumption that the meeting was with Turkington's was wrong? That's the evidence, that's the nub of the evidence that we are hearing and we have heard from yourself, so I just, given that we're here now second phase of questions, is that your position? Is that still your position?
3090. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, just come back to the letter. Probably, as the Minister indicated earlier on, the word "surprise" should have used as opposed to "shock". And, I think I have made
- reference to the logo on the letter as opposed to the content of the letter. That was what surprised me. I was expecting to see a letter coming from the Glass and Glazing Federation with their logo on it as opposed to a letter with the Turkington's logo on it. The content of the letter didn't change my view that the meeting was actually with the representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3091. **The Chairperson:** But, the key thing for me to try to understand and obviously what the Committee has to try to get at the heart of is that whatever about the logo — I mean you are saying that you became aware in July 2013 that the meeting was actually Turkington's.
3092. **Mr Brimstone:** I didn't.
3093. **The Chairperson:** You didn't?
3094. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
3095. **The Chairperson:** But, in your evidence, you said:
"It was a shock to me. When I first saw the letter from Ian Young in July 2013 and the logo at the top of that letter was Turkington's as opposed to the Glass and Glazing Federation."
3096. That was your written evidence, so I'm just trying to work out because, again, I'm just trying to understand how, given the fact that you were at all of the meetings, you were discussing the allegations which the Minister described as scurrilous and threatened legal action. The 'Spotlight' programme, letters to this Committee, Assembly debates, a lot of controversy. I'm just trying to work out how the Minister would not have been advised by someone in a key position as yourself as special adviser that you did not then follow the conclusion that you had reached that there was a meeting with Turkington's. You're now saying you don't think it was Turkington's.
3097. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I didn't reach that conclusion probably until mid-December of 2013 that the meeting was with Turkington, and that was after their evidence when they clearly stated, as

- Minister did, where they clearly stated that they weren't under any illusion that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. They felt that they were at the meeting in their own regard as Turkington's.
3098. **The Chairperson:** In your evidence, you said — I'm just quoting your own evidence — you said if you:
- "had seen it at the point in April when the meeting was held, flags would have been raised in my mind."*
3099. So, if you saw it in July 2013, was there a flag not raised in your mind, and would that flag not have reached the Minister?
3100. **Mr Brimstone:** Well —
3101. **The Chairperson:** Just — I'm just going to remind ourselves of the context. This is a very controversial, hot topic; one which has actually brought the Minister subject to an inquiry of this Committee on behalf of the Assembly, so it's a serious matter, and I'm just trying to remind ourselves of that.
3102. **Mr Brimstone:** I can only go back to my recollection of events in July of 2013. I had seen this letter for the first time. That was a surprise to me as to why it was only the first time, and probably the bit that flagged it up to me that it was the first time was that I saw that the logo at the top of the letter was Turkington's as opposed to the Glass and Glazing Federation. It was then I went and investigated and discovered, actually, when the letter arrived in, I was off on paternity leave, so that's why I hadn't seen the letter when it arrived in. The content of the letter; I was still of the belief that the actual meeting itself, whilst the staff members were from Turkington's, but they were there in the capacity of representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3103. **The Chairperson:** OK, well, I mean, I'm just to remind yourself again, your evidence, I think, as I understand, the decision is that the letter and so on would've been contained in your — in the brief, with a pre-meeting prior to —
3104. **Mr Brimstone:** And I think I went into that at the last evidence session.
3105. **The Chairperson:** I'm just making a point, but it was available to you, so —
3106. **Mr Brimstone:** But I didn't say it wasn't available. I hadn't seen it.
3107. **The Chairperson:** OK. And, the only very simple question I have is at no time you felt it necessary or appropriate to go the Minister and advise him, "There's a flag to be raised here; there's a query on this"?
3108. **Mr Brimstone:** Back in July, I would've said it was a surprise to me that —
3109. **The Chairperson:** Did you say that to the Minister? The point I am asking is —
3110. **Mr Brimstone:** I'm sure he was there whenever it was stated.
3111. **The Chairperson:** But, see, the Minister says he doesn't; he's no recollection of that whatsoever.
3112. **Mr Brimstone:** He may not have a recollection of it.
3113. **The Chairperson:** Because you do know the Minister — you've heard the Minister's evidence, which he says that he only became aware of that whenever Turkington's gave their evidence to this Committee.
3114. **Mr Brimstone:** He only became aware that the meeting was with Turkington's as opposed to — in their own right as Turkington's — as opposed to them representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. My view was, as Minister's was, up until mid-December 2013, that, yes, it was staff members of Turkington's, but they were there in the capacity of representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. The whole content of the meeting was discussing — the bit of the meeting that I was at — was discussing the guidelines of the Glass and Glazing Federation, so there was nothing to counter my view that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing — with them representing the views of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
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3115. **The Chairperson:** I mean, I'm not going to labour it any more. I'm just going to put the question once more. In your own evidence, you're saying you became aware of it in July. You certainly — in your own evidence, you said if you'd seen it at the point in April when the meeting was held, flags would have been raised in your mind. I'm only asking: was the Minister made aware that you had the flag raised in your mind —
3116. **Mr Brimstone:** That the logo was —
3117. **The Chairperson:** Please tell me yes or no.
3118. **Mr Brimstone:** If the logo was different than I expect, yes.
3119. **The Chairperson:** So, the Minister was aware.
3120. **Mr Brimstone:** I —. Listen —
3121. **The Chairperson:** No, but, I mean —
3122. **Mr Brimstone:** I'm saying I'm sure. That's the best; I'm trying to give my best recollection of events here. I can't point to a date and time on which I said, "Minister, I believe that logo was different — that logo was different to what I expected". I'm fairly sure that would've been raised, but I can't go any further than that, Chair.
3123. **The Chairperson:** You would accept that it is a serious issue, because it goes to the heart of who was at the meeting and why was the meeting held and, because: see, the key problem here is that this is actually ultimately why Minister is subject to an inquiry. In fact, there's a suggestion that the Committee in the Assembly was misled.
3124. **Mr Brimstone:** My view — and, Chair, you can clarify if I am wrong — my view is that the terms of reference of this inquiry is round the letter that was issued to you in May of 2012, I believe, as opposed to what discussions took place in July of 2013. I could be wrong on that, Chair. I am happy for you to guide me on it.
3125. **The Chairperson:** The terms of reference there — there are three terms of reference. The terms of reference are, among others, but what governs this particular phase. I will read it out for you now. It is whether or not the Committee was, and the Assembly was, misled. That is the allegation that has been put out there. They were first made in here. I am just making the point that the Minister now, unfortunately, finds himself subject to an inquiry. I remind that phase one of the inquiry will address — and this is a specific point which was agreed by all the members —
- "allegations that the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing."*
3126. The only key point I am trying to make, and it is a simple point, I am trying to remind ourselves of the seriousness, because we have an inquiry which is taking this Committee off all other very, very important work. The Minister has found himself subject to an inquiry. Others, like yourself, are now subject to being required to give evidence. All I am trying to get into my head is, notwithstanding all of that difficulty, nobody appears to have told the Minister, "Actually, hold on; there might be a problem here.". And, you are saying —
3127. **Mr Brimstone:** And, nobody told me either that there might be a problem.
3128. **The Chairperson:** So, you were not aware that there was a whole big controversy. You weren't at the meeting on 20 June discussing the response to the BBC.
3129. **Mr Brimstone:** I thought your question to me was "Did anyone raise a flag with Minister that his impression was wrong as to who the meeting was with, from official level or whoever?" No one did.
3130. **The Chairperson:** That's been the whole subject of the questions during all of the sessions so far.
3131. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.

3132. **The Chairperson:** So, I'm just making the point. I'm not going to ask it again. Just simply, did you tell the Minister that you think there might be a problem that the meeting may well have been with Turkington's?
3133. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
3134. **The Chairperson:** OK.
3135. **Mr Brimstone:** Because I didn't believe that, Chair.
3136. **The Chairperson:** Even though the letter was from Turkington's, and so on and so forth. OK. Michael Copeland.
3137. **Mr Copeland:** Thanks, Chair; thanks, Mr Brimstone. When did you go on paternity leave?
3138. **Mr Brimstone:** 27 February 2012.
3139. **Mr Copeland:** Was that your last day or the first day?
3140. **Mr Brimstone:** That was a Monday, and my son was born on the 26th.
3141. **Mr Copeland:** Congratulations. Would you normally see communications? Even, would they backed up on your system, when you would return after paternity leave?
3142. **Mr Brimstone:** If you started going back through that, you'd have a backlog.
3143. **Mr Copeland:** I wonder who does what you do when you are on paternity leave.
3144. **Mr Brimstone:** I believe number one went to the permanent secretary on that instance.
3145. **Mr Copeland:** Which instance? On this?
3146. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. Are you referring to the letter that arrived with the Minister requesting a meeting?
3147. **Mr Copeland:** No. I'm referring to a letter from Susan McCarty, the housing director's office, dated 27 February 2012. I was curious, because our knowledge and attendance are not necessarily the same thing, but this went to the permanent secretary, to the Minister, to Will Haire, Heather Cousins and a whole plethora of others. In that letter, it details the issue, and it explains the issue at that stage as:
- "Ian Young, general manager of Turkington Holdings Ltd ,wrote to you",*
3148. I presume that that is the Minister,
- "on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet you",*
3149. and, again, I presume that is the Minister,
- "to discuss how his company",*
3150. I presume that's Turkington's,
- "could help with this".*
3151. There are then some other routine matters. In the detail, it specifies that:
- "Ian Young, general manager of Turkington Holdings Ltd wrote to you and would like to meet to discuss how he could help with this company. Ian Young advises in the letter that Turkington Holdings has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation".*
3152. Is there anything in that that would indicate that this was an approach by anything else other than Turkington's?
3153. **Mr Brimstone:** If I can just separate that out for clarity. You asked a separate question at the start, and then you moved on to that question. Are you happy enough with the response I gave to the first part of your question?
3154. **Mr Copeland:** Again, I can accept that looking at a letter, the first thing you look at is to see who it is from, and on some occasions that would be the logo, Turkington's. Then, read what the letter says. Generally, you try to find who it is from. On this occasion, as you quite rightly say, Turkington Holdings. It is addressed to the Minister, and it is from Ian Young, but there is a capacity there as general manager. The only thing that Ian Young could be general manager of

- is Turkington's. If you read the body — I suppose I'm being kind, but some of it could be open to misinterpretation, but it is a very small amount in my case. It begins by detailing it's to install double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015 Programme for Government commitment. It thanks the Minister for taking time to read the letter, which, he feels, will be of benefit to all concerned. It then says, "I am writing in connection" —
3155. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Michael. That's at tab 14, for people if they need to refer to it. Michael, you might need to make it a clear question to Mr Brimstone.
3156. **Mr Copeland:** Yeah. What I am driving at, really, is there any reasonable degree of misinterpretation that would lead you to conclude that this was not a letter from Ian Young in his capacity as general manager of Turkington's? He begins it "I" — that is, he — is writing to the Minister regarding this. He then goes on to say that "We" — that is his company. There is a very spurious link to the Glass and Glazing Federation. Indeed, it is couched only again in that wonderful word that appeared in the second letter that I went to:
- "We are also members of the Glass and Glazing Federation".*
3157. I can't see how you could read that —
3158. **Mr Brimstone:** You weren't at my earlier evidence session when I went into detail on that — that I hadn't seen that letter. The first I had seen of that letter was July 2013. Now, in light of all the discussions to this Committee and the investigations that are going on in this Committee, it is well and good looking at this letter and viewing it in the light that you have just outlined, but bear in mind, I had come at this from the outset, where I had had an initial meeting where my belief was that there was going to be a letter sent by Mr Ian Young, who had been vice-chair and fulfilled various roles in the Glass and Glazing Federation. There was going to be a letter coming from him requesting a meeting with the Minister to discuss the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. That was my belief, and, I will be honest, that was my belief up until their evidence session in December 2013.
3159. **Mr Copeland:** I fully accept that that is your belief. What I am asking you is, can you understand our impression reading that that it is very difficult to accept that anyone could read that as coming from anyone else other than Ian Young of Turkington's?
3160. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely, but that's in the context in which you are reading it. I read it in a different context at the time and place when it was read.
3161. **Mr Copeland:** Thank you, Chair.
3162. **Mr Allister:** You say you didn't see this letter that has been drawn to your attention from Turkington's until July. How did you come to see it then?
3163. **Mr Brimstone:** To be honest, Jim —
3164. **Mr Allister:** And what else would you be?
3165. **Mr Campbell:** Ah, come on now.
3166. **The Chairperson:** Sorry. No comments of that nature, please.
3167. **Mr Campbell:** This is where it goes off the rails again, you see.
3168. **The Chairperson:** Stephen, don't respond to that, just answer the question.
3169. **Mr Brimstone:** I am disappointed, to be honest, Chair. I am doing my best to answer questions in the fullest and honest way.
3170. **The Chairperson:** Again, I will, just before you go back —
3171. **Mr Brimstone:** I have treated the member with respect, and I would appreciate it if he'd do the same with me.
3172. **The Chairperson:** Stephen, I am just going to remind all members. Jim, since you have the floor at the moment, I want no type of remark like that in this evidence session or any other evidence session. Go ahead.

3173. **Mr Allister:** How did you come by this letter?
3174. **Mr Brimstone:** In early July 2013, post the programme. I can't recall if it — was the letter held up at some point during the programme? I asked officials after the programme then to get a copy of the letter. That was the first I had seen of the letter.
3175. **Mr Allister:** You had been the recipient of letters from the BBC?
3176. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3177. **Mr Allister:** And the Minister had been the recipient of such letters? You had seen those?
3178. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3179. **Mr Allister:** And you knew there was a live issue as to with whom the meetings had taken place? Is that right?
3180. **Mr Brimstone:** They had made reference to having a meeting with Turkington's, yes.
3181. **Mr Allister:** Yes. So, did you never think at that time to search out this letter that you had, since you had been off on maternity leave when it came in?
3182. **Mr Brimstone:** To be honest, I didn't even think of the fact that I was off on paternity leave when it did come in. That wasn't the point of what I was getting at.
3183. **Mr Allister:** So what was it that caused you to go looking for it then?
3184. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, the letter was held up, and I saw a letter that had clearly the Turkington's logo. My expectation would have been that there would have been a letter coming with the Glass and Glazing Federation logo at the top of it. That was what took my attention first of all. Then I was — normally, I can recall things fairly well, but I couldn't recall ever having seen that. So I went and looked and discovered, then, the reason I hadn't seen it was because I was off on paternity leave. If you look, my initials were not on the subhead to Minister, and that initially caught my attention. I thought, "Why are my initials not on this going to the Minister?", and then we looked, and it was whenever I was off on paternity leave.
3185. **Mr Allister:** Now, I am not going to go into the stuff that Michael Copeland put to you, but I just want to suggest to you. You obviously read the letter when you saw it; you just didn't see the heading.
3186. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. That's correct. In July 2013, yes.
3187. **Mr Allister:** And, as Michael took you through, it's very, very clear who the letter is from and who's looking for the meeting, isn't it — on the face of the letter?
3188. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. Yes.
3189. **Mr Allister:** Yes. There's no, not much room for doubt on the content of the letter that it's Turkington's asking for the meeting. Do you agree with that?
3190. **Mr Brimstone:** In light of the discussion which we are at today, yes.
3191. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And when you read it in July, you couldn't but have reached that conclusion.
3192. **Mr Brimstone:** I clearly did.
3193. **Mr Allister:** So you read that letter — you ask us to believe that you read that letter in July and did not conclude that this is a letter conveying that Turkington's, as Turkington's, are asking for a meeting the Minister.
3194. **Mr Brimstone:** Remember, I am at this Committee here today to give my best recollection of events as they happened at that time. I'm not asking you to believe anything; I'm asking you to listen to what I'm saying. That is my best recollection of events in July 2013 is that that did not ring any great alarm bells to cause me to go and investigate this further.
3195. **Mr Allister:** What did you mean then when you told the Committee the last day you were here that, if you'd seen the letter earlier, it would've raised flags in your mind?
3196. **Mr Brimstone:** Before the meeting was held with the Minister in April of 2012.

3197. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but whether it was before or after, you said, if you'd seen the letter earlier than you did see it, it would've raised flags in your mind. That could've only come from the content of the letter, those flags.
3198. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, but in the intervening period of time, there had been a number of questions, discussions, all of the rest. Officials weren't querying Minister's stance on who the meeting was with at all. There was no, "Minister, you're wrong". There was nothing like that came back up. I continued on the belief, genuinely, and you can accept it or not, but I continued on the belief up until December of 2013 that the meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Yes, staff members of Turkington's, but in their capacity as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3199. **Mr Allister:** What would have been the flags that would've been raised in your mind if you'd seen that letter sooner?
3200. **Mr Clarke:** A Union Jack.
3201. **Mr Brimstone:** I am here under an affirmation today to give a response based on my best recollection of events as they happened. I can't go into the subjecture like that.
3202. **Mr Allister:** You're the man who told us, if I'd seen that sooner, flags would've been raised in your mind. I'm simply asking you: what are those flags? What is it would've bothered you.
3203. **Mr Brimstone:** It's what capacity they were coming to meet with the Minister.
3204. **Mr Allister:** Right. Right. So, if you'd seen it sooner, the question of what capacity they were coming in would've been a bother and would've raised itself in your mind. But having seen it in July, you tell us that didn't bother you.
3205. **Mr Brimstone:** That's what I'm telling you, yes.
3206. **Mr Allister:** And that's your explanation for then not drawing it to the attention of the Minister.
3207. **Mr Brimstone:** Drawing what to the attention of the Minister?
3208. **Mr Allister:** The fact, "We may have got this wrong. This seems to have been a meeting with Turkington's, not with the Glass and Glazing Federation". The very flag that would've been raised in your mind if you'd seen it sooner, that suddenly isn't raised in your mind in July, and that's why you didn't have that conversation with the Minister as to who this meeting was actually with.
3209. **Mr Brimstone:** Because I believed at that point the meeting was with Turkington's staff representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3210. **Mr Allister:** Despite what the letter said.
3211. **Mr Brimstone:** Despite what the letter said.
3212. **Mr Allister:** And despite the fact that if you'd seen the letter some months earlier, you'd have reached a different conclusion.
3213. **Mr Brimstone:** Some considerable months earlier, yes.
3214. **Mr Allister:** Yes. On the same content in the same letter, you'd have reached a different conclusion as to who the meeting was with.
3215. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, it would've raised questions in my mind, yes.
3216. **Mr Allister:** But not now.
3217. **Mr Brimstone:** Not at that point, no.
3218. **Mr Allister:** Was that because you'd crossed the Rubicon as far as rowing back —
3219. **The Chairperson:** I just ask —
3220. **Mr Allister:** — from saying it was the Glass and Glazing Federation?
3221. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim Allister, I just want you to ask the question because, again, you understand the arguments that we put, and this has been conducted, I think, very, very well this morning for the most part, and I am very thankful to members for conducting

- the inquiry the way they are doing, but we just need to make sure we're not straying into subjectivity or kind of making suggestions or inferences. We need to ask the questions and accept entirely the right to probe the questions.
3222. **Mr Allister:** I accept your ruling. I didn't think I was. I was simply looking for an explanation as to why that which would have alerted you at an earlier point in time to reach a certain conclusion, or raise a certain concern, didn't alert you or cause you to reach a certain conclusion at a later point in time. I am trying to understand how that could be and is there another reason for that.
3223. **Mr Brimstone:** If I had seen the letter before the meeting, I probably would have sought clarification on it at the meeting in April.
3224. **Mr Allister:** Having seen the letter, did you then conduct any other investigations to see what was the Minister told? You know the whole process of how letters come in, they go through the process etc. Mr Copeland read you out the briefing that went to the Minister, as it were, about who's looking for a meeting with you. Did you go and look at those documents then, and say, "Well, I wonder how this was interpreted."?
3225. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I didn't.
3226. **Mr Allister:** Do you not think that would have been a sensible thing to do?
3227. **Mr Brimstone:** You asked me a question, and I am giving you the honest answer as to what happened at the time.
3228. **Mr Allister:** So, is what you are telling us that the Minister then was, effectively, kept in the dark until December about who had asked for a meeting with him?
3229. **Mr Brimstone:** Could you clarify what you mean by that question?
3230. **Mr Allister:** You became aware in July, having seen the letter, the request was to meet Turkington's.
3231. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I didn't. I haven't said that.
3232. **Mr Allister:** You said you read the letter.
3233. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3234. **Mr Allister:** You agreed that you couldn't read the letter without reaching that conclusion.
3235. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I didn't.
3236. **Mr Allister:** I think you did.
3237. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I don't think I did.
3238. **Mr Allister:** Or do suggest that you could read that letter without reading that conclusion?
3239. **Mr Brimstone:** I did and clearly did, and my view was that the meeting was held with the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation up until mid-December 2013.
3240. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, I think I just need to put on the record because I do think the Hansard record will show that just a few minutes ago that you said that the flag which would have been raised in your mind would have been — and I am paraphrasing this — but the issue that would have been troubling you would have been the capacity in which the people from Turkington's attended the meeting. I think you just need to reflect on what you really mean by your understanding of that.
3241. **Mr Brimstone:** If I had seen the letter before the meeting in April 2012, I probably — and I am going to "probably" here on the grounds that I can't confirm — but I probably would have sought clarification as to who they were actually representing, bearing in mind I was the one who was at the pre-meeting and bearing in mind I was the one who had the expectation that a letter was going to come in from the Glass and Glazing Federation requesting a meeting with the Minister to discuss for when Mr Young, from the Glass and Glazing Federation, requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss their guidelines.

3242. **Mr Allister:** Mr Brimstone, you were still at a critical point. You were serving a Minister who, at this point, was threatening to sue the BBC over allegations, including this allegation. So would it not have been incumbent upon you to exhaustively have established at that point in time, before your Minister goes down the road of suing someone or dealing with this controversy, to establish, through exhaustive investigation, what the record showed as to who the meeting was with? You didn't do that.
3243. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I didn't, because I had no doubt in my mind as to what the circumstances were at that time.
3244. **Mr Allister:** By failing to do that, did you then leave the Minister in the dark until December about who the meeting was actually with?
3245. **Mr Brimstone:** My readout of what you have just said to me is, by implication, by keeping the Minister in the dark, that I kept something back from the Minister that I knew. I didn't.
3246. **Mr Allister:** I suppose I am suggesting what you knew or ought to have known in expectation of the inquiries you would carry out.
3247. **Mr Brimstone:** Officials were carrying out that on behalf of the inquiry.
3248. **Mr Allister:** So nobody told the Minister on the foot of those inquiries, "By the way, this meeting wasn't with the Glass and Glazing Federation; it was with Turkington's"? That is what we are being asked to believe, that no one told the Minister.
3249. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3250. **Mr Allister:** And even though you had the knowledge and the means of knowledge from having read the letter, you didn't think it necessary, even in the context of previously telling us what flags would have been raised in your mind, to do anything about it.
3251. **Mr Brimstone:** That's what I said, yes.
3252. **Mr Allister:** Even though when you saw that letter you were shocked.
3253. **Mr Brimstone:** If I was to use that language again, I'd probably change it to "surprised".
3254. **Mr Allister:** Your language.
3255. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, that is what I'm saying. I never disputed the fact that it was my language. If I was to say it again, I would probably use the word "surprised" there as opposed to "shocked".
3256. **Mr Allister:** Now, you told us that you had no power to give instructions to the Department.
3257. **Mr Brimstone:** That is correct.
3258. **Mr Allister:** Isn't that right?
3259. **Mr Brimstone:** Correct.
3260. **Mr Allister:** And yet, we have now before us, evidence in documents, where someone interpreted your giving of instructions as the issuing of a decree.
3261. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3262. **Mr Allister:** Isn't that right?
3263. **Mr Brimstone:** That's correct.
3264. **Mr Allister:** You may quibble with the word "decree". Did you give an instruction that despite the Super Seal meeting being having been refused, it was now to be granted?
3265. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, if we go to the document that has my handwriting on it.
3266. **Mr Allister:** Yeah, tab 13, I think, is it? Which document are you taking us to now?
3267. **Mr Brimstone:** Page 36.
3268. **Mr Allister:** Right. So, that is your writing that we see.
3269. **Mr Brimstone:** I am a special adviser, yes.
3270. **Mr Allister:** So we are both looking at the same —
3271. **Mr Brimstone:** Yeah.

3272. **Mr Allister:** Oh, sorry, yeah, the writing at the top, not the more legible writing towards the bottom.
3273. **Mr Brimstone:** That's correct.
3274. **Mr Allister:** Yes, the writing at the top: "Agree to meeting SB".
3275. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3276. **Mr Allister:** And that has been described to us as a decree by you.
3277. **Mr Brimstone:** So it seems, yes.
3278. **Mr Allister:** Does that suggest that that instruction may have been accompanied with some conversation?
3279. **Mr Brimstone:** That is not an instruction for a start; that's my advice to Minister on the —
3280. **Mr Allister:** Right, but that advice may have been accompanied by some conversation.
3281. **Mr Brimstone:** No. That goes to Minister. I had no reason to give any other instructions. There is no evidence to point to any other instruction.
3282. **Mr Allister:** So, someone somewhere thought that was a decree from you.
3283. **Mr Brimstone:** As I said in my opening statement, I did not decree that the meeting should go ahead and I am not responsible for the choice of words used in the email referred to.
3284. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but you were making the political decisions in the Department, as it were.
3285. **Mr Brimstone:** The Minister makes the political decisions.
3286. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but you were advising him on those, and your advice was agree to this meeting. This is the meeting that another MLA had asked for — Ms Overend — and then Mr McCrea asked for it and you advised agree to it.
3287. **Mr Brimstone:** On the back of the additional information that had come in from Mr McCrea, yes.
3288. **Mr Allister:** But you told us you had no power to give instructions.
3289. **Mr Brimstone:** I haven't instructed anybody to do anything. I advised Minister to go ahead with the meeting.
3290. **Mr Allister:** And, on foot of that, the meeting happened.
3291. **Mr Brimstone:** On the foot of Minister agreeing to a meeting; yes, the meeting happened.
3292. **Mr Allister:** You see, might one find it difficult to understand how you can be so influential on whether a meeting happens or doesn't happen, but had no capacity or influence in changing a minute?
3293. **Mr Brimstone:** If I had put on there, "Special adviser advice to Minister: recommend you decline this meeting". Minister has, in the past, and may well in the future decide, "I am still going to agree to that meeting". It is only my advice to Minister.
3294. **Mr Allister:** Yes. Well, wouldn't you have had the power in regard to a minute — I am referring, obviously, to the contested minute of 16 April — wouldn't you have had the power to give advice to the private secretary to change the minute?
3295. **Mr Brimstone:** I can give advice to anybody, but whether they take that advice or not is a completely different matter.
3296. **Mr Allister:** So, it's quite possible that Ms McConaghie could have been told by you to change the minute, is it?
3297. **Mr Brimstone:** But she wasn't.
3298. **Mr Allister:** Yes. But you had, in or about that time, made similar changes, hadn't you?
3299. **Mr Brimstone:** If you specify what they were, we could —
3300. **Mr Allister:** Yes: the answer, the draft answer to the written question on 24 May, at tab 15, which coincides within or about the time that the minutes were changed. You changed an answer which the Minister was going to send out. Isn't

- that right? Again, it is in your own hand, I think.
3301. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, that is my handwriting, yes.
3302. **Mr Allister:** Yeah, and the change you made was to say that “I” — the Minister — “and the chief executive of the Housing Executive met with Turkington Holdings”. You, personally, changed that to:
- “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”.*
3303. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3304. **Mr Allister:** So, in or about the time that the minute was changed —
3305. **Mr Brimstone:** If we can be specific here rather than “in or about”, because I think that is important in the whole thing.
3306. **Mr Allister:** I believe the minute was changed in or about May 2012, and I am sure the precise date is available. No doubt, we might get to that in a moment.
3307. **Mr Brimstone:** The date is important in this, and it will become evident why.
3308. **The Chairperson:** OK, we will try and get that.
3309. **Mr Allister:** Let’s try and find the date.
3310. **The Chairperson:** We will pause for a second. On 16 May, the finalised version changes from version 5 made by Barbara McConaghie, dated 16 May. That is in tab 5 of your big pack.
3311. **Mr Brimstone:** And this response was on 24 May.
3312. **Mr Allister:** So this is eight days later.
3313. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3314. **Mr Allister:** So, eight days after the minute is changed, we have irrefutable evidence that you were making a parallel change to an Assembly answer.
3315. **Mr Brimstone:** I didn’t make the earlier change, but I made the change to this.
3316. **Mr Allister:** Eight days after the earlier change, you were making a parallel change to an Assembly answer.
3317. **Mr Brimstone:** On the same day, I believe, Chair, as the letter was amended to go to you as well. I think that that change was made after the Minister had sought the change to the letter going to you.
3318. **Mr Allister:** Well, it was you who actually wrote on the draft reply, wasn’t it?
3319. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, and Minister signed off on it.
3320. **Mr Allister:** The Minister signed off on it. And it is you who writes on the draft reply to the Assembly question.
3321. **Mr Brimstone:** Which goes back to officials.
3322. **Mr Allister:** Of course.
3323. **Mr Brimstone:** There is a difference between the two.
3324. **Mr Allister:** Of course.
3325. **Mr Brimstone:** The letter going to the Chairman, which was signed off by the Minister — at that point, normally what happens, whenever I make a suggested amendment to anything, it goes back into the system. Officials will look at that and it will come back up to the Minister and the note will be, “The special adviser has recommended this change and there are changes being reflected”. In the letter going to you, Chair, the Minister made that change. That change didn’t go back into the system. That change was made at the private office level and went straight out to you. This answer here goes back into the system and comes back up to Minister to be signed off.
3326. **Mr Allister:** Yes, the mechanics, I am sure, are interesting, but the fact is that you initiated the change.
3327. **Mr Brimstone:** To reflect Minister’s thinking, yes.
3328. **Mr Allister:** Affecting both in the letter and in the answer.

3329. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. *"Meeting with Representatives of ... Glass and Glazing Federation"*
3330. **Mr Allister:** And that's within the same week, virtually, as the minutes have been changed, yes? Eight days, I think.
3331. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, OK.
3332. **Mr Allister:** But you ask us to believe —
3333. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry, the final amendment to the minutes?
3334. **Mr Allister:** Yes. The final and the first time that GFF is written into the minutes and Turkington's are written out.
3335. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry, I think, if you look, you can go back through the minute of the meetings, because I think Turkington's is on the first line of that. I don't think they are written out at all. You can go back through it for clarification.
3336. **Mr Allister:** Well, in terms of whom the meeting was with —
3337. **Mr Brimstone:** Could we just go back to that, because it is important.
3338. **Mr Allister:** Yes, let us find that.
3339. **The Chairperson:** It is tab 5.
3340. **Mr Allister:** I think we are looking at version 6, is that right?
3341. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, the first line.
3342. **Mr Allister:** Yes. Of course, the heading —
3343. **Mr Brimstone:** No, the first line of the content; the body of the document.
3344. **Mr Allister:** Is:
"Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that ... had extensive ... experience".
3345. Yes. But, of course, that is not where the change is made.
3346. **Mr Brimstone:** No, but —
3347. **Mr Allister:** The change is made from version 5 to version 6 on the heading. It changes:
"Meeting with Turkington ...16 April"
to:
3348. and changes the designation of those who were present at the meeting from Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Turkington Holdings — changes it to representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Those are where the changes are made. Is that right?
3349. **Mr Brimstone:** Yeah, but your allegation was that Turkington's were "wrote out" of the document, I think was the phrase you used.
3350. **Mr Allister:** Written out in terms of with whom the meeting was headed as being with. With whom those who were present — who those who were present were representing — that was written out.
3351. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, but that is not writing the company out of the document.
3352. **Mr Allister:** Right, OK. But, who they were representing was written out of the document.
3353. **Mr Brimstone:** OK, but the allegation was that you made was that Turkington's were writing out of the document.
3354. **Mr Allister:** Well, coming back to the nub of my point to you, here we have it, on 24 May, you making a parallel change to an Assembly question, and, in fact, reply to the Chairman, but you ask us to believe that, eight days earlier, you had nothing to do with making a parallel change to the minutes.
3355. **Mr Brimstone:** I don't ask you to believe. I've said before that's my best recollection of events. And I was quite clear at my earlier evidence session as to what I believed happened at that time.
3356. **Mr Allister:** Had you — Do you remember in your evidence, and it's at page 10 of Hansard, when you last were with us on 9 January, the Chair asked you a point, and you said at no point did you seek to change any references to Turkington's or refer to it as Glass and Glazing Federation representatives?

3357. **Mr Brimstone:** With reference to the note of the meeting, yes.
3358. **Mr Allister:** Well, “at no point”. Of course, you now know that, on the Assembly answer, you very definitely made that change.
3359. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, I think I was clear to you there about 10 seconds ago that we are referring to the note of the meeting, as opposed — I think what I said to Dolores Kelly, actually, the next page; sorry, it is not, yes, page 15 of Hansard of the same session, in response to Dolores, Dolores said:
- “Perhaps I misunderstood, but I understood that you said at the outset that you never made any amendments to letters and did not initiate those. Maybe I took you up wrong.”*
3360. My response was:
- “I was talking about departmental meeting notes. I have no role in any of that at all. Day and daily, I get papers that come up to me for the Minister. I will put queries and suggested amendments on them. That happens on a day-to-day-daily basis, as a part of the approval process by which it goes to the Minister.”*
3361. **Mr Allister:** But, just to finish on this point: you know the conundrum that the Committee has that Ms McConaghie says that she didn’t make the change — her own volition. She points to the most likely people being yourself and the Minister. And, therefore, we are left to unravel. Can you help us at all as to who could or did give that instruction?
3362. **Mr Brimstone:** I am here to give my best recollection of events as they happened at that time. I can only speak for myself, and I have given a clear answer with regard to what happened.
3363. **Mr Allister:** Are you saying most emphatically, “I did not give any such instruction” or are you saying, “I don’t recall giving any instruction”?
3364. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, what’s the difference?
3365. **Mr Allister:** Well, there might be —
3366. **Mr Brimstone:** Unless —
3367. **Mr Allister:** You have told us a number of things you can’t remember. But, are you saying emphatically, “I did not have any hand in changing the minute” or are you saying, “I don’t remember doing anything that could’ve resulted in a change to the minute”?
3368. **Mr Brimstone:** That is why — I do not recall, at any time, whether in DCAL or DSD, ever having sought meeting notes, requested changes to meeting notes, and, on that basis, I’m of the belief that I did not in any way seek any changes to the —
3369. **Mr Allister:** So, are you ruling out the possibility that Stephen Brimstone caused that change to be made?
3370. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3371. **Mr Allister:** OK. I have some other points, but I will come back.
3372. **The Chairperson:** Back on it later on. I just want to, before I bring Dolores in, just to remind, just to ask you to reflect on this, maybe for later on, I think, in your evidence a few minutes ago, you said that no official had advised the Minister about any query around the status of who was at the meeting.
3373. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3374. **The Chairperson:** But Michael Sands actually did, and he gave that in his evidence. In fact, there was toing and froing in the drafting of a letter to me to the Committee. So, I am just asking you to reflect on that for a few minutes, because Michael Sands queried that. You —
3375. **Mr Brimstone:** And, if we go back, I mean, I, because we looked into this at the time as to whether there had been any mention of by officials, and it was clear there wasn’t; the Minister wasn’t informed by anyone that he was wrong in his assumption that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3376. **The Chairperson:** But, you, I mean, you were explaining the mechanics of the drafting process. Michael Sands, in his evidence, said he pointed out in the letter, actually it’s Turkington’s.

3377. **Mr Brimstone:** In the original draft —
3378. **The Chairperson:** It was changed.
3379. **Mr Brimstone:** Yeah. This is the letter going to you, Chair.
3380. **The Chairperson:** So, he is an official. Yeah, exactly.
3381. **Mr Brimstone:** So, then, Minister, what happened was the Minister amended that letter, requested me to amend that letter, signed off on that letter, and there was nobody came back to say, “Minister, you are wrong in that”. And that is normally what would happen.
3382. **The Chairperson:** Well, I am just making the point that Michael Sands, in his evidence, did say that he actually made it very clear, as far as he was concerned, the meeting was with Turkington’s. So, an official did, and did actually say it under evidence. I am just asking for people to reflect on that.
3383. **Mrs D Kelly:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Stephen. Stephen, one of the points that puzzles me a bit is in relation to 8 November 2012, when the Glass and Glazing Federation emailed Oliver McHugh in DSD seeking more information regarding the review taking place in relation to the Housing Executive’s specification and whether this involves GGF members, and they also requested further information about the tendering process. Would that not have caused some alarm bells? If Turkington’s were acting on behalf of the GGF, then why would the GGF then write separately raising their own specific questions, which would appear to contradict that evidence which — or the information which — Turkington’s provided to the Minister in relation to savings.
3384. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, but I — we had no sight of that. They went to — it was Oliver McHugh, you said, the official in the Department, but that did not come back up the line.
3385. **Mrs D Kelly:** So there was no discussions in and around that. Nobody from the Department thought to say to the Minister, “Well, actually, we have a contradictory view from the actual federation, as opposed to the ones that’s being promoted”.
3386. **Mr Brimstone:** I’m not aware of that at all.
3387. **Mrs D Kelly:** OK. Thank you.
3388. The other point was — I mean, the choice of words actually I found to be quite interesting. You made a remark, a comment, about the word “decreed” used. Because that suggests to me a sort of autocratic-type regime, you know, where there’s a dictator in charge. And you did say that — I mean, obviously, you have no control over how people use those words, but you did say in your last evidence sessions that you have no powers to give instructions in the Department, and yet, as Mr Allister pointed out to you also, you overruled the Department’s advice in relation to the meeting with Mr McCrea and Super Seal. And furthermore, not only —
3389. **Mr Brimstone:** Just on that point, if you don’t mind me addressing it first of all.
3390. **Mrs D Kelly:** Yeah, that’s OK.
3391. **The Chairperson:** I was going to say there, aye, because, I mean, I think, I think, you’re stretching any inference of overruling. I haven’t seen any reference to overruling myself, so I don’t know where that’s coming from. So —
3392. **Mrs D Kelly:** Well, it actually then says there’s an email from an official in the private Member’s office which advises that a special adviser has decreed. It’s that bit about overruling.
3393. **The Chairperson:** But Mr Brimstone already said he didn’t decree anything, and he refutes that categorisation. And he has also said in his evidence here this morning repeatedly that he gives advice rather than instructions. I’m just making the point. So, you’re using a term which was quite authoritative.
3394. **Mr Brimstone:** I was surprised when I seen that language myself. King Nebuchadnezzar was the last one

- I heard decree anything. But I was surprised at that language myself.
3395. **The Chairperson:** OK. Let's stick to the programme here, folks, before we give in to —
3396. **Mrs D Kelly:** Well, Chair, the fact is Mr Brimstone said he didn't give instructions to the Department, and yet we are finding that had there been — and we don't know who these are attributed to in terms of diary entry changes in 2012, minute/aide-memoire changes, changes to Assembly questions, letters from the BBC. And yet it's not until the following year, you know, in 2013, that alarm bells really start to ring, and people then concede that, in actual fact, they were wrong in their interpretation of who was at the meeting. It is a bit of stretch, you know, that there was so much activity around changing it. I mean, I just wonder how often has it been the case that diary entries have had to be changed to reflect who was at meetings, or was this a one-off?
3397. **Mr Brimstone:** I've no idea is the honest answer to that.
3398. **Mrs D Kelly:** That's OK.
3399. But, it was just — the other point, you see, that was the 12 November, you know, the letter, you may recall that came in from MW Advocate was a letter directly to the Minister, and they were supported by Dr McCrea where they were refuting some of the cost-savings that were claimed to be able to be made. And then there was a reply prepared, and you advised that the draft response from the Minister be redrafted to a private secretary response; that is that it should come from Barbara McConaghie and not the Minister. What was your thinking behind that change?
3400. **Mr Brimstone:** Well, normally, Minister would sign off on letters going to elected representatives, whether that be council members or MPs or Members of this legislative Assembly. Normally, any other letters going to individuals out there would come from the private secretary.
3401. **Mrs D Kelly:** OK. Now I just was curious around that.
3402. And, just, are you telling us then that really it was December 2013 whenever the Minister, and then I think in the January, when the Minister finally realised that the meeting was with Turkington's not the Glass and Glazing Federation? When did you come to that conclusion?
3403. **Mr Brimstone:** After I heard the Turkington's evidence on whatever date in December they gave it.
3404. **Mrs D Kelly:** OK. So that was the only time that you can — OK, thank you.
3405. **Mr Campbell:** Yes, I'm gonna try and not go over some of the old ground, but I missed your evidence in January: I was unavoidably absent that day. So I just want to get absolutely clear in my mind, because a number of members have asked questions about the Glass and Glazing Federation/Turkington meeting. You met two representatives — two members, employees — of Turkington's in April.
3406. **Mr Brimstone:** January.
3407. **Mr Campbell:** In January, sorry. January. That's right. That was the first meeting.
3408. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. 2012.
3409. **Mr Campbell:** January of 2012, yes. And subsequent to that then the April meeting was held, and the Minister and you were both at that meeting.
3410. **Mr Brimstone:** I was at the majority of it. I had to leave for a personal appointment.
3411. **Mr Campbell:** Right, OK. And you've said in your evidence that it was your belief that, as a result of that meeting, an invite would come in from the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3412. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3413. **Mr Campbell:** Now, a huge amount of importance, as you've gathered from previous questioning and today, seems to be attached to who was at the meeting and whom were they

- representing, and you've given your answers. There appears to be — I'm not going to ask you to comment now on insinuation, but there appears to be a repeated inference that, if we can focus on who was at the meeting and in what capacity they were at the meeting and who changed the note to more accurately reflect who was at the meeting, that that would lead us somewhere, that we would get to some sort of conclusion. So I just want to ask you in terms of whether it was perceived accurately or inaccurately about who was at meeting. In terms of the outcome, what difference would it have been had it been accurately projected on all responses on aide-memoires, on responses to Assembly questions and in letters? If it had been done accurately, what would the outcome have been in terms of difference?
3414. **Mr Brimstone:** We wouldn't be sitting here today, but, other than that, none.
3415. **Mr Campbell:** I don't mean the inquiry, because obviously there appears to be efforts to get us in a particular direction in terms of outcome. The Minister has been very clear in that, as far as he is told, there was no benefit — no tangible benefit — to Turkington Holdings.
3416. **Mr Brimstone:** I'm not aware of any benefit at all to anyone but the taxpayers.
3417. **Mr Campbell:** Right. So all this series of questioning about when it was changed, who authorised the change and, I suppose the unsaid question, why was it changed. We've got to try and get to — there has to have been some substantive reasoning that I can't see. But there has to have been some outcome that somebody is inferring people were going to benefit as a result of this being hidden and then only subsequently being brought to light. Are you saying that there was no change in terms of outcome?
3418. **Mr Brimstone:** No, there was no change in outcome.
3419. **Mr Campbell:** Has there been any correspondence from the Glass and Glazing Federation subsequent to the changes that were done to questions, to letters and to the letter to the Chairman?
3420. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I believe there was some correspondence came in last week from the Glass and Glazing Federation to seek a meeting with the Minister. I don't know if Minister's seen that or not yet, but I believe that, as of last week, there was some request came in.
3421. **Mr Campbell:** Right. Not about this issue.
3422. **Mr Brimstone:** No, no, no. A separate issue.
3423. **Mr Campbell:** You're back now, at a subsequent time, in front of the Committee dealing with this inquiry-related issue. You had said in the January meeting — There was a question that I think Mr Allister had put to you. Yes, on page 7 of the Hansard report, when there was an issue about your belief that the Glass and Glazing Federation was there, represented by the two members from Turkington. And you said that you could not recall.
3424. Then there seems to have been, then, an issue between Mr Allister, the Chairman and yourself about dates, because the Chairman says:
- "That flurry of activity that you described actually occurred on 16 May."*
3425. And then the Chairman says:
- "You said April."*
3426. Is it clear there about the date that you were talking about?
3427. **Mr Brimstone:** I don't think I was talking about any date. I think Jim brought in the fact — and, according to Hansard, he was right — that the date was 16 May, and the Chairman took him up wrong. It was 16 April, potentially.
3428. **Mr Campbell:** Right. So is that just a misunderstanding about dates?
3429. **The Chairperson:** I was just clarifying the date, yes.

3430. **Mr Campbell:** But that has no bearing on your recollection?
3431. **Mr Brimstone:** No.
3432. **Mr Campbell:** OK. I suppose finally then, Chairman, and it is a point I made to the Minister, in terms of preparation for the private office and yourself and the Minister and the permanent secretary, what sort of hours are involved in dealing with the request from the Committee in relation to this inquiry?
3433. **Mr Brimstone:** With regard to myself, there is some preparation involved. Obviously, it is a distraction from what we want to be there to do in the Department. But for housing officials, there is a significant amount of work going on in preparation for this Committee and in the preparation of documents and there's been some reference made to the Department holding back on documents and all the rest, and all I can say is that officials are providing documents as and when they are asked to the best of their ability. And there is significant resource going into servicing this inquiry. Housing officials, who would normally be involved in fuel poverty and other issues in the Department. This inquiry has its place and we as a Department have to operate to service that inquiry, but there is significant resource.
3434. **Mr Campbell:** OK.
3435. **The Chairperson:** Gregory, thank you. Fra, you wanted a point?
3436. **Mr F McCann:** Chair, just —. As I say, given the information that the inquiry of this Committee has now got, and the whole run-up to the 'Spotlight' programme, the evidence there, the allegations that came through the 'Spotlight' programme, the fact that there was meetings, either with the Glass and Glazing Federation or with Turkington's, that there were changes made to certain documents, can you not understand why the Committee would be trying to get the truth of the matter? Because from that time, there were serious questions asked.
3437. **Mr Brimstone:** I'm not sure how I can provide a factual answer to that.
3438. **The Chairperson:** All you can do is give your best answer. You may not have an answer at all for it.
3439. **Mr F McCann:** The reason I am asking it is that the last speaker is saying that this has been a complete distraction and taking you away from your work. I'm asking, and you answered that. What I'm saying is that, given the evidence that we have in front of us and the whole run-through of it, do you not understand why this Committee would try to get to the bottom of the matter, and try to get the truth out there?
3440. **Mr Campbell:** Chairman, just for accuracy, I didn't say it was a distraction. I just asked about the amount of time that was deployed.
3441. **The Chairperson:** Yes, that is fair enough. Can you answer that?
3442. **Mr Brimstone:** I mean, the Committee has to fulfil its functions and I accept that. I'm here, hopefully, voluntarily, to help it in carrying out its functions.
3443. **Mr F McCann:** That's OK. The other question is, and it has been said here, that Turkington's had no benefit at all from the meetings that took place. Had they any indirect benefits, through subcontracts with other companies who might have done it?
3444. **Mr Brimstone:** I wouldn't be in a position to answer that.
3445. **Mr F McCann:** That's fine.
3446. **Mr Clarke:** Thanks, Chairman. Maybe to follow on from where Fra is at, I will maybe ask you it a different way. I think you've been asked it probably already, but I am going to ask you a different way, maybe. Fra was trying to draw out in terms of, maybe, the purpose of this inquiry, and — he didn't use these words but — the usefulness of it or the necessity of it. But I think in an earlier question — maybe it was even asked to the Minister — if the focus — if this had been purely Turkington's, no reference to

- the Glass and Glazing Federation, what difference would it have made?
3447. **Mr Brimstone:** To me or to the outcome?
3448. **Mr Clarke:** To the outcome.
3449. **Mr Brimstone:** None.
3450. **Mr Clarke:** No difference. Well, then, I mean it's sitting on this side of the table, and I mean, last week, I was accused of being a human shield for the Minister, which I refute. But, to me, and it is up to you whether you want to answer it or not, you can see how some can draw the conclusion that there is a witch-hunt, not only for the Minister in this but also a company who just so happened to be a company who made donations to this political party. Yet and all, they brought forward —
3451. **Mr Campbell:** Amongst others.
3452. **Mr Clarke:** — brought forward — yeah, well, a donation to our party and others, yes —
3453. **Mr Campbell:** Amongst others, yes.
3454. **Mr Clarke:** — who brought forward a proposal to save Northern Ireland plc — *[Interruption.]*
3455. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, folks —
3456. **Mr Campbell:** You can make a declaration if you wish. *[Interruption.]*
3457. **The Chairperson:** I am not interrupting you, Trevor, but there are other members cross-talking —
3458. **Mr Allister:** Absolutely wrong. *[Interruption.]*
3459. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Gregory. Sorry, Trevor, just a wee second, because I want you to be able to make your point clear without any interruption. Jim Allister, please, and Gregory, please, no cross-talking because there is a witness here giving evidence. It's difficult enough, enough pressure on the witness. Trevor, go ahead and ask your question.
3460. **Mr Clarke:** I appreciate that, Chairman. So the point I was making, so we have a company who has made donations to this party, other parties, even other members who have started their own parties in this room today in the past in terms of their involvement with European elections and so forth.
3461. **Mr Allister:** When a member of your party.
3462. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, folks, let's not have any cross-argument about this.
3463. **Mr Clarke:** Sorry. So the point I am making is, given that they have had that involvement with others, would you see it as an indictment against them now that they have come forward with a proposition which could save Northern Ireland plc some millions of pounds and, yet and all, haven't benefited in any way after bringing forward that piece of work?
3464. **Mr Brimstone:** I don't think I could comment on that.
3465. **The Chairperson:** OK, I just want to make a couple of points there, because I want to make sure that everybody gets their say. As chair of this inquiry, I actually made it very clear when Turkington's representatives were here in the first session of the evidence, when they were here, that there's nothing wrong with an organisation or a company giving a donation to a political party — nothing. There's nothing wrong with that at all, and I wouldn't accept that, and I wouldn't accept any characterisation of a company giving donations to parties as something somehow wrong.
3466. **Mr Campbell:** As many do, Chairman, as many do.
3467. **The Chairperson:** So, in fact, the whole question —
3468. **Mr Clarke:** Mr Chairman, I accept what you are saying. My difficulty is that so much has been focused round, and, in terms of the questioning, the very fact that Turkington's/Glass and Glazing Federation have been involved in this inquiry and, yet and all, many

- characteristics have been drawn in terms of their involvement with this party and, as my colleague said, other parties as well. But the only focus is the fact that they have made donations to this party. But the bit that concerns me most is, and I think this is where it's been lost, the whole thing has been lost on this one here. This company has come forward, and I think even in terms of the letter they've written to this Committee and how that could have affected the outcomes for them as a company. They have come forward with a genuine attempt to show how, in their opinion, the operation of the fitting of windows was done and was done incorrectly, which could save some millions. And because of that, and because of the connection with our party and others, that it somewhat could affect their company as well. What has been lost in this is the fact that we have saved millions of pounds as opposed to getting into detail of whether someone had a logo of the Glass and Glazing Federation or another company.
3469. **Mr F McCann:** *[Inaudible.]*
3470. **The Chairperson:** Sorry. Fra McCann, please don't interrupt. I'm not letting any others interrupt, so the same applies.
3471. **Mr F McCann:** *[Inaudible.]*
3472. **The Chairperson:** Fra, sorry. I am just directing you now — no interruptions. OK, Trevor?
3473. **Mr Clarke:** Yes.
3474. **The Chairperson:** I accept your point, and I don't accept any characterisation of a witch-hunt against anybody, because this is an inquiry which will follow evidence. Just to finalise making the point that all the members of this Committee agreed to hold an inquiry and agreed the terms of reference and so on, and, for the most part, almost unanimously and at all times, people have been very responsible. I accept that these things are a little bit difficult, but we are where we are. So, Jim, you wanted to —
3475. **Mr Allister:** Yes, I wanted to make a couple of points. The meeting of 28 June relating to the correspondence from the BBC: were you at that meeting?
3476. **Mr Brimstone:** As frustrating as you are going to find this, I can't confirm whether I was at that meeting or not. I've no record of me being at that meeting. I don't particularly recall that meeting, so I can't —
3477. **Mr Allister:** Were you at work that day?
3478. **Mr Brimstone:** I was at work. Whether I was at the Department that day or not, I can't recall.
3479. **Mr Allister:** Had you been at any meetings discussing correspondence from the BBC?
3480. **Mr Brimstone:** Absolutely, yes.
3481. **Mr Allister:** Because you'd received some yourself.
3482. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3483. **Mr Allister:** Yes, and had you held meetings with officials in that connection?
3484. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, well the Minister had had a number of meetings with officials —
3485. **Mr Allister:** Yes.
3486. **Mr Brimstone:** — regarding the letters from BBC.
3487. **Mr Allister:** So you just don't recall whether or not — We have noted you are absent from the list of attendees.
3488. **Mr Brimstone:** Is there a list of attendees?
3489. **Mr Allister:** I think there is.
3490. **The Chairperson:** From 20 June. There is a diary entry, yeah. I am advised that there is a diary entry.
3491. **Mr Brimstone:** Is there a list of attendees?
3492. **The Chairperson:** No, I don't — I can't give any clarification on that, so I will not give a misleading answer.

3493. **Mr Allister:** If I'm wrong about that —
3494. **Mr Brimstone:** I'm not prevaricating here. If there was a list of attendees —
3495. **The Chairperson:** If you don't have it, we can't deal with it, so —
3496. **Mr Campbell:** Well, Chairman, is there a list of attendees or not?
3497. **The Chairperson:** That's what I'm saying, I'm not going to — sorry, just could everybody settle down — I'm not going to give a misleading answer.
3498. **Mr Clarke:** Just a misleading question, but.
3499. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, a wee second. People just hold a second. Unless I have written confirmation in front of us here, then I'm not going to allow it to be considered because we don't have clarification, and we can't mislead ourselves. We'll just check it. Tab 17. Let's go to tab 17. Minister's diary entry, with list of attendees for meeting of 28 June. Do we have that?
3500. We have a diary entry there, as I said, it's just referred to and it says:
"Meeting with officials. Lighthouse Building. Will Haire. Jim Wilkinson. Michael Sands. Susan McCartney."
3501. **Mr Brimstone:** That wouldn't exclude me from being at the meeting, but I can't particularly recall being at that particular meeting on that day.
3502. **Mr Allister:** So it wasn't a misleading question.
3503. **Mr Clarke:** It's not like you, Jim, but, yeah, it wasn't like you.
3504. **Mr Allister:** And because you weren't listed on it, that is the reason I was asking, because I anticipated that maybe you would be at that meeting.
3505. **Mr Brimstone:** It wouldn't be unusual for me not to be listed.
3506. **Mr Allister:** Yes, and it would be — So you can't help us whether you were there or not, but it would be no surprise if you were there.
3507. **Mr Brimstone:** No surprise at all, no. If I was there, I would expect that I would've been at the meeting.
3508. **Mr Allister:** If you'd been at work.
3509. **Mr Brimstone:** No, if I had been in the Department headquarters that day.
3510. **Mr Allister:** Oh, in the headquarters. And, you have no indication you were elsewhere.
3511. **Mr Brimstone:** No, but I can't particularly recall being at that meeting.
3512. **Mr Allister:** Had you any hand in drafting replies to the BBC?
3513. **Mr Brimstone:** No, I would have seen them as they came back up from officials, but I don't recall having any role in drafting them at all.
3514. **Mr Allister:** And you were acquainted with the BBC allegations.
3515. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes.
3516. **Mr Allister:** But you never asked officials to check out the departmental record against those allegations, did you?
3517. **Mr Brimstone:** No, we didn't, no.
3518. **Mr Allister:** Final question. Apart from your meeting on 25, I think it was, January, with Turkington's, and your attendance at some of the meeting on 16 April, have you held any other meetings at any time with Turkington's or their representatives?
3519. **Mr Brimstone:** I think I had a telephone conversation with someone from Turkington's with regard to houses of multiple occupancy. It must've been 2011, 2012. That was all. They were querying as to where the Department was at with regard to its review of HMO regulations. That's the only thing I can think of.
3520. **Mr Allister:** No other face-to-face meetings.
3521. **Mr Brimstone:** No, except back in DCAL, I think.
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3522. **Mr Allister:** Yes, I'm talking about DSD terms.
3523. **The Chairperson:** Stephen, can I just ask you one question just from myself? And that would be: we had evidence obviously from Turkington's, I think on 14 November 2013, and we had something additional evidence from Ian Young and a letter from Trevor Turkington. I am asking you: can you offer any explanation? This relates to the meeting in January that you had with Turkington.
3524. **Mr Brimstone:** Sorry, Chair, I was distracted there. You mentioned the letter coming from Turkington's.
3525. **The Chairperson:** Yeah, it is in tab 19.
3526. **Mr Brimstone:** Is that shared with officials in the Department, no?
3527. **The Chairperson:** The question, actually, is that Turkington's, in their evidence, said that they met yourself in January, in the Radisson, if I remember correctly.
3528. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes, that is correct.
3529. **The Chairperson:** Can you offer any explanation as to why you believe that the letter then coming as a result of that meeting would be on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation? Because their evidence is that they were clear that they were Turkington's.
3530. **Mr Brimstone:** Yes. I can only go back to what I said at the last meeting. Although I cannot recall the details of the meeting, I do recall forming the impression that Mr Young was going to write to the Department on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation asking for a meeting with the Minister in relation to realising potential savings. After that, actually, whenever I spoke to the Minister and then subsequently to his private secretary — and I think that the private secretary brought this out in her evidence, that I had said to her to expect a letter coming from the Glass and Glazing Federation, and she brought that out in her evidence session, from what I recall, when she was up here last.
3531. **The Chairperson:** But, Turkington's are clear that they have made no suggestion.
3532. **Mr Brimstone:** I accept that. I can only go only go on my recollection of the meeting and what I expected.
3533. **The Chairperson:** OK. Thank you. There are no other members indicating to ask any further questions of Mr Brimstone, so on that basis, Stephen, is there anything else that you want to add or any comments you want to make?
3534. **Mr Brimstone:** No, thank you.
3535. **The Chairperson:** You are happy enough. OK. Thank you for your evidence here this morning. I thank members. We have agreed then, at this point, that we are going to have a short adjournment for lunch.

3 April 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Fra McCann
 Mr Sammy Wilson

Witnesses:

Mr Will Haire *Permanent Secretary,
 Department for Social
 Development*

Please note that this is a fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.

3536. **The Chairperson:** I formally welcome yourself, Will Haire, here this afternoon to this evidence session; Will being the permanent secretary for the Department for Social Development. Obviously, Will, you're aware you've been requested to come this afternoon to give evidence to this particular session and you've been requested to give that evidence under oath or affirmation. I understand you want to take an affirmation?
3537. **Mr Will Haire (Department for Social Development):** Yes.
3538. **The Chairperson:** Could I ask the Clerk then to present you with that affirmation and then you could satisfy yourself with the wording, and so on, that you'll then read that into the record, please?
3539. **Mr Haire:** I, Will Haire, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I shall give the Committee all such information and assistance that I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
3540. **The Chairperson:** Thank you, Will. Obviously, just for the record, then, obviously, just accepting that you are fully aware of the implications of the affirmation. Thank you for that.
3541. Just moving on then, before I open up to other members, Will, if you don't mind, there's actually two key points that I'd like to put to you. One is — it's just a very direct question, I suppose, just cutting to the core of all of this. One would be in respect of your own position as a permanent secretary and how do you see your role in terms of — or how do you see your role? Is it your ultimate responsibility to ensure that the Minister would be fully briefed and accurate on issues to protect the Department's reputation and so on?
3542. And then, secondly, have you or any of your officials, at any time, advised the Minister that the suggestion or the belief that the meeting with Turkington Holdings was actually with Turkington Holdings, as opposed to the Glass and Glazing Federation? I just want to know if yourself or any of your officials have, at any time, I mean, and bear in mind Michael Sands's evidence in regard to the written letter to the Committee in his evidence. So, they're fairly direct questions. The issue around your role, I think, is important as well because how do you see that?
3543. **Mr Haire:** Thank you, Chair. I mean, obviously as permanent secretary, my role is the overall running of the Department and, in some sense, the value set of officials and how they approach their work. Clearly, I cannot see every aspect or bit of work and oversee in detail that process. As I said in my note, while notes are copied in on me in this process and I see correspondence going through, I'm quickly just checking them off — I'm just checking very quickly to have a sense of what broad issues are going on and that they're being allocated to the right people. But as, clearly, I've got a senior team who deal with the different areas

- of work, and it is in the area of this area; it's obviously housing division who has handled this particular issue and the senior — while Jim Wilkinson is the director, Michael Sands has been the senior official who has been handling this particular aspect of the work. As you say, the requests — we have had all the history of the particular requests coming in, and, quite clearly, officials, when they saw the letter coming in, Michael Sands put forward that it was from Turkington's, the understanding from the letter that went up to the Minister as such — I think the briefing went up as Turkington's.
3544. It was, however, clearly on 16 May when there seems to be a series — the evidence that you have received indicates a series of discussions in the private office — around the private office — and the Minister goes on record — you have the record of the Minister saying this is the Glass and Glazing Federation. That was obviously in the light of — it had gone up to him, but, quite clearly, Michael saw that note, the Minister said that issue and Michael had put up his advice and in fact, some of the subsequent AOs coming through from Michael are still saying Turkington's, but — because after the original decision by the Minister, but clearly the Minister had got that position and had taken that decision and, I suppose, particularly the fact that Stephen Brimstone had had a pre-meeting, as you have heard about here, and had got that insight.
3545. So, I think officials, having heard that clearly their view about it being Turkington's initially, they had put that up. Minister has explained his view on it and also Stephen has indicated his position, but the Minister had made his decision on that issue and so officials from that time on said, "Right, our understanding is that they have got an understanding" as it was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. Records were then changed and subsequent material goes up in the process. There's obviously issues, for example, the answer to the AO on 16 September to
- Daithí McKay clearly indicates it was — I think it refers to both Glass and Glazing and Turkington's, so it is in the record from both angles of that. But, that is my understanding of how officials dealt with it at that time.
3546. I was not myself involved in any of those meetings at that stage, so I can't give you any more detail than Michael has particularly given you.
3547. **The Chairperson:** But in the context of your role as the permanent secretary, given all of the controversy, given all the serious allegations, which, in fact, have led to an inquiry, will you have not have seen any responsibility on your shoulders to ensure that the correct information was, in fact, on the record and dealt with as such, and anyone who had any other understandings that those understandings would be corrected?
3548. **Mr Haire:** Well, clearly, whilst the Department — the Minister having made the decision, the Department's position was, therefore, that it was the Glass and Glazing Federation. That was the position that had been taken. The Minister had quite clearly indicated that was the position, the Minister had heard the views that — had seen the stuff from Michael initially that that was the decision made. So, that was the case.
3549. Now, the interesting thing, of course, it doesn't — it only comes back in June a year later that the issue about the Glass and Glazing is brought back. I think it is the 7 June letter from the 'Spotlight' programme that they raise that. It comes as relatively small paragraph in that letter with quite a few queries, but it comes up at that stage. But, as you have seen this morning, the Minister was still very clear, "No, my belief was" and "I am not lying". He was stating, "I really believe that I was having a meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation." And that was a very strong line from the Minister at that time and the officials worked within that context, because the Minister had made his decision.

3550. **The Chairperson:** OK, and — OK, fair enough for now. Thank you, Will, for that. Sammy.

3551. **Mr Wilson:** Would it have made any difference, from the Department's point of view, whether this was with Turkington's or the glass and glaziers' federation or the man from the moon, given what the issue is?

3552. **Mr Haire:** No, I mean — clearly, sorry, there is a really important issue that clearly if there was, you know, taken — the Minister taken very seriously big value is we tell this Committee as it is. We should do that. So, obviously there is an issue. The Minister has been embarrassed by this situation and obviously that angle of not getting it right to tell the Committee is obviously an issue which we always think about and a process that we think about. But actually in the processing of this contract issue, as I said in my note to you — and the key element from myself is, from the beginning and talking to Michael — because remember, this takes place post all the issues and debates about Red Sky and all those other issues. The clear mantra and clear understanding is contract issue are for the Housing Executive and for technical people to take views on. It was quite clear, and we were very happy that the Minister's line was very much on that point. He has the meeting with the Glass and Glazing Federation, and he says, as he has made quite clear, he says, "Right", and he had John McPeake there — he had the chief executive there, so it was nothing behind the back of that, and Declan Allen, the chief procurement person there — and he says, "Go look at it".

3553. At the same time, the Department says, "Well, let's also check." We've got some specialists who are actually CPD specialists from DFP who are embedded within DSD, and we go to them and say, "Are you happy as well?". We wanted to give independent advice to the Minister as well as from the Housing Executive, and they come and say, "That's fine. This is a very fair point. This is the way we should go forward".

And then the key point after that was, right, once the Housing Executive was taking it forward — I mean, another key point that I found assurance, the fact was the Housing Executive was already thinking along these lines. And so, in fact, I think in front of this Committee, the Housing Executive said it was really, it was as much their idea as anybody else. They saw it very much as their idea. They took it forward and they dealt with all the contract issues, and, I mean, that's — we have had no involvement, I understand, as a Department, and, of course, nor should we, so my, as accounting officer, the process issue was correct and was correct from the outset in that process, and that, you know, was very crucial to my position and to the advice that I gave my officials about handling this sort of issue.

3554. **Mr Wilson:** So, you know, just so we're dead clear on this, from the point of view of kind of public propriety on all of this, the — whether it was Turkington's or glass and glazier federation or whatever, there is no issue that there was any impropriety in — and had it been Turkington's as opposed to glass and glazier federation or the other way round, that would not have made any difference regards concerns the Department may have had about how this might be interpreted.

3555. **Mr Haire:** No. I mean, as I said, the key issue was the relationship with the Committee: the fact the Committee felt, I mean, misled in this process, and the Minister has made his position very clear on that issue. That was the key.

3556. **The Chairperson:** OK, Sammy? Will, just for the record, before I bring Jim in, you were saying there about there was the response maybe for the Housing Executive in terms of contracts and so on, but, I mean, John McPeake and Declan Allen made it very clear in their evidence to this — sessions to this Committee — that they were not asked, "most unusually", I think, the term they used, to present any briefing to the Minister for the meeting on 16 April.

3557. **Mr Haire:** Yes. I —

3558. **The Chairperson:** They described it as “most unusual”.
3559. **Mr Haire:** Yes, it was, I mean, I’m sorry, I don’t know the background to that issue — I mean, that process — and whether there was, and you have seen the notes. I mean, there were some notes, I think, in the process about that. I don’t know the issue in that question. I have no background on why that took place, but I got a sense, and certainly, subsequently, talking to John about the issue is that I don’t have a sense of unhappiness that he felt that, once it was done, the meeting took place, the process was, that it was his process.
3560. **Mr Allister:** Mr Haire, I’m intrigued by your evidence today that the Minister had taken a decision that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Minister may be the Minister, but he’s not entitled to his own facts, is he?
3561. **Mr Haire:** The Minister had, I think — I was saying the point is that there’s a reference — the note there says the Minister — I can’t, sorry, and I apologise, I can’t quote. It comes from the private office and it states that it comes — you know, maybe the secretary could give that answer. That’s what I was referring to. It was a clear mind from the Minister that that was the issue of his understanding. Because the Minister, obviously, he has the political adviser, who was at the pre-meeting, and, presumably, the sense was there was an understanding from that pre-meeting about the terms of engagement. That was the take of —
3562. **Mr Allister:** But it’s a question of fact whether the meeting was with Turkington’s or with the Glass and Glazing Federation. You seem to be suggesting to us the Minister took a decision, post facto, that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3563. **Mr Haire:** I refer to the note. I mean, sorry, I was saying that it was a clear understanding from — the Clerk can get you the note, which is in your *[Inaudible.]*
- of what comes as — that’s what I was I referring to there.
3564. **Mr Allister:** Well, had there been a debate involving officials and the Minister and the special adviser as to with whom the meeting had been?
3565. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, I was not involved at that stage. The answer is, as I say, Michael Sands has given evidence in this place on his position here. You’ve also heard from Stephen and from the Minister their position, and you’ve also got the record of how the decision — what, how the final change, which was saying it’s clearly Glass and Glazing Federation. You have the reference there. That was made. That’s the evidence that you and I share in common; I’m just saying I’m referring you to that.
3566. **Mr Allister:** Well, Mr Haire, the Minister, having made the decision that the meeting had been with the Glass and Glazing Federation, the minutes are then changed. Is that the correct chronology?
3567. **Mr Haire:** I think that that is the logical — that’s my understanding. Once that is communicated somehow in the system and the system —
3568. **Mr Allister:** So what light can you shed for the Committee on how that came about and who gave that direction?
3569. **Mr Haire:** There is a record you have, which is a document, which says — Claire is trying to look it out, there — which actually puts down the Minister that *[Inaudible.]* — I presume that —
3570. **The Chairperson:** I am just trying to establish what that actually is.
3571. **Mr Haire:** That provides — now, I’m sorry, that might — clearly there was all the evidence you have seen and we have heard, there was a decision, a conclusion how we wished to place it that this was how it was and the Minister has in front of this Committee said that he takes responsibility for that. How that was communicated within the private office, sorry, I cannot give you any —

3572. **Mr Allister:** Have you made any inquiries about that?
3573. **Mr Haire:** I have made — I have — in preparation for this, I have talked to people and asked. Nobody can give any more insight than they have given in front of this Committee.
3574. **Mr Allister:** To whom have you talked?
3575. **Mr Haire:** I've been talking clearly — I was — In preparation for this, I've asked Stephen Brimstone, I've been talking around Stephen Brimstone and he has said about and it's clearly clear indicated in his lines that this is the line that he has taken. Minister — I mean obviously I've been talking to the Minister in preparing for these sessions and that's the line he's taken. Barbara I have not talked to in that process but I've seen Barbara's evidence [*Inaudible.*]
3576. **Mr Allister:** We heard Barbara tell us that, yes, the change was made but not in her volition.
3577. **Mr Haire:** But it wouldn't be.
3578. **Mr Allister:** No, it wouldn't.
3579. **Mr Haire:** It's quite clear it's the Minister's volition. Maybe it's is a good way of describing, I suppose, decisions: the Minister's volition. The Minister makes the decision, he's the head of the Department, it's the Minister's decision. He makes decisions and the system then puts that in place.
3580. **Mr Allister:** Yes but somebody has to tell whoever physically makes the change to the minutes on the Trim system. Somebody has to tell them to do that.
3581. **Mr Haire:** But, and the bit which I find — You are absolutely right, somebody has to get that message. I am not too sure what is your concern about naming the individual because whoever is doing it is finding the name of the individual because it clearly is the volition of the Minister. And that, I mean, I just —
3582. **The Chairperson:** Barbara McConaghie said she did the change but she didn't do it of her own volition.
3583. **Mr Haire:** Exactly. We know the Minister's volition is there. We know that Barbara does something. How the message got transmitted across and the fact people can't remember that, I'm not, I mean I'm not, I'm just slightly concerned — I can't see — Listening to your evidence, your debates, why are you concerned about that issue?
3584. **Mr Allister:** Is that another way of saying to us that the Minister, it was on the Minister's direction that the change was made?
3585. **Mr Haire:** But that's the record you have. It says that.
3586. **Mr Allister:** That's your belief; it was on the Minister's direction that the change was made.
3587. **The Chairperson:** No, it's not the Minister's —
3588. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, the note says —
3589. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, the Minister has not said, if I remember correctly — In fairness to the Minister, his evidence is that he didn't make the change.
3590. **Mr Haire:** He's not saying that he told Barbara to do it, but there is, I think, a reference in your text which says, you know, this — Have I got it right, Claire? Maybe —
3591. **The Chairperson:** There are two separate issues. There was a letter to the Committee, which was changed via the draft. That's the one that Michael Sands referred to in his evidence. But the — and that was changed on 22 May and then the minutes of that meeting were changed on the sixteenth, so — my recollection is the Minister said he actually didn't instruct Barbara McConaghie to change —
3592. **Mr Haire:** Yes, but I mean — I'm not saying — I mean, he was saying — but it is not that he necessarily himself said it but the point is his volition is made clear in the private office and then the system runs and does these things. That's how Departments run. That's the — [*Inaudible.*]

3593. **Mr Allister:** But it has to be conveyed to Barbara McConaghie.
3594. **Mr Haire:** Undoubtedly it has to and the question — And it doesn't seem that anybody can give us an answer how it was conveyed and I have not got —
3595. **Mr Allister:** But does that — ?
3596. **Mr Haire:** But that seems to me — I've worked in private offices for 35 years —
3597. **Mr Allister:** You have heard her evidence that, doing the best she can, she says, she assumes the instruction came either from the Minister or the special adviser.
3598. **Mr Haire:** And, presumably, the special adviser passing on the Minister's volition.
3599. **Mr Allister:** And is that what you believe happened?
3600. **Mr Haire:** I think that decisions — watching how work is done here — and everything is run past the Minister, and the Minister decides. OK?
3601. **Mr Allister:** So, do you think the chain of communication was Minister/special adviser/Barbara McConaghie?
3602. **Mr Haire:** There are, you know, it's — I can't —
3603. **The Chairperson:** I think we need to be — in fairness, I don't think we can expect Will Haire to answer —
3604. **Mr Allister:** Well, just unless he discovered something.
3605. **The Chairperson:** Yeah.
3606. **Mr Allister:** So, just to track back a little bit: the letter comes in from Turkington's. It is quite clear, on the face of the letter, who's asking for the meeting; no one can be in any doubt. Isn't that right?
3607. **Mr Haire:** The letter's from Turkington's, but clearly — and that is how officials interpreted it —
3608. **Mr Allister:** Yes.
3609. **Mr Haire:** — the process. But, there is then this pre-meeting. —
3610. **Mr Allister:** Yes.
3611. **Mr Haire:** — and you have heard Stephen's explanation of that pre-meeting.
3612. **Mr Allister:** Yes, yes, yes. But just deal with the question, if you would. The letter comes in; it would be hard to interpret it otherwise than a request from Turkington's for a meeting, and that is how Mr Sands interprets it. Isn't that right?
3613. **Mr Haire:** That's the way that Michael has interpreted it, yes.
3614. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And we now know that, having been invited to the meeting, that's how the Housing Executive interpret it. Is that right?
3615. **Mr Haire:** Well, they are advised, of course, by, I think, the team under Michael. So Michael will have passed on the message in that way. So that's why —
3616. **The Chairperson:** Or John McPeake.
3617. **Mr Haire:** So that will be how they got the message, Chair, to be unsurprising; you know, it's not surprising that they got this.
3618. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And we know that the original record of the meeting — before they're changed at the sixth revision — all are consistently saying meeting with Turkington's. Isn't that right?
3619. **Mr Haire:** That is how the meeting — you've got the record of that issue. They're not six — I mean, they're very small and minor changes; it is not as though they're six major changes —
3620. **Mr Allister:** I didn't say major.
3621. **Mr Haire:** No, I understand that. They're six iterations: some of them are at the same time, if I understand the process. There are two or three times, I think, that people go into the system to do with that process. And, clearly, it is changed, and that goes back to the question of the Minister's volition being

- clear, his understanding being clear. And, as the Minister has made clear to this Committee, as Stephen has made clear to this Committee, that's what happens and the system is changed. That's how the system runs.
3622. **Mr Allister:** Are you agreeing that the first five versions all proclaimed the meeting with Turkington's?
3623. **Mr Haire:** Ahm.
3624. **Mr Allister:** Yes or no?
3625. **Mr Haire:** Clearly, the record's there.
3626. **A Member:** Yes. I'll take that as a yes. So, you have the original letter —
3627. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim. I'm not sure whether you are indicating a doubt. Will. I think —
3628. **Mr Haire:** I just think, sorry, it's going to this issue of versions.
3629. **The Chairperson:** — it's a valid question to ask you.
3630. **Mr Haire:** The point is you are looking at the electronic system here. So, it's not as though there are five drafts which are changed. It's electronically you are looking into this. People go in and somebody changed a name of somebody — I think they've got Michael Sands's name early on — The private secretary forgot — ah, Barbara forgot, so they put that in. Now, is that a version? It's actually —
3631. **The Chairperson:** It's an iteration.
3632. **Mr Haire:** These are just — these are small issues. So, I am just saying I think it is about three times.
3633. **Mr Allister:** Do you want me to put it another way? It's not till the final version that we have any proclamation that the meeting is with the Glass and Glazing Federation.
3634. **Mr Haire:** Yes. There, it's quite clearly — That's when the Minister's —
3635. **Mr Allister:** So, the Minister is making a decree that the meeting's with the Glass and Glazing Federation, but the Department has the evidence of the letter, which speaks for itself, originally asking for the meeting. It has the senior official, quite clearly believing it's with Turkington's. It has the Housing Executive, quite clearly believing it's with Turkington's. It has the original records of the meeting, proclaiming it's with Turkington's. It has the first draft of the letter to the Chairman of this Committee, proclaiming it's with Turkington's. It has the first draft of a reply to an MLA, proclaiming it's with Turkington's. All that's correct, yes?
3636. **Mr Haire:** Those are all right, because the key point is that the key evidence issue is the understanding — my reading of what's happened here, and you will see, is the key issue is that the pre-meeting, the understanding of the pre-meeting and the understanding of the meeting itself leads the Minister to say that, quite clearly, that's it. All the things you've pointed to are pointing, in a sense, to the original letter. There's a train of thought that comes from the Turkington letter, but there is obviously the pre-meeting and the understanding that came out of that meeting which says, yes, of course they were meeting Turkington's but it is in their role as Glass and Glazing Federation. So, that's how the two things come —
3637. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Mr Haire, I think you need to be — I think, Will, with all due respect, you're straying into the versions of why someone or somebody had an understanding. For you to say who had an understanding and why they had an understanding, you're straying into being speculative there, I have to say now, and I am not allowing —
3638. **Mr Haire:** Well —
3639. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, I'm not allowing members to put speculative questions to you.
3640. **Mr Haire:** OK.
3641. **The Chairperson:** So you shouldn't be giving speculative answers, in fairness now, to the inquiry.

3642. **Mr Haire:** All I am just trying to do is explain my understanding from the evidence in the process. As I've said to you all, I was not involved in any active way in that process. So, I cannot give you any more information than that, and I'm just trying to answer Mr Allister's questions to try and explain, because he was asking why the difference here, and I was saying it was my reading of it, clearly, that the key element in this process was coming from their understanding at the pre-meeting and the understanding that the political adviser took from that and his discussions with the Minister. That's all I'm saying.

3643. **The Chairperson:** OK. Jim. I can't understand that.

3644. **Mr Allister:** Mr Haire, I'm not going to recite them again, but you know the half dozen pointers —

3645. **Mr Haire:** Yes. Yes.

3646. **Mr Allister:** — that I referred you to. Now, given that those were all within the Department's knowledge, why, in your briefing note to this Committee of 10 March, did you say:

"The meeting on 16 April 2012 was also referred to in letters from and to BBC Spotlight in June 2013. However, the Minister still believed at this time".

3647. June 2013.

"that this meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and officials were not aware of alternative evidence to indicate this was not the case."

3648. Why did you say that to us when you had a whole range of alternative evidence?

3649. **Mr Haire:** I'm talking to new — The Minister had made his decision.

3650. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but he's not entitled to his own facts.

3651. **Mr Haire:** No, no. He's taken his position, and that is the position of the Department. I'm saying that, when it came to that time, we had no additional material in front of us, on the 28th, which changed the view which we had

before that process, because, if there had been this discussion, the officials had talked originally about Turkington's and the process and this one. It had gone to the Minister. The Minister had discussed this issue and had made very clear that he, at that time, had come to this view, and that had gone into the departmental record in that process. So, what I'm saying is, on the 28th, when we came to that time, there was nothing new. What we were hearing about, but I think it only arrived in the Department on the 28th, was, and I think you've got it, the manuscript note from Declan Allen, which is his manuscript note. Now, his manuscript note, I suspect, was not too different probably from any manuscript note any other person had. He writes against the name of Iain, the name Turkington. So, it adds nothing new to what his sentence is. That is the point. But, I say, that goes back to the original. He had been briefed. He'd been asked by the Department to come to a meeting with Turkington's because that was the — So, there is nothing new. The only thing we had was a statement from the BBC at that stage.

3652. **Mr Allister:** You say —

3653. **Mr Haire:** But, the point is, our view was that that was not external evidence — the BBC coming with their view on that process. We did not have evidence. The Minister was very strongly, at that time, saying very clearly it was his belief that it was and, likewise, the political adviser. So, it was that context. We did not have that position.

3654. **Mr Allister:** Mr Haire, forgive me, but it sounds very much like what you're saying to this Committee is that, once the Minister decreed that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation, that expunged any other contrary evidence that the Department had and it was never to be referred to again. That seems to be what you're saying to us.

3655. **Mr Haire:** I'm saying that the Minister had had the stuff originally. Michael has given you the evidence that he gave to the Minister. The Minister had looked at,

- been conscious of that issue and was conscious of the other issue from what had been said by Stephen Brimstone, presumably, and had come and had taken responsibility for that decision and that process. And that was the position which we had at that stage.
3656. **Mr Allister:** But, Mr Haire, are you not under a duty within the Department not to just nod to everything the Minister says but, where you have evidence which would suggest the Minister is, in fact, factually wrong, to robustly challenge that and not to expunge that evidence, never to have it referred to again?
3657. **Mr Haire:** The Minister had had the evidence before. He had got other evidence in relation to — from his political adviser on the process, and he had come to that position. We had made sure, as a Department — By September 2012, the fact that it was both the details of that meeting, including members of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Turkington's, was in the public domain. So, that was our understanding at the time, and so the core issue, and, of course, the core evidence is when the Minister hears from Turkington's itself, from your meeting, and that is the one which clearly does give the core element at that time.
3658. **Mr Allister:** So, what you are saying to us, really, is that the Department had its own view from senior officials, which seemed to be the same view as the Housing Executive, and that all the other evidence that pointed to a particular conclusion about the meeting being with Turkington's, and the Minister decrees, "No, the meeting was with the federation", and, thereafter, that evidence that you had has got no weight whatsoever.
3659. **Mr Haire:** The key point for us was there had been a meeting. It wasn't as though the Minister had — he has a political adviser who has been at a previous meeting who comes away with a strong impression, has in fact told Barbara that it will come from the Glass and Glazing Federation in that process. I think that
- is recorded in the system. So, there is a strong element there. It is not an unreasonable position for him to —
3660. The second point, of course, which we have emphasised, the Department makes sure in this situation that exactly the same and correct process takes place in relation to the contracts. So, those are the issues. The Minister, going back to the terms of reference that you are exploring here, the misleading of the Committee takes place in May of 2012, so you are talking about issues that, after that time and that process, that had become part of the system. It actually had gone, until the 'Spotlight' programme comes up, it had kind of gone reasonably quiet in the process. It wasn't an issue in the process. That was the issue.
3661. **Mr Allister:** Tell me, Mr Haire, at what point, when the Department has evidence that points in one direction, and the Minister decrees that, in fact, the opposite is the truth, at what point does the Department failing to stand up for itself amount to cover-up for the Minister?
3662. **Mr Haire:** It's not my concern. I do not think that that is a —
3663. **The Chairperson:** OK, that's fair enough. Jim, again, I'm —
3664. **Mr Allister:** The evidence is staring you in the face.
3665. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Jim, let me just finish this, because, again, we are kind of nearly there in terms of these sessions, so, I do not expect any witness to have to again get into speculation or conjecture or interpret other people's motivations. You have a direct line of questioning there, and that is fair enough, so go ahead on that direct line of questions.
3666. **Mr Allister:** The evidence is staring you in the face. To be as neutral as I can, it is simply parked, it is removed from the scenario, because the Minister says, "No, the meeting is with the Glass and Glazing Federation", and then everyone sits back and waits. In spite of the BBC

programme, in spite of the BBC letters, in spite of all of that, everyone sits back and waits for the Minister to realise that he was wrong, when he hears from Turkington's in this Committee, and no one in the meantime has dared to say, "In fact, Minister, you are wrong about this". That is really the scenario that we are looking at.

3667. **Mr Haire:** Well, the key, from a, clearly, after the 'Spotlight' programme took place, obviously, we knew this inquiry was going to take place and would look into all these issues in great detail. Clearly, we waited for this inquiry in that process. When we saw the evidence from Turkington's, we clearly made that clear to the Minister in the situation, and that is where his decision made. Because that seems to me the core evidence of the issue, it was, but what you are asking is: "In what guise did those individuals come? What was their understanding for coming to that meeting?" The Minister never denied that Turkington's were there. I mean, it is on the record, it is in the minutes. The question is on what hat were they wearing at that time. The Minister, and the political adviser was there, repeated, very confident, and expressed very confidently that it was with a particular hat on — Glass and Glazing Federation. Clearly, when it comes from — [*Inaudible.*] — clearly that Turkington's were not in that process, and that — the Minister sees that it is that core evidence that comes that makes the Minister's decision and that's the Department did wait to that time to see what the position was.

3668. **Mr Allister:** Meanwhile, Mr Haire, you had had letters from the BBC and a major meeting on 28 June that you are at, and one of the allegations of the BBC relates to who this meeting was with. Now, particularly since the Minister was being asked to do a public interview, did no one, yourself most particularly, say to him, "Well, now, Minister, there is this issue of who the meeting on 16 April was with; you would need to be very sure of your ground before you think of doing an interview as to who you

actually met because that is a key issue highlighted in this correspondence."? Did nobody even say that or say, "Well, maybe it is time to reflect on who that was with; maybe it is time to investigate a little further."? Was everyone just so in awe of the fact that the Minister had decreed that it was with the federation that no one dared squeak about the fact that, in fact, there was evidence the other way?

3669. **Mr Haire:** By the meeting of the 28th, clearly we had had the situation in relation to 'Spotlight'. As you know, 'Spotlight' was talking about programmes for six months beforehand — you are aware of that process — but yet did not do programmes. And then, in June it comes forward and starts billing a number of other areas that it has got to do in that process. Clearly, I had taken advice from the executive information service. I had talked to Stephen Grimason. My press officer had been heavily involved. We had talked to 'Spotlight' at the time to try to get some understanding of the meetings in that process.

3670. Clearly, we were looking at that question and deciding whether it was sensible. If they were going to do a programme, how did we get the Minister's position on the record? The meetings took place were to try and decide how to do that, whether you actually offered an interview or whether you made sure that the Minister's letters — his position was put there in letters, and that is usually the correspondence that takes place. We have various meetings at different times. Different letters come in, and they cross over each other a bit as takes place at that time, and that is the correspondence that takes place. The key point of which was not — I don't think there was concluded — it was very unlikely that an interview would be appropriate, but what is very important is that the Minister — and the Minister felt very strongly and was very intrepid that his firm belief should be put on the record, and, as you know from the programme, in fact, is the letters were successful in getting the

- BBC to recognise that that is what his thoughts were. So, it was a carefully thought-through process of trying to get on the record the Minister's position. Those letters are a faithful way of demonstrating that process, and that is what we are involved in.
3671. **Mr Allister:** And you, at the 28 June meeting, no pause to reflect on whether it was sustainable to say whether the meeting was with the federation back in April, given that the Housing Executive had obviously been asked by the BBC who they thought the meeting was with, and there was a great flurry, if not a panic, to find out what their FOI material contained. No reflection on the fact, "Well, Minister, bearing in mind the evidence we originally had, which we buried once you decreed it was with the federation, we need to be sure of our ground here." No discussion like that whatsoever.
3672. **Mr Haire:** The Minister is very clear on his position at that time and the meeting —
3673. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Will.
3674. **Mr Clarke:** They didn't "bury" anything.
3675. **The Chairperson:** I don't want — again, Jim, using language like "buried" information and so on like that is not acceptable.
3676. **Mr Allister:** Ignored.
3677. **The Chairperson:** Well, don't use it. Will.
3678. **Mr Haire:** The Minister was very clear on his position, and that was the position that we were representing on behalf of the Minister.
3679. **Mr Allister:** So, whatever the Minister said, you, as permanent secretary, simply accepted because the Minister could not be wrong.
3680. **Mr Haire:** Do I have to — I mean I —
3681. **Mr Allister:** Isn't that what it amounts to, Mr Haire?
3682. **The Chairperson:** Well, in fairness, Will, it is a question because it goes to the heart of, if you have an understanding of one set of evidence and the Minister has another understanding, do you take issue with the Minister on that or anyone else for that matter? But, I mean, you clearly have evidence; the Minister has a different understanding. Given the importance of these issues, we're asking, "What is your role in that?"
3683. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, what's the difference, you're saying, between myself and the Minister.
3684. **The Chairperson:** Well, the evidence would say, because there's a list of evidence that you had at your disposal for the meeting on the 28th, for example, including the letters Barbara McConaghie forwarded on from Turkington's, so everything was all pointing to Turkington's, and everyone has accepted, to this moment, including the Minister who came here and advised the Committee that he inadvertently misled the Committee. So, everyone accepts that the meeting was with Turkington's. All the evidence, electronic, and so on and so forth, and Jim outlined some of them earlier on, points at Turkington's. We're saying what we can't get our head into is that the Minister eventually, you used the term, maybe it was the Minister's volition to say it was Glass and Glazing Federation, but all the evidence is to the contrary. So, where is your role in that?
3685. **Mr Haire:** I am sorry, I don't think — I'm saying is there's all the — the Minister — that had been discussed a year before in a process. Michael — in a process — and the Minister had made clear his understanding of what it was the meeting — including in the light of the previous — and therefore that had gone into the departmental record, and that was the understanding, and that was the position of that one. That was from the May 2012 changes. That has gone into the system, right. And that was, and I say, I'd personally had not been involved in any other, you know — that's when it came into my sort of consciousness that that's where that was, you know — because I wasn't close to it at this stage. So, I knew that that had been debated out,

- and that's how it stood. And that's a process. So, when it came a year later towards the issues here, and this came up in June, that was the departmental understanding, because the Minister — that was the clear understanding from the private office what the meeting was around. That's how they understood the hats, as it were, of the people walking into the room were wearing. Right. And, that was certainly the position which we understood.
3686. And, I am not saying, and, you know — Michael Sands and other people at the meetings who were at these pre-meetings, and were preparing drafts, they were preparing the drafts of these letters and that process. That's what's coming up in the process. Right. So, there was not — I don't see the difference, as I say, between the Department and others. I'm saying, by this time, that's how it got — the Minister's position was clear.
3687. **The Chairperson:** We want to let Mr Allister finish his line of questioning.
3688. **Mr Allister:** Could I just suggest to you, the Minister got it wrong? He said that. Right. Now —
3689. **Mr Haire:** He —
3690. **Mr Allister:** Isn't that right?
3691. **Mr Haire:** He accepts and allows that issue that clearly —
3692. **Mr Allister:** — he got it wrong.
3693. **Mr Haire:** He got it wrong.
3694. **Mr Allister:** So, you are the head of the Department which sat back. Once he'd made the decree that the meeting was with the federation and did nothing to challenge, to check, to recheck any of that, even when you get letters from the BBC making those very strong assertions. Now, do you think the Department failed in simply rolling over and accepting the Minister's decree, which, ultimately, turns out to be false?
3695. **Mr Haire:** The Minister and his political adviser had been at the special — at the pre-meeting of that, which sets the nature of the engagement at that meeting. So, you had somebody, you know, saying that as part of the process, and they are feeding that into the system and same process. How do other officials — you know, that's, you make a judgement that calls, and that was the situation where the officials judged on that process.
3696. **Mr Allister:** What's the pre-meeting you're talking about?
3697. **Mr Haire:** There was a pre-meeting, if I understand rightly, between — I mean, it's been referred to. Stephen Brimstone —
3698. **Mr Allister:** But you tell us.
3699. **Mr Haire:** Stephen Brimstone met the people from Turkington's in the Radisson —
3700. **The Chairperson:** Radisson hotel —
3701. **Mr Haire:** That's the meeting which Stephen comes saying, "This meeting is going to be a Glass and Glazing Federation".
3702. **Mr Allister:** But you were sitting with a letter from Turkington's saying, "I, the general manager, would like to meet you to talk to you about my company and our view and all of that".
3703. **Mr Haire:** My officials saw that meeting but they — when Stephen and the Minister — they said, "Well, that must be an understanding".
3704. **Mr Allister:** The Minister wasn't at the January meeting.
3705. **Mr Haire:** When you hear that Stephen, even when he looks at the letter again, says that still —
3706. **Mr Allister:** The Minister wasn't at the January meeting.
3707. **Mr Haire:** No, I'm not saying — I am saying that when Stephen — it was clearly the understanding, and Stephen, even when he sees the meeting this time, he still believes very much, he is adamant, about the meeting still being —

3708. **Mr Allister:** I'm going to ask you one last time. Do you think that given that the Minister got it wrong, and given that the Department acquiesced for, what, 18 months, of it being wrong, do you think you served the public interest by not challenging and relying upon and raising the evidence that you had that he was wrong?
3709. **Mr Haire:** I, personally, was not aware of the nature of this problem until much later in the process that there was this — I knew I had trusted officials who saw this issue and made a judgement at that time, and I trust those officials made the judgement in that way.
3710. **The Chairperson:** Could I — Is that you — Have you finished there, Jim?
3711. **Mr Allister:** I just had one last answer. Did you get a letter from the BBC?
3712. **Mr Haire:** I got letters from BBC, yes. It is referred to — well, it is references to — it is a different issue, which came up in relation to the former chair of the Housing Executive. It is referred to in the 'Spotlight' report, and they also put my comment on that. So that was the only issue. So it's a different issue.
3713. **The Chairperson:** Well if I could draw your attention to tab 14 actually, and it's a response from you to Turkington's. The response was [*Inaudible.*] Barbara McConaghie is actually responding to Ian McKeown who wrote on behalf Turkington Holdings.
3714. **Mr Allister:** Which tab are we at?
3715. **The Chairperson:** The back end of tab 14.
3716. **Mr Copeland:** And 29 February, yeah?
3717. **The Chairperson:** You're on 27 February.
3718. **Mr Haire:** Yes. This one here.
3719. **The Chairperson:** You're in that, permanent secretary, and Nelson McCausland. 27 February, the letter from Susan McCartney.
3720. **Mr Haire:** Yes, that was because that was the time Stephen was off, so I would've just put this through to the Minister for clearance.
3721. **The Chairperson:** It shows you that you had sight of the —
3722. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, I mean, undoubtedly. I mean I knew that there was an agreed meeting to go ahead. I will readily admit I likely cleared that. It is my job to clear those sort of issues, but I have no recollection any more of being involved in the meeting other than just saying —
3723. **The Chairperson:** Yeah, but that's our problem, you see, because you're saying you cleared it, and you're now saying that you can't remember what it was, or do you remember? I mean —
3724. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, you know, sorry, you know, I —
3725. **The Chairperson:** The issue here was, were you aware that the letter came in, a request came in from Turkington's?
3726. **Mr Haire:** Yeah, the answer is —
3727. **The Chairperson:** You cleared it.
3728. **Mr Haire:** Undoubtedly I cleared the process, but, I mean, sorry, by the time the meeting takes place and the debate in May, I am out of the picture on that one, and I am not aware of what's going on in this debate. I mean I only see it when it is Turkington's at this stage, and I will readily admit I can't remember. I would clear, in his absence, I would've cleared — as well as all my work and the Department's work, I was just checking these things going through the Minister, but I would not have a detailed knowledge.
3729. **The Chairperson:** The reason why I would press that is because, again, that it goes back to the issue for us is that — and we are trying to square this circle — that, as you said, the Minister ultimately then makes a decision that the letter, or that the meeting, was with Turkington's Holdings. What I'm presenting to you is a set, a sequence of evidence, which Jim has already done, and a few other Members done it previously. Now, which would be to the contrary, which shows that the

- meeting was not with Glass and Glazing Federation but with Turkington's.
3730. **What I want to put to you directly, Will, is this:** on the last day when you were here, I asked you the last day when you were giving evidence, could you account for how — you were actually in this room when Michael Sands gave evidence, which was subsequently proven to be incorrect. Maybe that is not his evidence, but there was a contradiction in the evidence presented by Michael Sands and others around the meeting on 16 April, which was sitting about on 20-odds of May to this Committee. The difficulty for me in this is that, you, in your response the last time round, said you were aware, I put it to you, that you were aware, when Michael Sands was giving his evidence, that there was a conflict in actual what happened. You referred to the TRIM system and what have you. Your response at that meeting, in your last evidence, was that you were waiting, because I asked you, at what point, if you were aware that there was incorrect evidence being given to this inquiry because of evidence and information sitting in the Department's disposal, at what point would you bring that to the attention of this inquiry. You told us on that occasion you were expecting Michael Sands would deal with that when he returned to the inquiry. In saying that, I also did point out to you on that occasion, if I remember correctly, because you'd made us aware that Michael Sands wouldn't be at that next session because he was off ill. My problem here is that, notwithstanding the list of evidence that there is which proves that the meeting was with Turkington's, up until very, very recently — in fact, until the Minister actually says, "I got it wrong" — the Department was prepared to accept that, even though all of the evidence pointed to the contrary. I put this question to you in my opening remarks: as the permanent secretary, do you not see that that is an absolutely unacceptable situation?
3731. **Mr Haire:** Michael is not back here to give his evidence, being seriously ill —
3732. **The Chairperson:** But you're aware the evidence is there, so leaving Michael out of it —
3733. **Mr Haire:** But, I mean Michael is very central, because he is, in a sense, my person who has been dealing most closely with the issue here. You will readily understand, as the biggest Department in this process, I rely on a lot of people to do the detailed work I cannot get into. So, I would like to hear Michael on this position here. But what I am saying is, looking at this process, clearly there was a situation here where there was a letter came in and was processed. There was obviously a pre-meeting in the Radisson about this question, and you're going to get more evidence as you — Out of that, Stephen Brimstone, as he has made evident to this Committee, came with a very clear impression of what the process was. The Minister, when he goes into the meeting — and I don't know the pre-discussions the two of them had — but he likewise comes and says, "No, I was meeting them in that guise". Clearly, as I say, the record indicates that that decision is made in that process, and Michael makes his comments about this issue and the process. But I have Michael and other people saying, "Well, fair enough, that's the judgement they accept in that process". That's the judgement call, and I rely on those officials, and I think they are good people who make good judgements of what is appropriate for officials to do. So, that's all I can say.
3734. **The Chairperson:** My final point: so, if someone's making a wrong assertion, you're not going to correct that if you think, ultimately, they've made that decision.
3735. **Mr Haire:** I think these people are well able to judge, and if I haven't got evidence to the contrary. I have to back that Michael had made the right call at that time.
3736. **The Chairperson:** OK; thank you.
3737. **Mr Haire:** OK.
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3738. **Mr Clarke:** Just finally, in terms of the meeting — and I just want to get your thoughts on this one— and I can understand to a degree in terms of the question comes, once the report has got to a certain stage. But I presume you're not across the level of detail of each and every one of the meetings the Ministers have.
3739. **Mr Haire:** Certainly, no. I can't be.
3740. **Mr Clarke:** I presume that. But in terms of — so, whether it had have been from the Glass and Glazing Federation or Turkington's, but if it had been recorded as Glass and Glazing Federation and it had turned out to be Glass and Glazing Federation, or if it had have been Turkington's and it continued to be Turkington's, what do you see the net effect to the Department?
3741. **Mr Haire:** I mean, if this had been a non-issue, it would've been Turkington's and nobody had raised the question around that, it would be much easier for us in that process. But the answer is, in terms of process, no difference. I mean that was the big issue for myself, as my notes indicated, was, I kept on saying to people, "Make sure; I want to make sure", and this was because the Red Sky issue and all those issues, "Make sure everybody's clear that contracts are done by the Housing Executive, the Department's very careful limits in the process what is it and that this was".
3742. **Mr Clarke:** And if this meeting had have been recorded as Turkington's, and the meeting took place with Turkington's, what difference would that have made to the Department?
3743. **Mr Haire:** None at all.
3744. **Mr Clarke:** None at all. OK.
3745. **The Chairperson:** OK, Trevor. Thank you for that. Fra McCann.
3746. **Mr F McCann:** Just one point. If it made no difference whether it was Turkington's or the Glass and Glazing factory — or, Federation — why are people going to so many lengths to try to say that it wasn't?
3747. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, and the answer is, I can only assume, is because they felt that was what it was with was the Glass and Glazing Federation, because I think — I presume — it's because that's what they felt it was. I mean, especially since, publicly, they're very quickly saying, explaining that the Glass and Glazing Federation it was Turkington's in the process.
3748. **The Chairperson:** Don't enter into speculation of other people's —
3749. **Mr Haire:** I am just saying; I have been asked to speculate. I'm just saying — a good point; I shouldn't. OK?
3750. **Mr Clarke:** Sorry, Chairman. You're — and I'm not asking you to speculate, but it's on the record today in terms of what BBC have said in relation to that. There was a summary. I think Stephen possibly read it today. I'm not sure if it was Stephen or the Minister. Your impression of what BBC had — I mean, have we got a copy of that, where they said that they could see — what was the bit where they —
3751. **Mr Haire:** Yes, they have the transcript there.
3752. **Mr Clarke:** Can we just get a copy of that again a second?
3753. **Mr Copeland:** See where the Minister might have thought, possibly.
3754. **Mr Clarke:** Yeah, I think that is the words, can you see where the Minister may have thought. Can you understand why the BBC would have thought —
3755. **The Chairperson:** Is the reference where some of the programme-makers or presenters said it is possible the Minister may have thought —
3756. **Mr Clarke:** Can you see where BBC could have drawn the conclusion that it may have been possible for the Minister to think it was the Glass and Glazing Federation?
3757. **Mr Haire:** I think it is because the Minister had made very clear in his letters of 28, 26, 27 exactly his views

- and made — I think the BBC had accepted that point.
3758. **Mr Clarke:** Can we read that into the record again just, Chairman. That paragraph.
3759. **The Chairperson:**
- “It is possible Mr McCausland thought that they may have been Turkington’s or there as representatives of the federation. Housing Executive has told”.*
3760. **Mr Clarke:** So, that’s his words. That’s BBC’s words.
3761. **The Chairperson:** Yeah, but there is more than that.
3762. **Mr Allister:** You should hear it all.
3763. **Mr Clarke:** It is not like you to want to hear it all, Jim.
3764. **The Chairperson:** I’m only just going — I’ll only read the paragraph, or the full sentence or whatever, but:
- “It’s possible Mr McCausland thought that they men from Turkington’s or there as representatives of the federation, but the Housing Executive has told us that their two officials who attended the meeting were not aware that the men from Turkington’s were representing Glass and Glazing Federation. What is even harder to understand is why Nelson McCausland changed the draft letter to say he also met Fusion 21”*
3765. I can continue, but —
3766. **Mr Clarke:** No, I think it’s important. The opening part of the paragraph was —
3767. **The Chairperson:** But if you want to pick — I am only making the point, if you want —
3768. **Mr Clarke:** Well, others picked portions and paragraphs because it suits their arguments, right Jim.
3769. **The Chairperson:** Fair enough, yeah, but you asked for it to be read out. I am only finishing to the full stop. That’s all I’m doing.
3770. **Mr Clarke:** That’s right.
3771. **The Chairperson:** No, I mean, Trevor, you’ve obviously put your point and all; that’s fair enough.
3772. **Mr Clarke:** Yeah, I’m happy.
3773. **The Chairperson:** OK, well, just to make the point, then, that really what I’m putting to yourself, and this is just my final remarks, is that there is a raft of evidence, written, email, verbal, oral evidence, which points out to the meeting with Turkington’s, and all I’m suggesting to you that we’re being asked to accept from yourself, and, indeed, others, that, notwithstanding all of that, that people jumped to an understanding or took on board an understanding that Turkington’s were representing someone else. That’s at the core of the Committee being misled. That’s the allegation, and I’m asking you then — and I’ve asked you before, but I’m not going to labour it again — you know, at what point would you have actually tried to convince those people who were making those assertions that they were actually incorrect? Do you understand or do you accept that there was a different version?
3774. **Mr Haire:** Clearly, the point was, when we had the Turkington — sorry, the Turkington evidence to your Committee came through and we had, from the voice of Turkington’s themselves, their position of it. When that came through, that was clearly — this went to the Minister and the Minister looked at that material, and that’s where the Minister changed the position.
3775. **The Chairperson:** And is that where you changed your position?
3776. **Mr Haire:** Sorry, that was the key evidence, that process, yeah.
3777. **The Chairperson:** OK. Is there any other comments, Will, that you want to make before you — OK, no other members asking to speak. OK, so, Will Haire, thank you very much for your evidence here this afternoon.
-

3 April 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Alex Maskey (Chairperson)
 Mr Jim Allister
 Ms Paula Bradley
 Mr Trevor Clarke
 Mr Michael Copeland
 Mr Fra McCann

Witnesses:

Mr Jim McKeag	<i>Managing Director, Turkington Holdings Limited</i>
Mr Ian Young	<i>Former Divisional Manager, Turkington Holdings Limited</i>

Please note that this is a fully verbatim Official (Hansard) Report of evidence given under oath or affirmation.

3778. **The Chairperson:** OK gentlemen, could I formally welcome you to this meeting this afternoon. I'm sorry for the delay of the business today. I'm sure you're very busy men. You've a lot of work to be doing, so I do apologise on behalf of the Committee for keeping you as long today.

3779. Again, as you know, you've been requested to attend this session of the inquiry this afternoon just in respect of some evidence. Just to outline, the Committee's position has been that, when we receive evidence, we will review that evidence. If there is any kind of disparity or lack of clarity in terms of any evidence coming from different witnesses, then we would invite those witnesses back and request and require them to take an oath or an affirmation. That makes no judgement on the veracity or otherwise of anyone's evidence. It just simply means that, if we are faced with different evidence, or perhaps potentially conflicting evidence, then we are duty-bound to probe

that further. We make no judgement whatsoever on anyone.

3780. I do appreciate that yourselves are a private company. You're involved in business, and you have your own reputation at stake. I've made it very clear here in the earlier session that the whole question of party affiliation, donation and all the rest of it, that's completely, totally and utterly legitimate. It's no — there's no aspersions being cast on anyone in regard to that. I can assure you of that on behalf of this particular Committee. So, if that's been cast out in any media reflection, then it's unwarranted, as far as I'm concerned, for this inquiry. And nobody around this room — even though members may enquire, because sometimes there is a question over relationships and so on — but there is no one in this inquiry, certainly when I'm chairing it, will be making any allegations against your company, or anybody else for that matter, for any inappropriate behaviour.

3781. This inquiry is statutory based. We have very clear rules for procedural fairness. We want to treat every witness equally and fairly, and we are trying our very, very best to do that. And, again, this afternoon, I hope that you feel that your evidence and yourselves will be respected as witnesses here. We are taking your professional integrity as a given. There are obviously members who will wish to ask a number of questions. So, hopefully, we can deal with that.

3782. Obviously, as I have said earlier on, people, when they're recalled back again, are asked or have been asked to take an oath or make an affirmation. I think I understand you've — you're happy to take an oath. Is that correct, gentlemen?

3783. **Mr Jim McKeag (J. H. Turkington & Sons):** Yes.

3784. **Mr Ian Young (J. H. Turkington & Sons):** Yes. were representing Turkington Holdings company. Is that a fair assessment?
3785. **The Chairperson:** On that basis, could I then ask the Clerk to bring that oath just round to you, and if you could read that onto the record?
3786. **Mr McKeag:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
3787. **Mr Young:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be truthful and honest, and that I will give the Committee all such information and assistance as I can to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
3788. **The Chairperson:** Could I thank you both, Mr McKeag and Mr Young, for being here this afternoon formally, and again apologise for the delay in getting to your particular evidence session? Thank you for taking the oath on the record.
3789. I presume this will be simple enough. I'm not sure if any members indicated yet to speak on this or to ask any questions. Michael and Jim. It's just then, if I could just — Again, for me, the essential core element of all this is that, as you know, there has been, for whatever reason, an issue around who attended the meeting and on whose behalf yourselves, for example, attended the meeting with the Minister on, I think, 16 April. There was a previous meeting with the special adviser at the Radisson hotel.
3790. Could I just ask yourselves, just because you're here now under oath this afternoon in terms of this particular session of evidence — it's really just a repeat of the earlier; I mean, I think you've already provided the answer, but I'm just asking again on the record today. In your evidence, you made it very clear that no one could have been under any misapprehension as to the status of the meetings. In other words, that when you attended the meetings, you
3791. **Mr Young:** That's right.
3792. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
3793. **The Chairperson:** And that's the key kind of question that I just wanted to ask. Michael.
3794. **Mr Copeland:** Thanks, Chair. With your indulgence, there's a paper trail for quite a lot of this, but it all seems to start with the pre-meeting. And there's no way that you feel anyone at the pre-meeting in the Radisson could have left with any impression other than that this was to be a meeting with Turkington's?
3795. **Mr McKeag:** I wasn't at the pre-meeting.
3796. **Mr Young:** No, definitely not. No.
3797. **Mr Copeland:** OK.
3798. **The Chairperson:** OK, Michael? Jim Allister.
3799. **Mr Allister:** Just in terms of that meeting in the Radisson, it was just you, Mr Turkington, and Mr Brimstone?
3800. **Mr Young:** That's right, yeah.
3801. **Mr Allister:** Were any notes taken by anyone at that meeting?
3802. **Mr Young:** I don't think so, no.
3803. **Mr Allister:** So, just so as we get the picture, is it a meeting in a private room in the Radisson or in the lobby of the Radisson or —
3804. **Mr Young:** In the coffee shop.
3805. **Mr Allister:** In the coffee shop. And it's over a cup of coffee, presumably —
3806. **Mr Young:** Yes.
3807. **Mr Allister:** — three of you chatting. What sort of duration had that meeting, if you can help us?
3808. **Mr Young:** Thirty minutes, 45 minutes.
3809. **Mr Allister:** Just remind us, I think you did tell us previously, but just remind us how that meeting came about.

3810. **Mr Young:** I think there was a couple of things that we wanted to get resolved whatever, and Trevor suggested having the meeting with — it was arranged by Trevor's PA to meet Stephen Brimstone then.
3811. **Mr Allister:** Yes. And you hadn't previously yourself met Mr Brimstone, is that right?
3812. **Mr Young:** No, I'd never met him.
3813. **Mr McKeag:** I think it came from — was it the last time he came from a 2007 meeting to do with water sports?
3814. **Mr Allister:** From DCAL days.
3815. **Mr McKeag:** Yeah.
3816. **Mr Allister:** So, you've already said to Mr Copeland nobody could've left that 30-minute discussion thinking that you were asking for a meeting for — on anyone's behalf but yourselves. Isn't that right?
3817. **Mr Young:** No, I was representing Turkington's at that meeting.
3818. **Mr Allister:** And the idea of then meeting the Minister, who did that come from?
3819. **Mr Young:** The idea of the first meeting was to try and get a meeting with the Minister.
3820. **Mr Allister:** With the Minister. So Mr Brimstone was meeting you as a preliminary.
3821. **Mr Young:** Yeah, to try and see how what was the best way of going about —
3822. **Mr Allister:** Yes, and then after that you write a letter —
3823. **Mr Young:** Yeah
3824. **Mr Allister:** — on behalf of Turkington's, specifically asking for the meeting.
3825. Mr Brimstone has told us he was surprised that that letter came on your letterhead asking for a meeting as Turkington's; he expected it to be asking for a meeting as Glass and Glazing Federation representatives.
- You're quite clear in your evidence to us there's nothing said in the coffee shop or elsewhere that could've given rise to that expectation.
3826. **Mr Young:** We did talk about Glass and Glazing Federation standards and specifications, and I was a previous chair —
3827. **Mr Allister:** Beyond that.
3828. **Mr Young:** Beyond that? No.
3829. **Mr Allister:** Just when you are here, arising from something that came up this morning. You were, am I right, I just want to make absolutely sure about this, at the material time, you were a subcontractor to Mascott? Is that right?
3830. **Mr Young:** Yes.
3831. **Mr Allister:** And Mascot had a Housing Executive contract.
3832. **Mr Young:** That's right, yeah.
3833. **Mr Allister:** If, in the process of a contract with the Housing Executive, a contractor comes up with a good idea, which saves everyone money, is there any incentivisation, reward or benefit from that to the contractor?
3834. **Mr McKeag:** We wouldn't be privy to the main contract between Mascott and the Housing Executive. We would have a subcontract.
3835. **Mr Allister:** Yes, but from your experience of contract work, is an incentivisation clause — or maybe that's not the right phrase — is that a common feature or not?
3836. **Mr Young:** I wouldn't think so, no.
3837. **Mr Allister:** And you don't know in this Mascott contract whether there was any incentivisation clause.
3838. **Mr McKeag:** We haven't done work for the Housing Executive for a long time; I think I said in the last meeting.
3839. **Mr Allister:** And there was no such clause in your subcontract?
3840. **Mr McKeag:** I wouldn't know.

3841. **Mr Young:** No, there wasn't, no.
3842. **Mr Allister:** You wouldn't know?
3843. **Mr McKeag:** I wouldn't know.
3844. **Mr Young:** There would be different rates for different — obviously, you have a rate for a window and a rate for doing other things, you know, so. It is all done on a bill of quantities. There'd be no incentivisation to save money, if that's what you mean.
3845. **Mr McKeag:** I have to say, if I was the main contractor and there was such a clause, I wouldn't be inclined to pass it on to a subcontractor, to be honest.
3846. **Mr Allister:** Yes, well I can understand that.
3847. **The Chairperson:** OK?
3848. **Mr Allister:** OK, thanks.
3849. **Mr Clarke:** Yeah, because it's been so long since you've been here — in terms of the purpose of the meeting then, can we just remind everyone how much we're talking about saving the executive at that meeting?
3850. **Mr McKeag:** Well, the original housing stock was about 50,000 houses and, based on that, it would've been £19/£20 million. During the course of our work, I think that housing stock came down at 30,000 houses, which would have brought the overall saving down to maybe £12,000/£13,000, £12/£13 million.
3851. **Mr Clarke:** And prior to the meeting that you had with the Minister, you would've been carrying out the double glazing on behalf of the subcontractor Mascott.
3852. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
3853. **Mr Young:** Yeah.
3854. **Mr Clarke:** So after the contract was stopped, were you successful in getting that work back?
3855. **Mr Young:** No.
3856. **Mr Clarke:** You were unsuccessful.
3857. **Mr Young:** That's right, yeah.
3858. **Mr Clarke:** So it would be fair to draw from that conclusion, again, that your — I mean, we'll call it an interference; a useful interference in terms of Northern Ireland plc — your useful interference actually cost your company money because actually the contract was brought to an end?
3859. **Mr McKeag:** Well the contract was retendered, and we tendered for it, but we weren't successful. Our contract with Mascott is just now coming to an end, and we've no future orders through Mascott or the Housing Executive or any other contractor associated with the Housing Executive.
3860. **Mr Clarke:** So it would be fair for me to assume also then other companies who are in the same position as yourselves in the future, where they see an opportunity to save money, will be slow at coming forward.
3861. **Mr McKeag:** Well, you know, in all of this, I think that point has been lost. I mean, we did our duty, the savings were recognized, and we got no credit for it whatsoever.
3862. **Mr Clarke:** When you say you got no credit, you no financial gain whatsoever.
3863. **Mr McKeag:** Well, I don't even mean monetary credit; I mean, just, you know, a slap on the back, "Well done guys". Certainly no monetary benefit whatsoever.
3864. **Mr Clarke:** And I think you're right; I think that has been lost. I mean there's been much focus on whether it was Turkington's or Glass and Glazing Federation. To me and, I think, any right-thinking person out there — others may have their own agendas in this particular inquiry — but for me — I don't know if you'd agree or disagree — what has been lost and what the public should be interested in is that you come forward with a very reasonable idea, the Minister, in turn, gave it to, we'll call them, experts within the Department to look at that idea, and have now since rolled that out, and because you've done that, youse have lost out. So, any right-thinking person would say the course

- of events — whether it was Glass and Glazing Federation, Turkington's or anyone else — the course of action taken in relation to the meeting was useful in terms of savings to Northern Ireland, but wasn't very useful to whoever the company may be who would come forward in the past or in the future.
3865. **Mr Young:** Yeah.
3866. **The Chairperson:** It's entirely —
3867. **Mr Clarke:** Well, you know —
3868. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, gentlemen. It's entirely an opinion.
3869. **Mr Clarke:** It is, yeah.
3870. **The Chairperson:** And you hold that, Trevor. That's not a problem, but, I mean, automatically, you're going to get other members who'll want to put counter — I'm not going to allow this to go on much longer.
3871. Sorry, gentlemen, you wanted to respond there. What I'm saying is that I don't want to be getting into — because all these things will be evaluated in due course — and I don't want it accepted that, because you came forward with an idea, somehow or other, you were penalised either. So, I don't know whether that's been said or not, but it's not really a purpose here. But, the point I'm making — I'm giving a wee bit of latitude, so do you want to respond to that?
3872. **Mr Young:** I was just going to say in the new tender, the way of fitting a window was included, so by that, I had to fit the GGF standards and all that sort of thing, so —
3873. **Mr McKeag:** Our proposal for fitting the windows was taken on board at that stage in the new tender.
3874. **Mr Young:** In the new tender.
3875. **Mr Clarke:** So, really, what you're saying, on the back of the other tender stopped while this was being looked at on the basis of the new tender going out, the discussions you had in terms of the identified savings was rolled out in terms of the new tender.
3876. **Mr McKeag:** It was incorporated in the new tender.
3877. **Mr Clarke:** Thank you. So, I mean, it wouldn't be hard to draw a conclusion from that.
3878. **Mr Allister:** Just to be clear: you completed your contract — your subcontract — with Mascott.
3879. **Mr McKeag:** Just about to. We're still working, finishing it.
3880. **Mr Allister:** Yes, you're still working on that. So, you didn't lose that?
3881. **Mr McKeag:** No.
3882. **Mr Allister:** No. What you lost was something you never had; namely, you tendered on the planned maintenance contract and weren't successful.
3883. **Mr McKeag:** Yes.
3884. **Mr Young:** You take your chances.
3885. **Mr Allister:** And that's how commercial life works.
3886. **The Chairperson:** OK. Fra McCann to make a final point.
3887. **Mr F McCann:** Chair, I am just trying to work it out. When you apply for a contract, how long does the period of contract last?
3888. **Mr Young:** Contract, five years. The first contract was five years. I think the next one was —
3889. **Mr F McCann:** So, the savings would've been over a five-year period.
3890. **Mr Young:** It would be until all the houses are done.
3891. **Mr F McCann:** If it took — how long would it normally take?
3892. **Mr Young:** Well, I think the new contract has to finish in April 2015, I think, but it may be extended.
3893. **Mr F McCann:** It would've been over that period of time. Could you tell us

- the vast majority of the savings, was that not down to doing away with redecoration grants?
3894. **Mr Young:** Yes. Well, half of it.
3895. **Mr F McCann:** That's fine.
3896. **The Chairperson:** OK. Trevor, go ahead.
3897. **Mr Clarke:** Can I come back in on that?
3898. **The Chairperson:** Yeah, go ahead.
3899. **Mr Clarke:** In terms of that, I mean, and whilst I take the point that the previous member has made about the redecoration, but is it not because of the fitment that there's no necessity to redecorate?
3900. **Mr Young:** Yes.
3901. **Mr McKeag:** That's right, yeah.
3902. **Mr Clarke:** So, really, we're not in the business of just because we're doing works — I presume — just because we're doing works that someone should get a redecoration. It would be on the basis of damage caused to the property in terms of the former way of installing windows.
3903. **Mr McKeag:** That's exactly right.
3904. **Mr Clarke:** So, you wouldn't automatically assume, just because you've found another way — I am sure that the member is not suggesting that if we found another way to do things, we should be rewarding people who are redecorating houses.
3905. **Mr F McCann:** I am saying we are still —
3906. **The Chairperson:** Sorry, Fra, let's not have cross-arguments about redecoration grants. Are you finished there, Trevor?
3907. **Mr Clarke:** Yes.
3908. **The Chairperson:** Do you want to make a final point, Michael?
3909. **Mr Copeland:** It is just on the issue of the savings. When you had projected how much money could be saved and that total was arrived at, was that on the basis of the payment of no redecoration grants, a reduction in the level or substituting public liability insurance claims for redecoration grants?
3910. **Mr Young:** No, the savings were just due to the plastering. There's no plastering required, and then the redecoration grants would be the other part of it — you don't need to do it out.
3911. **Mr Copeland:** In other words, the removal of the wet trades?
3912. **Mr McKeag:** The savings were in the physical works. We had less work to do than a redecoration.
3913. **Mr Copeland:** OK.
3914. **The Chairperson:** OK, members. Thank you, gentlemen. No other members are indicating to ask any more questions. Are there any final remarks you want to make before we conclude this particular session?
3915. **Mr McKeag:** No.
3916. **Mr Young:** No.
3917. **The Chairperson:** Are you happy enough? Can I thank yourselves again, just to stress, for your patience for being here today for this inquiry. I know you had issues around coming here, given the publicity attached to this and all the rest of it. I can only apologise for any of that, and can I just formally thank both of you and your company for attending the evidence session here again this afternoon? Thank you very much.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 3

Written Submissions

Briefing Paper Dept and NIHE 14 Nov



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Dr Kevin Pelan
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11 November 2013

Dear Kevin

Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety relating to NIHE managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions

As part of the above Inquiry, the Committee has requested oral evidence on 14 November 2013 from Departmental officials and Northern Ireland Housing Executive officials who attended a meeting on 16 April 2012. In advance of the Inquiry meeting, the Committee has requested that officials provide a short written briefing on their understanding of which organisation/organisations they were meeting on 16 April 2012, what they understood the meeting was to be about, their role in attending and any other information that is relevant to the issue.

The following officials will attend the Inquiry meeting:

- Michael Sands – Deputy Director, Housing Division, DSD
- John McPeake – Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Declan Allen – Head of Procurement, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Written briefing in advance of the meeting from the three officials attending on 14 November 2013 is attached at Annex A.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

SUSAN McCARTY

Annex A

Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013 - oral evidence session from Department officials to be held at 2.30pm Thursday 14 November 2013, in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The officials are asked to provide a short briefing to the Committee of their understanding of which organisation/organisations they were meeting on 16 April 2012, what they understood the meeting was to be about, their role in attending and any other information that is relevant to this issue.

DSD official – Michael Sands, Deputy Director of Housing

Their understanding of which organisation/organisations they were meeting on 16 April 2012.

I was aware that the Minister received a letter dated 2 February 2012 from Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings in connection with the Programme for Government target to install double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015 and that a meeting was to be arranged.

I was further advised that the meeting was arranged for 16 April 2012 and that Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings would be attending the meeting and that Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive, would also attend.

What they understood the meeting was to be about.

I understood that the meeting was related to the Programme for Government target to install double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015. The draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-15 was published for consultation on 17 November 2011 and the Minister had also issued a press statement on 17 November 2011 advising of his Department's PfG priorities which included double glazing for all Housing Executive properties.

Mr Young had advised in his letter that he felt that the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers could assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. He advised in his letter that this particular scheme promised great potential if executed properly but urged caution that if the scheme was not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost

Mr Young stated that Turkington Holdings had been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturer and installers in larger replacement contracts and were also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). He advised that with their experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (the GGF) they have a lot to offer the Department and the Housing Executive and would see value in a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.

Their role in attending.

I attended the meeting as the appropriate official from Housing Division, Department for Social Development. My role was to listen to the discussion and if necessary or relevant to take forward any actions that the Minister may require from his departmental officials.

Any other information that is relevant to this issue.

Immediately following the meeting I asked the Division's Housing Advisory Unit, Professional Staff, to research the Glass and Glazing Federation Guidelines and compare these guidelines against the current NIHE specification for window replacements, as at the meeting we had been advised that there were potential savings if these guidelines were followed.

Housing Advisory Unit subsequently confirmed that, if the Glass and Glazing Federation Guidelines were applied, then there was a potential for considerable savings largely due to the fact that there would no longer be a requirement to pay redecoration grants to tenants.

This has resulted in an estimated savings of £15.1m

Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

NIHE officials - Dr John McPeake Chief Executive & Declan Allen Head of Procurement

Organisations Attending

On 16th April 2012 the Chief Executive, the Head of Procurement (and a management trainee who was shadowing the CX that month) attended a meeting hosted by the Minister at his office in Parliament Buildings.

The Chief Executive's diary entry for the meeting reads as follows: "Meeting with Minister McCausland and Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings to discuss Double Glazing of NIHE Houses."

NIHE was initially advised via email to our Information Department on 28th February 2012 that the Minister had agreed to meet Ian Young of Turkington Holdings Ltd and the Minister's Special Advisor had suggested that John McPeake should be invited to attend.

Subsequently, a telephone confirmation of the date of the meeting was received from the Private Office to the Chief Executive's PA and the detail of the entry text above was how the meeting was described.

The Chief Executive requested that the Head of Procurement accompany him to the meeting. This was because of the Head of Procurement's earlier involvement in meeting industry representatives in respect of our double glazing work.

Purpose of the Meeting

The Housing Executive was not advised of any specific purpose beyond discussing the double glazing of NIHE houses. We were not asked for any briefing in advance and nor did we receive any specific requests by way of preparation from the Department or the Minister's office.

At that time Turkington Holdings were a sub contractor working on NIHE double glazing schemes.

We were aware that they had some ideas about how double glazing could be fitted more economically, a meeting having previously taken place between representatives of Turkington Holdings and our Policy and Standards Team (13th March 2012).

Equally, we were aware of the wider context of a PFG target to double glaze all NIHE properties and ongoing work to put in place a dedicated framework contract to deliver the necessary works.

Role in Attending

In broad terms, the Chief Executive and the Head of Procurement understood their role in attending was to listen to the suggestions of the contractor and to take part in any discussions that arose.

Representatives from Turkington Holdings commented on the then current approach NIHE contractors used to fit windows and compared that with an alternative approach based on the guidance from the Glass and Glazing Federation. The key difference was the removal of a requirement for re-plastering of the window reveals, which would mean a reduced likelihood that redecoration grant would be required.

During the course of the meeting the Chief Executive explained that the Housing Executive was currently reviewing the specification for double glazing, including the types of window frames, the glazing, and the hinges. He also commented that his technical staff were aware of the Glass and Glazing Federation's approach and were considering its potential.

There were no issues raised by the representatives of Turkington Holdings that the Housing Executive was not already aware of and/or working on.

Other Information

By way of additional background, the following paragraphs set out in broad terms the Housing Executive's approach to revisions in the double glazing specification and associated issues up to and post the meeting with the Minister and others on the 16th of April 2012.

Actions Related to the Specification up to the 16th April Meeting

The Housing Executive has regularly reviewed its specification for double glazing. There was a fundamental review in 2006 and additional changes were made in February 2010. Further changes were approved by the Board in November 2011.

On 1st December 2011 the Chief Executive met with the Head of Procurement, the Director of Housing and Regeneration and two Assistant Directors in Housing and Regeneration to discuss double glazing and it was agreed that the Head of Procurement would commence discussion with the industry to help finalise the specification and help inform our procurement strategy.

On 2nd December 2011 the Head of Procurement met with Peter Blair, Blair Neill Ltd (now insolvent) to discuss windows in general to discuss on our future procurement strategy for double glazing.

On 5th Dec 2011 the Head of Procurement met with Mila and Peder Neilsen to discuss capacity and supply of hinges. This was considered important as we had previously experienced supply problems which impacted on ability to deliver schemes in line with the planned schedule. Given the volume of work anticipated at that time we believed that there was a need to broaden the supply. We recognised that changes to specification could broaden the supply base which, in turn, would stimulate competition and competition helps ensure value for money.

Around the same time, the Head of Procurement contacted the Glass & Glazing Federation in London to seek a meeting to discuss how we might construct our procurement process. We were advised that there was no representative of the Federation in Northern Ireland with whom to have such a discussion. However, we were able to review published materials regarding the Federation's standards.

Also around that time the Head of Procurement had a discussion on technical aspects of double glazing with an academic at the University of Ulster. This focused on the interplay between cost and energy efficiency.

On 15th February 2012 the Chief Executive met with the Director of Housing and Regeneration and the Assistant Director with responsibility for policy and standards to discuss the specification in light of the discussions with the industry.

On 30th March the Chief Executive wrote to the Director requesting clarification on the extent to which the specification for the new double glazing programme was appropriately "future-proofed."

As a result, further work was initiated to review the energy performance requirements in light of the pending procurement for a dedicated contract to install double glazing.

On 4th April 2012 a briefing note on options was produced and discussed with the Director of Housing and Regeneration and subsequently with the Chief Executive in advance of the meeting with the Minister on the 16th April.

At the meeting with the Minister and representatives of Turkington Holdings the Chief Executive made clear there would be no discussion of the planned procurement and the commercial assumptions that were being made by the Housing Executive, but it was appropriate to discuss the ongoing work regarding the specification as this was seen to be in line with good commercial procurement practice. The Chief Executive outlined the work that was being done to future proof the specification in advance of going to the market. This included up-rating the glazing component, revising the frames, reviewing the hinges and considering the fitting methods, particularly in light of the redecoration grant issue. In short, a significant review of the specification was underway.

Actions Related to the Specification Post the 16th April Meeting

Following the meeting, on the 30th April the Minister wrote to the Chief Executive asking for a rigorous review of the Housing Executive's specification for window replacement on the basis that it was not delivering best value for money. The Minister drew particular attention to the fitting method, hinges and handles. He instructed that until the review was completed new work should be held except for those jobs already ordered.

On 9th May 2012 DSD issued a Press Release in which the Minister outlined his concerns that the NIHE specification for supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. The Press Release also referred to the letter he had written to the Chief Executive requesting an urgent review of the specification and an instruction to hold further schemes until that review was completed (bar those that had already been ordered).

On the 14th May 2012 Michael Sands of DSD emailed the Chief Executive asking for details on the impact of the Minister's instruction to halt work on schemes not yet ordered as "We are receiving numerous requests from MLAs about how Minister's decision will affect their constituents..."

The Chief Executive replied by email on 15th May 2012 indicating that there were 7,094 dwellings in schemes that had been ordered and a further 7,193 where the work had not been allocated to contractors or orders placed with the supply chain. A list of impacted schemes was provided. The email also indicated that Technical Staff in the NIHE had been to see some schemes where windows had been fitted using the revised method and the results were positive.

On 16th May 2012 Michael Sands emailed the Chief Executive to confirm that the Minister was content for the NIHE to proceed with the 7,094 dwellings where orders had been placed but that all such work should be completed using the revised fitting method, except for any high rise schemes.

At its meeting on 30th May 2012 the NIHE Board approved changes to the specification, including the introduction of a revised fitting method. Subsequently, a new Code of Practice for Survey and Installation was issued to contractors requiring the use of the new method for low rise schemes moving forward.

With the review of the specification now having been completed and instructions issued to contractors, on 15th June the NIHE responded to the Minister's letter of 30th April.

There were two further letters from the Minister on 4th July and 16th August requesting additional clarification around the specification, with responses provided by the NIHE on 20th July and 4th September.

In each case, the Minister's queries related to his concerns over value for money. He sought explanations of the proposals and the data and assumptions that underpinned the proposals. In our view these were legitimate questions, appropriately asked, and appropriately answered.

On 18th September the NIHE wrote to the Minister indicating that all of the agreed schemes had been started (i.e. the 7,094 dwellings previously approved). Approval was sought to start work on a further 2,400 dwellings using the revised fitting method. Approval to proceed on this basis was received from the Minister on 8th October.

In preparation for tendering, the Board approved a Final Specification for double glazing at its meeting on 26th September 2012. This confirmed a move to "A" rated windows, use of modified friction hinges in low rise properties, the retention of fully reversible windows with the "hotel" hinge in medium / high rise properties, and the revised fitting method which minimised the need for re-plastering and hence redecoration grants.

Subsequently, following contact from unspecified members of the industry, the Social Development Committee requested briefing on the specification of hinges used by the NIHE and the proposed cost savings with the new specification. A hearing was scheduled for 10th January 2013.

Gerry Flynn, the Director of Housing and Regeneration, and David Adamson, a Senior Project Manager represented the NIHE. The DSD representative was Michael Sands.

The Committee received a briefing from industry representatives on 17th January 2013.

Subsequently on 25th January the Committee wrote to the DSD and requested that the procurement be delayed until the industry representatives had an opportunity to meet with the Chairman and Chief Executive of the NIHE (scheduled for 5th February), a further review of the proposed cost savings was undertaken, and a review of the rationale for change over and above cost.

Donald Hoodless, the NIHE Chairman, chaired the meeting with the industry representatives on 5th February, where there was a full airing on the issues. The Chairman's conclusions were that this was a wholly operational matter for the Housing Executive as the purchasing authority and the rationale and approach adopted by the organisation was reasonable.

The Minister responded to the Committee Chair on these issues on 11th February and included the comment that the specification issue "is entirely an operational matter for the Housing Executive and neither I nor Departmental officials have any approval role if they decide to change the specification."

There was further correspondence from the Committee to the Department on 21st February requesting further briefing from the NIHE as the specification was an operational matter for that organisation. There was a request for a further delay in the procurement.

The NIHE Board approved the initiation of the procurement at its meeting on 27th February.

NIHE officials Gerry Flynn and David Adamson appeared before the Committee on this matter on 28th February and the Committee asked for a further week's delay to allow additional information to be provided on a number of the matters raised and discussed at the hearing.

The requested information was provided and there being no other issues raised the OJEU Notice was placed with an operative date of 13th March 2013.

John McPeake
Chief Executive

Declan Allen
Head of Procurement

Joint Submission Jim McKeag and Ian Young

DSD Committee Inquiry re: NIHE Managed Contracts Joint statement on behalf of Messrs Jim McKeag and Ian Young

11th November 2013

Biographies

Jim McKeag is the Managing Director of Turkington Holdings and has worked at the company for 28 years. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Building.

Mr Ian Young worked at Turkington from 1996 to 2013 as Divisional Manager and is currently the General Manager of Polyframe. Mr Young is a former Chairman of the NI Glass and Glazing Federation.

Turkington

Turkington Holdings comprises a number of trading companies. It was set up in 1951 by Trevor Turkington's father and is based in Craigavon. The company employs 120 direct and indirect staff and has an annual turnover of £20m.

The group operates across Northern Ireland and across various sectors of industry, acting as Main Contractor & Developer through our Construction Division, and also providing specialist sub-contracting and supply expertise through our Windows, Curtain Walling and Precast divisions.

Over the course of the past thirty years - depending on where the company was working - we have held a wide range of meetings with public representatives from all political parties. Meetings with public representatives were infrequent, but mainly with those involved in DRD and DoE. Over the years I have personally met Ministers Attwood, Poots, Ritchie and Wilson.

Between 2001 and August 2011, Turkington's had not undertaken any work with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, either directly or through a main contractor.

Turkington did not apply to become an Egan¹ Contractor in 2006/7, because this was a combined contract for windows, kitchens and bathrooms and the company did not feel it was appropriate for it.

In May/June 2011 Turkington was contacted by Mascott Construction to see if the company would be interested in undertaking a supply and installation window sub-contract for some of their sites. Mascott had previously bought windows on a supply only basis, but on this occasion felt that the supply and installation route would be more beneficial.

Turkington was successful in being awarded a site and started the contract in August 2011.

Further sites were awarded later in the year and on into 2012 - all for Mascott Construction.

It was during the execution of these contracts that Turkington started to identify a range of issues, which we believed were worth bringing to the attention of the main contractor Mascott and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. These included:

1. First - a Health & Safety matter related to the Housing Executive's requirement for windows to be factory glazed. This led to a substantial increase in weight causing issues for manual handling both at the factory and during installation on site. This was likely to cause potential claims in the future.

1 Derived from the Egan report on 'Rethinking Construction' which aimed to improve the delivery of maintenance contracts

2. The second issue was the method of installation. The Housing Executive process required that all the reveals² were first cut back, windows were installed and then reveals were re-plastered.

This practice was increasing the time to complete houses due to the wet trades involved. It was, therefore, more costly for the Housing Executive and it increased the amount of disruption for tenants, including time spent in tenants' property.

Redecoration grants were also being afforded to tenants due to the disruption to the house.

Turkington had initial discussions with Mascott over these issues and they were content for us to raise the matter directly with the Housing Executive.

Consequently, a meeting was arranged with David Adamson (Procurement/Specification) at the Housing Executive in late 2011. During the meeting we discussed our concerns and he said he would come back to us. We were keen to resolve the issue of pre-glazing quickly in order to minimise the potential impact on employees and protect against any breaches of health and safety. Turkington heard nothing from Mr Adamson despite follow up emails.

As we appeared not to be receiving a timely response from the Housing Executive, Turkington decided to try and raise the issue with the Minister responsible, Nelson McCausland. An approach was made to the Minister's Special Adviser, Stephen Brimstone, in the first instance and a meeting was secured with him in January 2012. Mr. Brimstone advised that we should contact the Minister to request a meeting to discuss the issues.

On 2nd February 2012, therefore, Mr. Young wrote a letter to the Minister requesting a meeting on behalf of Turkington with the intention of discussing our concerns and to highlight potential savings to the public purse if the window installation process was reviewed. This letter is attached as Appendix A.

Turkington received a response from Department of Social Development in late March 2012, advising that a meeting had been arranged for 16th April 2012.

Jim McKeag (Managing Director, Turkington) and Mr Young attended the meeting on behalf of Turkington with the Minister; also in attendance were representatives of the Housing Executive and the Department of Social Development.

The meeting focused on two issues.

1. The first was the simple health and safety issue surrounding the issue of pre-glazed glass. It was agreed at the meeting that because Turkington was supplying and installing, we could install the glass on site.
2. The second issue focused on our perception that there appeared to be a substantial cost being unnecessarily incurred by the public purse.

Turkington is a member of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) and we comply with the standards set by the Federation. These standards include installation guidelines. We explained that if the windows were installed to Federation guidelines this would not necessitate the reveals being removed - thereby avoiding the need for wet trades in tenants' homes. This would give an industry-recognized standard of installation at reduced cost and save disrupted time in the tenant's property.

We presented a spread sheet - attached as Appendix B - which demonstrated that with decreased installation costs, plus avoidance of having to pay a redecoration grant, the Housing Executive could save between £20m and £30m as they completed their building programme. The Minister seemed impressed by the scale of the savings.

2 A 'Reveal' is the industry name for a window surround

Sometime after this meeting the Housing Executive made an amendment to the criteria for window installation, which loosely reflected our suggestions. It was our view that this change to the criteria would not only provide greater value-for-money to Housing Executive, but encourage both Turkington's and other contractors who met the Glass and Glazing Federation standards, to tender for the new contract. A subsequent tender was issued which we tendered for, but were unfortunately unsuccessful in winning.

Turkington sought the meeting with the Minister after failing to secure a response from the Housing Executive. There was no material gain to the company arising from the meeting.

In seeking the meeting we were prompted by our firsthand experience as a sub-contractor of health and safety issues and our analysis that the contract could be delivered to the same standard - but using a different process - that would avoid considerable waste of public funds.

Turkington Submission Appendix A

APPENDIX A

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

.....
IAN YOUNG
GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP



Department for
**Social
Development**

BUYER
5 MAR 2012
TRANSPORT
OTHER

From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dcdni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9084

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

29 February 2012

Dear Ian

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



Written Submission Turkington Appendix B

APPENDIX B

Turkington Windows & Conservatories

NIHE Projects

Issues

a/ The Installation Method

The current method requires us to remove all the window reveals, take out the existing window and then bracket in the window with 12 brackets per window. The window reveals then need to be plastered.

Issues with this method

- a/ Slows down the installation process - probably doubles the length of time to complete a house.
- b/ Introduces a wet trade i.e. plastering into the house which means extra visits into the tenants home
- c/ Adds more costs per house - approx £180 per house, or for 50,000 houses approx £9 million
- d/ Tenants have more disruption than they should have - leading to a redecoration grant which we believe is £50 to £100 per room. If we take an average of £75 for 6 rooms would be £450 per house and for 50,000 houses it equates to £22.5 million.

Suggested Method

- a/ Install windows as per Glass & Glazing Federation standards
- b/ Carefully remove windows, install new windows by bolting through the frame and then using pvc trim

Advantages

- a/ Minimal disruption to the tenant - house will be completed

50000	
Saving per window	21
Mark Up	0.25
Windows per house	7
Saving per House	183.75
Plastering Saving	9187500
Redecoration	
Per Room	75
Rooms	6
Per House	450
	22500000
	31,687,500

G&G Fed Letter to Dr K Pelan of NI Assembly

GGF/NDR/AC

14 November 2013

Dr K Pelan
Clerk, Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Building
Belfast
BT4 3XX



Glass and Glazing Federation

54 Ayres Street
London SE1 1EU
Tel 020 7939 9100
Fax 020 7357 7458
www.ggf.org.uk

Dear Dr. Pelan

GGF response to the inquiry into allegations arising from the BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013.

The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) is a Trade Association representing employers and companies within the flat glass, glazing, home improvement and window film industries. The GGF has approximately 500 members who can be found in over 1,500 business locations throughout the UK. The GGF have a structure which covers different technical groups e.g. windows and doors as well as regions. The GGF have a Northern Ireland Region, this currently has 11 members registered for the region. Details of these companies can be provided.

To become a member of the GGF an organisation needs to provide financial accounts for the past three years trading, three trade references, successfully complete a site visit (this checks the calibre of the company), agree to join GGF Fund Ltd if deposits are taken and agree to comply with the rules of the GGF. Further details of the application process can be provided.

The GGF run meetings which have a GGF member of staff as the Secretary and an elected member as the Chair. All meetings are minuted, have a calling notice and have strict guidance to prevent discussions prohibited by the Competition Act 1998 or the Enterprise Act 2002; in particular the issue of prices or market share will not be raised or discussed. Copies of the minutes from GGF Northern Ireland's meetings can be provided.

GGF members can use the GGF logo on their publications, letterheads and business cards. The rules for using the GGF logo are covered by GGF guidance and rules. Copies of this can be provided.

The GGF do have meetings with Government Officials to represent the GGF. These are usually undertaken by GGF staff or can be undertaken by a member with specialist knowledge and a brief from a supporting committee or group they are representing. The last such meeting undertaken in Northern Ireland was with Oliver McHugh from the NIHE on 10 April 2013, this was attended by Giles Willson, Deputy Chief Executive of the GGF. Notes from this meeting are attached for information.

The GGF were approached in June 2013 by Chris Thornton for the BBC Spotlight program. The questions and the GGF response is shown below:

Dear Chris,

In response to your email, I have discussed your queries internally with my colleagues responsible for GGF Northern Ireland . Please see answers (in blue) to your questions below:

- Was the GGF aware of an initiative by Turkingtons Windows resulting in a meeting with the Northern Ireland Social Development Minister Nelson McCausland in April 2012? No
- Was the GGF aware of this meeting in advance? No
- Did the GGF give the Turkingtons officials the authority to represent themselves as acting on behalf of the GGF? No
- If so, who gave that authority and was it communicated to the chairman of the Northern Ireland branch? No idea who gave authority, but it was no-one at the GGF and it was not communicated to the Regional Chairman
- Is there a formal record that such authority was given? No
- If the GGF was not aware in advance, are there any circumstances in which a member firm can purport to represent the GGF? If the GGF is represented in a meeting by a Member Company, it is with a specific mandate from either a GGF specialist group or region to address specific industry issues.
- What action would be taken with a member firm which purported to represent the GGF without authority? If someone has misused or broken our rules we would investigate and review through our Finance and Membership Committee.
- Was any contact made with the GGF by officials acting on behalf of Nelson McCausland following the 16 April 2012 meeting? Yes as the industry authority and to represent GGF Members, the Federation has sent GGF Officers (employees) to meetings with NIHE as we do with many other Government officials globally.

I trust this background information will help with the production of your programme.

Best regards

James Lee
GGF Marketing and Communications Manager

The GGF would be pleased to provide any of the supplementary information referenced above when Giles Willson GGF Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs attends the committee meeting which takes place on Thursday 21 November 2013 at the Parliament Building.

Yours sincerely



Nigel Rees
Group Chief Executive
Glass and Glazing Federation

Enc./ Notes from GGF Northern Ireland Regional Meeting – 11 December 2012



Glass and Glazing Federation

Private and Confidential

Minutes of: Glass and Glazing Federation N.I. Regional meeting held at the Wellington Park Hotel, 21, Maloney Road, Belfast NI. BT96RU on the 11th December 2012

Present:

**David Blair
Robin Getty
Ian Young
Cary Hindman
Norman Cameron
Willie Montgomery
Declan Moore**

**Getty Glass
Getty Glass (Chair)
Turkington
Turkington
Thermoseal Group
CEN Solutions
GGF**

**Apologies: John Agnew
Martin Moore
Roland Sarin
John Agnew
Jim Mcguire**

**Toughglass
Glass-Seal (NI) Ltd
Edgetech

Excel Glass**

1. Chairman

DM: opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Ireland regional meeting and requested a volunteer to act as chairman for the meeting. RG agreed to act as Chairman for the day and the meeting commenced.

2. Apologies and AOB not covered by the agenda

The Chairman noted the apologies and they will be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

3. Previous Minutes

The previous minutes were approved by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting held on the 4th September 2012

4. State of Trade Discussion

DM: reminded the meeting of the competition act 1988 and the enterprise act 2002 as detailed at the top of the agenda and asked that members refrained from talking of issues relating to pricing and market share.

CH: explained that it is a very tough market out there and whilst they feel busy there is real pressure on margins and getting paid can be a real problem.

WM: noted that if it were not for the HE (Housing Executive) work there would be not very much happening at all.

RG: felt they had become a cash only business

CH: suggested that the GGF is a valued badge and the credentials of deposit protection should be of value

NC: explained that since our last meeting, three more companies have gone out of business although he feels that Northern Ireland is a little more stable than the south. There has been a lot of downsizing and there may be too many Zombie companies around which are simply surviving on a credit card, they should be gone but are hanging on. No one is buying any machinery at the moment which is a very bad sign.

DB: explained that the industry is thinning out to the size it should be and even the sole traders (one man and a van) type operators are thinning out.

RG: explained that he thought that people perceived the GGF as more expensive than it really is. He went on to suggest that the GGF road show should be held at the Hilton at Temple Patrick and could focus on relationships with the finance industry and CE marking. DM: agreed to pursue this and come back with details.

CH: It would appear that NI is excluded from green deal and we should be included and also include solar panels.

DM: agreed to try to get Giles Wilson over to meet with ministers now that we have the services of GK political we should make better progress.

The group had discussion around GK political and agreed that they would like them to push for HE work to be given directly to contractors so there can be better management of payments with a focus on time lines.

5. Technical report

The technical report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and taken as read.

6. Health and Safety

DM: provided the meeting with an update on all Health and Safety activities which included the following.

Fee For Intervention now live as of the 1st October 2012

GGF database being cleaned up –we will require your stats in Jan to get your current certificate (this will be relevant in the future CAT C)

We will be requesting that companies with multi branches register them individually.

We will be reviewing the merit scheme for a RED / AMBER / GREEN – companies will be able to move backwards as well as forward

It will be suggested that we have two types of meeting in 2013 - a working committee type and - an information dispensing type meeting

7. Working Groups

The following working groups are currently under way:

Health and Safety Training

This working group will be meeting in October and will address the H&S training needs of the fenestration industry- this will build on our existing success with NOS and BBS and will focus on three areas

- Official HS training such as IOISH
- Industry Specific such as Glass Handling / WAH replacement windows
- Management strategy training

Environmental Waste Management

This working group will meet again in September and it is expected that a working draft guidance document will be available in October. The scope of this group will be established on the 13th September

Working at Height

This document has now been complete and has achieved a level 4 endorsement from the HSE now with GGF awaiting publication

Personal Protective Equipment

A further meeting for this working group is pending

Asbestos AIB

The latest draft of the LAR working code of practice has been reviewed and a further meeting held with the HSE. The latest version of the LAR document has

been released for comment on the 14th May and has been distributed to the working group

Stillages

This document is scheduled for review and the working group are expected to reconvene in October

Glass Handling

This Document is due for review in 2012

8. Social Housing in NI

DM: Updated the meeting on the meetings and activities which had taken place and now we are getting support from GK political we hope to make better progress early in 2013.

DM: agreed to keep everyone posted on any further developments.

9. GGF Website

DM: provide a presentation of the new GGF website and show the new GGF promo film which was very well received

10. AOB

CH: Requested that someone at the GGF consider putting triple glazing on the energy calculator. DM: to find out about this and report back to the meeting.

11. Diary Dates 2012

DM: will confirm the meeting dates for 2013

The Chairman brought the meeting to a close and thanked everyone for their time and input.

Letter from Minister to Chair re Oral Evidence Session on 12 December 9.12.13



From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/1121/2013

9 December 2013

Dear Alex

Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety relating to NIHE managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions

As part of the above Inquiry, the Committee has requested I attend on 12 December 2013 at 10.00 am to provide oral evidence.

In advance of the Inquiry meeting, the Committee has requested I provide a briefing on my knowledge of the meeting of 16 April 2012 and the drafting of the letter of 24 May 2012 to the Committee.

I will attend the Inquiry meeting as requested on 12 December and attached at Annex A is a copy of my written briefing.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**Nelson McCausland
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Annex A

The Committee would like to hear oral evidence regarding strand (ii) of the Terms of Reference. The evidence should detail Minister's knowledge of the meeting of 16 April 2012 and the drafting of the letter of 24 May 2012 to the Committee for Social Development as referred to in the Spotlight programme.

Knowledge of the meeting of 16 April 2012

A meeting was arranged by my Private Office for the 16 April 2012, to discuss the double glazing of Housing Executive homes. This was a key priority for me as I had ensured in November 2011 that, in the Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive gave a commitment that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by March 2015 through the provision of double glazing.

The Chief Executive of the Housing Executive was invited to attend the meeting, along with the relevant departmental official.

The discussion at the meeting was focused on the potential for significant savings if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed in relation to the double glazing programme specifications.

Following the meeting the departmental official raised this with professional staff with the necessary technical expertise and asked them to review the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines. I was advised that the techniques outlined by the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were those used by many window installers throughout Northern Ireland and appeared to be less destructive and less expensive, and that the aggregated costs of the double glazing programme and the associated potential for economies of scale were significant.

I then wrote to John McPeake, Chief Executive, Housing Executive on 30 April 2012 and asked that he rigorously reviewed the entire glazing specification.

This review has resulted in an estimated saving of £15.1m.

The drafting of the letter of 24 May 2012 to the Committee for Social Development (SDC)

I received a letter from the SDC Chairman dated 16 May 2012 and my Private Office asked officials to consider the contents of the letter and to draft an appropriate reply to the letter for my consideration.

When the draft reply was received in my office I queried the reference to Turkington Holdings suggesting it should refer to the Glass and Glazing Federation and I also queried if a meeting I had with Fusion 21 should be included.

This was forwarded by my Private Office to the official who had drafted the letter to consider and amend the draft accordingly. When I received the amended draft letter from the official I signed it and it was issued to the SDC Chairman on 24 May 2012.

Stephen Brimstone Submission January 2014

Mr Brimstone is asked to provide a short briefing to the Committee of his understanding of which organisation/organisations he was meeting on 16 April 2012, what he understood the meeting was to be about, his role in attending, his role in drafting or amending any subsequent communications (emails, letters, minutes etc) which may have arisen as a result of this meeting and any other information that is relevant to this issue, including any previous meetings or communications with representatives of Turkington Holdings.

Following the Minister's announcement in late 2011 that as part of its Programme for Government the Northern Ireland Executive gave a commitment to have all Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) homes fully double glazed by 2015, I was approached by a representative of Turkington Holdings who asked if they could meet with me to share how they believed this Executive priority could be delivered with significant savings to the public purse. I agreed and I met with representatives of Turkington Holdings on 25th January 2012.

Though I cannot recall the detail of the meeting, I do recall forming the impression that Mr Young was going to write to the department on behalf of the Glass and Glaziers Federation asking for a meeting with the Minister in relation to realise potential savings.

I subsequently verbally updated the Minister on the meeting I had held and indicated that it was likely that the GGF would request a meeting with the Minister.

I was aware I was likely to be taking leave so I verbally informed the Minister's Private Secretary a letter from the GGF requesting a meeting was to be expected, that the Minister was interested in what they had to say and that as it was ultimately a matter for the NIHE the Chief Executive should also be invited.

I attended a meeting on the 16th April 2012 with Minister, departmental officials, and NIHE officials, Mr. Young and Mr. McKeag. My role in attending was as Special Advisor to the Minister. I had been on leave when the letter requesting the meeting was cleared by Minister and had not seen that the meeting was being requested by Turkington Holdings as opposed to the GGF. I did not see this letter until around July 2013. In April 2012 I believed that though the meeting was attended by staff from Turkington Holdings, they were in fact representing the GGF.

The only communication I had any sight of or role in drafting or amending was the letter to the Chair of Committee for Social Development on the 24th May 2012. The Minister's recollection of the meeting on the 16th April 2012 was that whilst staff from Turkington Holdings were present it was the GGF and its standards that were being discussed. The Minister also had a recollection that there had been a separate meeting with Fusion 21 where some of the same issues were discussed. He asked me that those suggested amendments be noted on the letter and it was sent back via Private Office to officials. An amended letter which reflected Minister's amendments was subsequently sent back to Minister with no concerns or alternative suggestions being raised.

Barbara McConaghie Written Submission 2 December 2013

Your Ref: CSD/017/2011/AMcP

To: Social Development Committee

From: Barbara McConaghie

Date: 2 December 2013

INQUIRY INTO ALLEGATIONS, ARISING FROM A BBC NI SPOTLIGHT PROGRAMME AIRED ON 3 JULY 2013, OF IMPROPRIETY OR IRREGULARITY RELATING TO NIHE MANAGED CONTRACTS AND CONSIDERATION OF ANY RESULTING ACTIONS

I refer to your letter of 21 November 2013 which was passed to me on 29 November 2013 for a reply.

Please see my response below to each of the queries raised in your letter.

1a What Ms McConaghie understood to the reason for her attending the meeting and whether she was requested to take notes at the meeting.

As Private Secretary to Minister McCausland it was part of my role to normally attend internal and external meetings involving the Minister. As with all meetings I attended I would take a manuscript note of the discussions and replace this with an electronic Private Office internal memoir.

1b Whether Ms McConaghie took notes at the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know whether the notes were forwarded to anyone and if so to whom; and the Committee would also like to receive a copy of these notes.

I took notes at the meeting and these were typed up as an internal document (as described above) and would have been forwarded to the lead official in attendance (in this case Michael Sands) for his consideration/amendments/follow-up action as required. Copy attached at Annex 1.

1c Whether Ms McConaghie was requested to draft minutes of the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know who the minutes were sent to and would also like to receive a copy of the first draft. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie was asked to amend the draft minutes, by whom and the nature of the amendment. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie had sight of the final version of her minutes.

I was not requested to draft minutes of any meetings but to note the discussion as part of my normal duties. A first draft of the internal memoir was not circulated by me to anyone other than the lead official in attendance, Michael Sands. Responsibility for contents of the draft is passed to the lead official and I am not normally required to make any amendments. I cannot recall who requested subsequent amendments. I confirm that I had sight of the final document based on the copy of the version provided to me by the Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer, and as recorded on the Department's electronic records management system.

1d Whether Ms McConaghie had knowledge of the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 that were provided to the Committee in your letter of 29 October 2013. It would be helpful if Ms McConaghie could be sent a copy of the minutes that were provided to the Committee in order that she may correctly address this last point.

As Private Secretary in both DCAL and DSD during the period June 2009 to January 2013 I would have been responsible for the initial record of many hundreds of meetings held with the Minister. Having read the copy provided I can recall the memoir, however, I have no access to any Ministerial correspondence since I left the post of Private Secretary.



Barbara McConaghie

Letter from Minister to SDC Chair re 13 March Evidence Session 10 March 2014



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business
Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/118/2014

10 March 2014

Dear Alex

Inquiry into allegations, arising from a BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013, of impropriety relating to NIHE managed contracts and consideration of any resulting actions

I refer to your letter dated 27 February 2014 requesting that I attend the Committee meeting on 13 March 2014 to provide further oral evidence.

You ask in your letter that, in relation to a meeting with my officials on 28 June 2013, I provide the Committee with a briefing indicating who attended this meeting; the issues discussed at the meeting and, in particular, whether the status of Messrs McKeag and Young at the meeting of 16 April 2012 was discussed.

This is attached at Annex A.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**Nelson McCausland
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Annex A

SDC Inquiry Phase 1 - In relation to a meeting with officials on 28 June 2013 who attended this meeting; the issues discussed at the meeting and, in particular, whether the status of Messrs McKeag and Young at the meeting of 16 April 2012 was discussed.

Who attended the meeting?

With the significant number of meetings I hold it is difficult to recollect a meeting with my officials held more than eight months ago. However, I have been advised that my diary indicates that the meeting was to include:

Will Haire

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Susan McCarty

The issues discussed at the meeting

I understand that the diary entry records at Subject "Meeting with Officials."

However, I have now had sight of the documents, forwarded to the Committee on 26 February 2014, which appear to indicate that the meeting was to discuss my response to a letter received from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 requesting that I consider an on camera interview. The letter to Spotlight, which I signed and which was issued on the afternoon of 28 June, would appear to be the result of the meeting.

Whether the status of Messrs McKeag and Young at the meeting of 16 April 2012 was discussed

I do not recall the specific discussions at the meeting.

Briefing paper from Will Haire re Evidence Session 13 March 2014



From: The Permanent Secretary
Mr Will Haire

Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 90 829002
Facsimile: 028 90 829560
E-mail: perm.sec@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
BELFAST BT4 3XX

10 March 2014

Dear Kevin

SDC Inquiry – Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 27 February 2014 in which you advise that the Committee has requested oral evidence from me, in relation to Phase 1 of the above Inquiry, at the meeting to be held on 13 March 2014.

In advance of the meeting the Committee has requested a written briefing which is now attached at Annex A.

Yours sincerely



Will Haire

Annex A

Written Briefing Paper for the Committee for Social Development Meeting on 13 March 2014

Mr Haire is requested to provide a written briefing outlining what steps he took or instructed his officials to take in an effort to clarify the controversy surrounding the meeting of 16 April 2012. The Committee were particularly interested in the meeting of 28 June 2013 between the Minister and senior officials to discuss the Minister's response to the BBC on the allegations arising from the Spotlight programme. The Committee requested that Mr Haire provide clarification on what issues were discussed at this meeting, and confirmation as to whether the senior officials had advised the Minister that the meeting was with Turkington Holdings Ltd and not with the Glass and Glazing Federation.

What steps I took or instructed officials to take in an effort to clarify the controversy surrounding the meeting of 16 April 2012.

I did not attend the meeting on 16 April 2012 and, whilst I am copied into all submissions etc to the Minister, I do not read all in detail and I was not aware that there were any questions surrounding the meeting at that time.

As the Minister has made clear in his evidence, he made clear his understanding and position, in relation to this meeting, to departmental officials and his Private Office so that the note of the meeting of 16 April, subsequent related correspondence and Assembly Questions referred to the meeting as being with the Glass and Glazing Federation.

I was aware that, following the meeting, the key issue for departmental officials was reviewing with technical advisors the Glass and Glazing Federation Guidelines. Further the NIHE were rightly seen as the organisation which was responsible for decisions on these contracts. I was satisfied that these two issues were the right ones to ensure that any procurement was correct and value for money was being pursued appropriately.

The meeting on 16 April 2012 was also referred to in letters from and to BBC Spotlight in June 2013. However, the Minister still believed at this time that this meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and officials were not aware of alternative evidence to indicate this was not the case. As the Minister has now advised the Committee in December, it was only recently that he moved from his belief that the representatives at the meeting were representing the interests of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

In relation to the meeting on 28 June 2013 clarification on what issues were discussed at this meeting.

During this period in June there were a series of letters received from BBC Spotlight in relation to the programme they were preparing for transmission. These were on 7th, 20th, 26th, and 27th June 2013. The Minister replied to these letters on 26th (two letters) and 28th June 2013. I believe that the issue of Spotlight's possible programme was discussed with the Minister on a number of occasions, in particular whether he should agree to an on camera interview, but I cannot recall the details of each discussion.

This meeting on 28 June 2013 is not recorded in my diary but I am aware of the copy of the Minister's diary that was forwarded to the Committee on 17 February 2014. I have also had sight of the papers that were forwarded to the Committee on 26 February 2014 in relation to this meeting which indicate to me that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a response to the Spotlight letter received on 27 June 2013. The Minister's reply to the letter was issued on 28 June 2013 at 16.16 and represents the outcome of this meeting.

Confirmation as to whether the senior officials had advised the Minister that the meeting was with Turkington Holdings Ltd and not with the Glass and Glazing Federation.

The note of the meeting on 16 April 2012 was issued as an official record of this meeting as far back as June 2012. This recorded that the meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. Subsequent correspondence and Assembly Questions also referred to the meeting as being with the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Minister's letters to Spotlight on 26 June also refer to the meeting as being with the Glass and Glazing Federation. This was clearly the Minister's position since the meeting in April 2012, and had been stated as such and, as the Minister explained to the Committee on 12 December 2013, he still believed at this time that this meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Letter from Ian Young 6 March 2014

Polyframe
Unit 6
James Park
Mahon Road
Portadown BT62 3EH

The Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Ref: CSD/022/2013/2/SK

6th March 2014

Dear Dr. Pelan,

Thank you for your recent correspondence and the opportunity to respond to your queries in writing; I apologise that I am not able to attend the Committee on March 13th due to a holiday commitment.

You raised two areas of interest:

Meeting 25th January, 2012 with Mr. Stephen Brimstone

At the time I was employed by Turkington's as General Manager. I was asked by Turkington's CEO, Trevor Turkington, to attend a meeting with him and Mr Brimstone at the Radisson Hotel in Belfast's Gas Works. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential savings for the Housing Executive and raise health and safety concerns.

During the meeting we talked about the window industry generally and in particular the Housing Executive contracts which Turkington's was involved in with Mascott.

We advised that the contracts could be operated in a more cost effective manner if the windows were installed to Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) standards. This would realise substantial savings for the Housing Executive. We also discussed health and safety concerns as we felt that the existing process for installing windows under the contract was negatively impacting upon our staff.

I mentioned that I was a past Chairman of the GGF and that Turkington's was a member of the GGF, as were other local suppliers. As such, the company could install windows and doors to GGF standards.

I asked how best to bring this matter to the attention of the Minister and Mr. Brimstone advised that I should do so in writing – this I did.

Minutes Query

I did not receive the minutes from the meeting with Minister McCausland on 16th April 2012.

Subsequently, however, I did receive a summary of the meeting (attached) which Chris Thornton, BBC Spotlight, sent me on 21st June 2013 when he approached me in relation to his investigation.

I trust that the above is helpful, please feel free to contact me if you require additional information.

Yours sincerely

Ian Young

Appendix Ian Young letter



Roisin Goodall
Housing Division
Level 2
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9329

Email:
roisin.goodall@dsdni.gov.uk

Our reference: DSD/2012-0103

Date: 26 June 2012

Freedom of Information Act 2000

You requested, in three separate emails which were received on 16 May 2012, information relating to meetings with representatives of Turkington Holdings over the last 12 months. I can confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information you asked for, which was as follows:

- details of each meeting held between the minister or his officials and representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd, including, location, time and duration of each meeting. You also requested that details of individuals attending the meeting; the reason for the meeting; who requested the meeting and that minutes of the meeting be released to you.
- copy of all correspondence (electronic and written) between the Department for Social Development and Turkington Holdings Ltd over the last 12 months
- minutes for all meetings involving officials from the Department for Social Development and the minister when a reference was made to Turkington Holdings Ltd and details of where and when the meeting/s were held and who was present.

I am pleased to advise you that the following documents are being released to you:

- Copy of letter from Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd to Minister McCausland dated 2 February 2012.

- Copy of letter from Departmental Private Secretary, Barbara McConaghie to Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd dated 29 February 2012.
- Copy of minutes of meeting held between Minister McCausland and representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation dated 16 April 2012

I can confirm that the meeting was scheduled to take place on 16 April 2012 at 4.00 pm in the Minister's Office in the Lighthouse Building. Whilst there is no formal record of the duration of the meeting, evidence from Minister McCausland's diary suggests it lasted under 45 minutes. The Minister was supported by Michael Sands, Housing Deputy Director. Other attendees are listed on the attached minutes.

I can also confirm that an official from Regional Development Office (RDO) attended a meeting with Craigavon Borough Council officials, Planning Service officials and Mr Trevor Turkington at Mr Turkington's offices in Portadown, on 24 June 2011. However, RDO have confirmed that they do not hold any correspondence to or from Turkington Holdings Ltd, nor were minutes taken at the meeting.

If you feel that the information we have provided does not fully meet your request please contact us at 028 9082 9329 in the first instance. You have the right to request a formal review by the Department within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you wish to do so, please write to:

The FOI Team, Records Management Branch, Department for Social Development, Ground Floor, Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Rd, Belfast BT7 2JB.

If after such an internal review you are still dissatisfied with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely



Roisin Goodall

Encs

Letter from Jim McKeag dated 6 March 2014

JH Turkington & Sons Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
Portadown
Co. Armagh
BT62 3EH

The Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Ref: CSD/022/2013/2/SK

6th March 2014

Dear Dr. Pelan,

Thank you for your letter dated 27th February.

I would like to reiterate that I have not had sight of any minutes from the meeting with the Minister on 16th April, 2012 and no minute was circulated to Turkington's.

My reference to the Glass and Glazing Federation being mentioned three times was based on my personal recollection of the meeting. I referred to the Federation to emphasise three points:

1. That Turkington's were members of the Federation
2. That Ian was a past Chairman of the NI branch
3. That the method of window installation which we were suggesting was fully compliant with the Federation's standards.

I trust that addresses any misunderstandings which have arisen from my evidence, but please contact me if you have additional queries.

Yours sincerely

Jim McKeag

Letter from Trevor Turkington 7 March 2014

JH Turkington & Sons Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
Portadown
Co. Armagh
BT62 3EH

The Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3X

Ref: CSD/022/2013/2/SK

7th March 2014

Dear Dr. Pelan,

I refer to your letter dated 27th February in connection with the enquiry arising from a BBC Spotlight programme aired on 3rd July 2013.

At the time, Ian Young, the General Manager of our window division, was having several problems with the NIHE that he could not resolve and he asked for my assistance. These centred round health and safety concerns, and the potential to save the public purse a considerable sum of money.

A meeting was scheduled for 25th January 2012 at the Radisson Hotel, Belfast with Minister McCausland's special advisor, Mr. Brimstone.

During this meeting the Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) was referred to on numerous occasions as our proposals centred on changing the method of installing windows in line with the Federation's standards. I believe Mr. Young also stated that he was a former GGF Chairman.

The meeting concluded with the agreement that we should write to the Minister to request a meeting to discuss the issues further.

I can only presume that the references to the GGF during the meeting led Mr. Brimstone to conclude that the letter was to be issued by the Federation rather than Turkington's.

Please advise if you require any further clarification.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Turkington

Letter from Fusion21 12.12.13



Procurement Training & Employment Consultancy

Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Fusion21
Link Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 6AP

Tuesday 12th November 2013

Ref CSD/023/2011/2

Dear Dr Pelan,

RE: Request to provide Oral Evidence Thursday 21st November 2013

I write in reference to our telephone conversation on 8th November 2013 to discuss a letter of request to provide oral evidence to the Committee for Social Development on 21st November 2013.

The letter sent requests that we should detail all of our knowledge of a meeting held on the 16th April 2012. I can confirm that we have no knowledge of a meeting held on this date and did not attend any meeting on this specified date.

During our conversation you requested that if we could supply information of any meetings that may be of relevance to the committee we should detail the date and provide a summary of the purpose of any such meeting.

It is my understanding that once you have reviewed this information you will inform us as to whether oral evidence is still required from us on 21st November 2013.

In relation to the context of the letter I can confirm that Fusion21 met with Minister McCausland on the 23rd April 2012 at 2pm.



Building Skills Centre Huyton Industrial Estate Huyton Merseyside L36 6AP
t: 0151 481 3000 f: 0151 481 3001 e: info@fusion21.co.uk www.fusion21.co.uk

Fusion21 Limited A company limited by guarantee • Registered in England and Wales No. 5090266



I can confirm attendees of this meeting were:

- Minster McCausland
- David Malcolm (DSD)
- Stephen Brimstone (DSD)
- Dave Neilson (Fusion21, CEO)
- Chris Murray (Fusion21, Chair)
- Janis Simpson- Mahoney (Fusion21, Regional Director)

The meeting took place in Stormont and lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The context of the meeting was an introduction of Fusion21, a social enterprise company. The Fusion21 procurement model was discussed and it was outlined how Fusion21 ensure social value is derived from its procurement activity in Great Britain. Project examples of the Fusion21 model were also provided to the Minster.

We can confirm that we did not discuss any particular contracts with the Minster and we did not discuss window specifications in this meeting. We did discuss generic benchmarking information on our projects including windows and doors with housing associations in England that were previously provided to the DSD. Outlining generic cost savings and local job creation outcomes that could be created by accessing the Fusion21 procurement model for various workstreams.

I trust this information clarifies the context of our meeting and sufficiently explains the purpose of our meeting with the Minster. I would be grateful if you could inform me of your decision as to whether we are still required to provide oral evidence upon review of this information.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Whelan

Fusion21



Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Fusion21
Link Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 6AP

Monday 18th November 2013

Ref CSD/023/2011/2

Dear Dr Pelan,

RE: Request to provide Written Statement to the Committee for Social Development

Please find attached a written statement provided by Fusion21 in relation to the above reference.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Whelan

Fusion21



Building Skills Centre Huyton Industrial Estate Huyton Merseyside L36 6AP
t: 0151 481 3000 f: 0151 481 3001 e: info@fusion21.co.uk www.fusion21.co.uk

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Written Evidence Submitted by Fusion21

Introduction to Fusion21

Fusion21 is a social enterprise that promotes public procurement as a means to save money and create social outcomes.

Working nationally, Fusion21 links spending programmes across numerous organisations, to the creation of training opportunities and sustainable jobs for local people. As well as generating social value this model improves efficiency in the procurement process and generates significant cash savings. By using a small part of the savings generated through the procurement process, Fusion21 are able to fully fund our training and employment programmes ensuring that the model is not reliant on public funding and is wholly self sustaining

Since 2002 we have gained national recognition for our collaborative approach; delivering c£50m savings through the procurement process, creating over 1300 permanent jobs, and generating an estimated financial benefit in excess of c£32m through regular paid work and reductions in benefit claims.

Our aim is to help create the conditions where it is easier to deliver efficiency savings, to control costs, create jobs, train people and share best practice. We work by collaborating with social landlords, residents, local agencies, contractors and suppliers to deliver a wide range of programmes, skills training courses and commissioned consultancy projects.

Terms of Reference

This statement addresses strand (ii) from the terms of reference provided to Fusion21 that details:

ii: Allegations the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

This written statement seeks to address the above point as requested by the Committee for Social Development.

Summary

This statement confirms that Fusion21 did not meet with the Minister on the 16th April 2012 and outlines further information that the committee may deem useful.

Written Statement Submitted by Fusion21

1. The letter sent requests that we should detail all of our knowledge of a meeting held on the 16th April 2012. I can confirm that we have no knowledge of a meeting held on this date and did not attend any meeting on this specified date.
2. In relation to the context of the letter I can confirm that Fusion21 met with Minister McCausland on the 23rd April 2012 at 2pm.
3. I can confirm attendees of this meeting were:
 - Minister McCausland
 - David Malcolm (DSD)
 - Stephen Brimstone(DSD)
 - Dave Neilson (Fusion21, Chief Executive)
 - Chris Murray (Fusion21, Chair)

■ Janis Simpson- Mahoney (Fusion21, Regional Director)

4. The meeting took place in Stormont and lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The context of the meeting was an introduction to Fusion21, a social enterprise company. The Fusion21 procurement model was discussed and it was outlined how Fusion21 ensure social value is derived from its procurement activity in Great Britain. Project examples of the Fusion21 model were also provided to the Minister.
5. We can confirm that we did not discuss any particular contracts with the Minister and we did not discuss window specifications in this meeting. We did discuss generic benchmarking information on our projects, including windows and doors with housing associations in England that were previously provided to the DSD. This information outlined generic cost savings and local job creation outcomes that could be created by accessing the Fusion21 procurement model for various workstreams.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 4

Meeting between Minister
for Social Development and
Turkington Holdings Ltd
16 April 2012

Turkington Holdings to Minister 2 February 2012

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

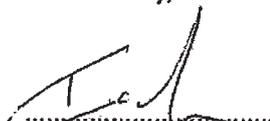
This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP

Internal DSD emails 22 Feb 2012 re Letter from Turkingtons

From: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:42
To: DSD Private Office; Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stephen Brimstone
Subject: RE: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: Turkington.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

**Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List**

Internal DSD Email 27.02.13 response to Turkington Letter

McCarty, Susan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 15:12
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Will do

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 27 February 2012 14:40
To: Bowsie, Margaret; Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Mills, Karen; Dodds, Ciara
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Cleared for issue please

John - have alerted John McPeake - if not can we please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 27 February 2012 11:07
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Susan, please see draft reply attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 09:50
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Alan,
Draft submission accepting attached for clearance.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

When advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited.
Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

DSD Submission accepting invite to meet Turkingtons

Mills, Karen

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 27 February 2012 14:56
To: O'Connor, Sheila; Dodds, Ciara
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); DSD Private Office; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Brenda; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: Turkington.pdf; INV 96 2012 - Submission accepting invite.DOCX; INV 96 2012 - Submission accepting invite.tr5

Please see cleared response to INV/96/2012.

Ciara
Can you please update the database
Thanks
Margaret

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 29 February 2012 15:12
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: CLOSING INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 29/05/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 29 February 2012 15:05
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Clara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wail, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/96/2012
Raised By: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

COR / INV / GMT / TOF 96.....

SPECIAL ADVISER _____

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

-
1. Approved ✓
 2. Noted
 3. Meeting to be arranged
 4. Further information requested
-

Additional Comments

Signed: _____

M

Dated: _____

23/7/12



From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

29 February 2012

Dear Ian

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

DSD PO Request for Briefing to Housing Div

20 March 2013

McCarty, Susan

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 20 March 2012 11:53
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) Briefing request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-2001

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk>]

Sent: 20 March 2012 11:44

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight

Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012

Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 20 March 2012

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

BRIEFING REQUIRED

The Minister has agreed to the above meeting to take place on Monday 16 April at 16.00 in the Minister's office, Parliament Buildings, with a pre-brief at 15.45. Attending will be Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings; and John McPeake from NIHE. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and mobile contact numbers of any officials attending with the Minister..

Please return to Private Office by Wednesday 11/04/2012

Chris Barry
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38033

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

Briefing note from DSD to Minister and SpAd 11 April 2012

14

Number 2



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 11 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS: DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES

Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

Timing: 11 April 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You are invited to note this short briefing.

Detail

You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

2. Ian Young advised in his letter on 2 February that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the Programme for Government, it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

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5. It is envisaged that this meeting will primarily be an informal listening exercise with Turkington Holdings who feel they have a lot to offer both the Department and the Housing Executive in relation to the installation of double glazing to NIHE properties.
6. Michael Sands will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is [REDACTED].*

Conclusion

7. You are invited to note this briefing. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConneli
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

** redacted as personal mobile number*



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 5

Amendments to Assembly
Questions, the Minister's Letter
to the Committee Chair and the
Minister's Diary Entry re meeting of
16 April 2012

AQO - 8 May 2012

AQO / AQT

- AQO 1904/11-15
- AQO1905/11-15

MLA DATE

Mr Stephen Moutray (DUP Upper Bann)

Mr Ian McCrea (DUP Mid Ulster)

08.05.12

Question

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Social Development what schemes are scheduled for the Upper Bann constituency, over the next 12 months, to replace single-glazed windows with double-glazed windows. Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development, in planning the roll-out of double glazing in Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties, if he will ensure that the standard of installation meets quality standards and represents value for money.

Response and Follow up Question/Comments

Mr McCausland: With the Speaker's permission, I will take questions 8 and 9 together, as they both relate to the double glazing programme. The installation of double glazing in all social housing is a priority of mine in order to tackle the thermal efficiency of individual homes. The Programme for Government, therefore, contains the commitment to improve the thermal efficiency of Housing Executive stock and ensure full double glazing in all its properties. In the financial year 2011-12, because of additional funds provided in-year through the monitoring rounds, the Housing Executive has already installed double glazing to approximately 5,100 properties. The Housing Executive's initial assessment was that 48,000 properties would require some form of work, at a cost of £120 million. However, it is now estimated that work is required to only 30,000 properties, although the Housing Executive is still unsure on whether that will be the final figure. I intend to ensure that the cost of that work will represent value for money. Following discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry, I now have considerable concern about the value for money of the Housing Executive's current specification to contractors for window installation. I believe that significant savings could now be made, ensuring that we deliver on that commitment, while maintaining industry standards. I have, therefore, asked the Housing Executive to rigorously review the entire glazing specification. Until that review is completed, all further double glazing installations are to be held until the new contract provisions, to include any revised specifications, can be put in place. The only exception to that would be where a current Egan contractor has a contract placed with a supplier for delivery of frames and any cancellation would mean nugatory expenditure. I am, therefore, unable at this stage to provide a list of schemes scheduled for the Upper Bann constituency over the next 12 months. My concern is that the current process used by Housing Executive contractors is extremely and unnecessarily expensive, in that it involves the removal of plaster from around the windows, replastering, damage to tenants' decoration, with a resulting redecoration grant, and the form of hinges that they use cost five times the cost of industry standard hinges. For all those reasons, it is well worth looking at, because a substantial amount of money could be saved on the figure previously quoted by the Housing Executive.

Letter to Minister re double glaze scheme

16 May 2013



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX
Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

16 May 2012

Our Ref: CSD/011/2011/SK

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

Dear *Nelson*

Review of NIHE double glazing installations

As Chair of the Committee I have been asked by a number of members of the Committee to write to you about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

Members have raised concerns with me that they only heard about this via Questions to the Minister in the Assembly on Tuesday 8 May, and feel that you could have indicated your intention of a review at the Committee meeting of 3 May when you were dealing with this issue in response to a question from a member of the Committee.

The Committee would like to make clear that it firmly agrees with you that any public expenditure should deliver value for money for the taxpayer and savings should be made where possible. It is also the case that achieving value for money and cost savings need to be balanced with carrying out all works to a high standard. The Committee would therefore like to see the terms of reference and timetable for the review, details on the methodology to be employed and information on who will carry out the review and how they were appointed.



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

Members are also concerned that you may have pre-empted the findings of this review given that at the meeting on 3 May you stated that the 'method' for installing double glazing *"is certainly not the most efficient and does not provide the best value for money; there is no doubt about that"*.

You also stated at the meeting *"Some indications are that it is possible to save tens of millions of pounds in the installation process if it were done by people with more experience in that field"* and in your press release you stated that *"I am advised that there is potential for significant savings to be made"*.

Members have noted that on 8 May you stated in the Assembly that you met with representatives of the glazing industry and they therefore presume this is the source of the above advice, but I would appreciate if you would confirm this i.e. who specifically who has provided this advice to you and on what basis these "significant savings" have been estimated.

Furthermore, the Committee would like information on your thinking about the implications for any future procurement exercise arising from the review, implications for existing supply and installation contracts and the implications for the established target of all NIHE homes to be double glazed by 2015.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex".

**Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson**

Michael Sands Draft Letter to Minister May 2012

No 4.

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dssdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around

4

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Email 22.5.12 F Lundie to M Sands re change to SDC Letter

McCarty, Susan

From: Fiona.Lundie@dsdni.gov.uk
Sent: 22 May 2012 16:00
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; henry.johnston@dsdni.gov.uk; psdirectorursd; Heaney, Donald; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan; Martin, Stephen; McIntyre, Patricia; Malcolm, David; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose
Subject: Submission: SUB/551/2012 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS
Attachments: elo58300.PDF

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Fiona Lundie
Private Office
To: Sands Michael (Mr)
Date: 22/05/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
O'Neill Eilish
Johnston Henry (Mr)
Heaney Donald
Carragher Damien
McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Martin Stephen (Mr)
McIntyre Patricia (Ms)
Malcolm David (Mr)
McConaghie Barbara
McShane Rose (Mrs)

SUB/551/2012: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 18/05/2012 and has requested that the letter to Alex Maskey be amended. See attached letter with amendments. Para 3 - remove Turkington Holdings Ltd and replace with "Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation". Also, Fusion 21?

I would be grateful if you could provide further advice on this point to be with the Private Office by noon on 24/05/2012.

Many thanks.

Fiona Lundie (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38037

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**

dsd@dcdni.gov.uk
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dcdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

From: The Minister

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with ~~Turkington Holdings Ltd~~ to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. *Handwritten: 'Glass & Glazing' and 'Turkington'*

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

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While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Ministers Reponse re Double Glazing 24 May 2012

From: The Minister



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

24 May 2012

Dear Alex

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Versions of minutes of 16 April 2012

Number 6

VERSIONS	THERE ARE SIX VERSIONS OF THE NOTE	DATE	AUTHOR
1	First working draft formed with two attendees listed	16 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
2	First draft created by Barbara McConaghie	17 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
3	Last line, page 1 amended to be in bold - change made by Barbara McConaghie	17 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
4	Michael Sands name added to the list of attendees - change made by Michael Sands	17 April 2012	Michael Sands
5	Version 5 amended with tracked changes shown - changes made by Michael Sands	17 April 2012	Michael Sands
6	Finalised version - changes from version 5 made by Barbara McConaghie	16 May 2012	Barbara McConaghie

Version 1

Meeting with

Attendees:

Minister McCausland

Barbara McConaghie, DSU

Version 2

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 20,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 3

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 20,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs -- NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 4

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving of £22m per 50,000 houses.

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 20,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 5

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers.
The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing.

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

Turkingtons claim that if the Glass & Glazing Federation guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

~~Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a savings of £22m per 50,000 houses.~~

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 240,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms as response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 6

Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Ian Young, Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing .

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

The representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation advised that if the guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications and supply.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however,

indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

The representatives offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Ministers diary entry 16 April 2012

Meeting 16/04/2012 16:00:00 - Lotus Notes

File Edit View Create Actions Section Help

Address

Workspace DSD Minister's Diary 2011 - ... X DSD Registers 2011 - 05. Submi... X Meeting 16/04/2012 16:00:00 X

Save Close Print Reminder Show Reminders Mark Private

Status: Confirmed

Subject INV/96/2012 with Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation

Venue Min Off LB

With

Contact Name Lynda Woods

Contact Tel No 02838 332807

Start Date 16/04/2012 **Time** 16:00 - 16:45

Notes John McPeake to also attend.

Office Only Notes

Internal Participants

External Participants Requiring Access via Reception Jim McKeag
Ian Young

Country

Region

Constituency

Arrangements Outstanding

Facilities Required To Be Booked

Refreshments Required To Be Booked

Related Documents INV 96 2012 Final briefing.msg RE Meeting with Minister McCausland.msg

Transaction History

Document Author: Chris Bany (20/03/2012 11:04:54)

Revision History:

16/05/2012 12:32:25	Barbara McConaghie
16/04/2012 11:46:19	Chris Bany
20/03/2012 11:49:38	Chris Bany
20/03/2012 11:49:15	Chris Bany
20/03/2012 11:41:07	Chris Bany
20/03/2012 11:21:47	Chris Bany
20/03/2012 11:07:29	Chris Bany

Relevant Documents re Daithi McKay AQW

Annex 1 - Papers Re SPAD Engagement in Daithi McKay AQW

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:44
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: 11512-11-15-amend draft sent back to officials 25-05.pdf; AQW 11512 11-15 - Daithi McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.tr5

Roisin

i) Amendment request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5004

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Margaret Bowsie & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

*Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060*

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay, to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

*Representation of
Mr McKay taken
by [signature]*

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with ~~Parkington Holdings Ltd~~ on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: (AQW 11512/11-15)

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

AS *by*
SP *24/05*

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:52
To: Mills, Karen
Cc: Kerstens, John; Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Karen please issue to PO

Roisin

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:51
To: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin,
Content, we will not refer to Turkingtons in any other answers unless specifically requested to name attendees at meetings.
M

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:49
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Michael – to clear SPAD wanted ref to Turkington’s taken out

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:41
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin, draft revised per SPAD.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 25 May 2012 14:49
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Alan,
Draft reply attached amended in relation to SpAds request for the change.

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndi.gov.uk

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay, to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

*Representative of
the Glass Federation*

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with ~~Parkington Holdings Ltd~~ on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: (AQW 11512/11-15)

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

AS *by*
SP *2/11/15*

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:54
To: Brimstone, Stephen; Corry, Ellen
Cc: Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Henderson, Michael; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; O'Reilly, Tommy; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Ward, Deirdre; Wilkinson, Jim
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: 11512-11-15-amend draft sent back to officials 25-05.pdf; AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared 2nd revised response.DOCX; AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared 2nd revised response.tr5

Folks

Attached cleared revised response for your attention.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: 11512/11-15

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 6

Correspondence between
BBC, Minister for Social
Development and his Special
Adviser 7 June - 1 July 2013

Letter from BBC to Minister dated 7 June 2013

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
Telephone +44 (0)2890 338 973 Fax +44 (0)2890 338 591



TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
bbc.co.uk

Friday, 7th June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I am a producer in the Television Current Affairs department at BBC Northern Ireland. My colleague, John O'Kane, wrote to you in November in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive ("NIHE") to terminate its "response maintenance" contracts with Red Sky Group Limited ("Red Sky") in July 2011. We are currently preparing to transmit a Spotlight programme about that investigation, and we will inform you of the exact date. To date we have not received a reply to the questions that were put to you and I would be very grateful if you would address them. For your convenience, I am enclosing a further copy of that letter.

I also have some additional questions to put to you arising from information that has come to light since November.

With regard to the 27th June 2011 meeting you attended along with Peter Robinson, Stephen Brimstone, DUP colleagues, DSD officials and representatives of Red Sky, then in administration:

1. Can you account for the fact that neither the NIHE nor the administrators of Red Sky were represented?
2. Do you think it was appropriate to discuss the affairs of a company in administration in the absence of the administrators, and the possible extension of that company's contract in the absence of the both the administrators and the NIHE (a body at arm's length to your department) as contracting party?
3. What did you understand by the "irregularities" referred to by Peter Cooke at that meeting?
4. Do you think it was appropriate to be involved in discussions the object of which was to assist the representatives of Red Sky in their desire to be in a position to bid for the

contracts that had recently been stripped from Red Sky, using a new company to be formed for that purpose?

5. At what stage did you become aware that this was the intention of Mr Cooke and Mr Rooney?
6. In the minutes of that meeting, you are recorded as having expressed a wish "to have the administrator in place until the end of August to allow all issues relating to the handover of the contracts to be considered, *during this time the proposed new company might also be able to progress matters*" [our italics]. It is evident from subsequent events that that desire was acted upon. Do you accept that, in so doing, you were favouring a proposed new company over other potential purchasers of the business, in circumstances where you had no basis for forming a view as to the ability of the proposed new company to fulfil any contract?
7. What, if any, steps did you take to ensure that the NIHE was made fully aware of what had been discussed?
8. In our view, your conduct as evidenced by the minute of the meeting and subsequently in correspondence with the Housing Executive breached the Ministerial Code, in the following respects:
 - (a) The requirement that you "must at all times observe the highest standards of propriety and regularity involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relationship to the stewardship of public funds";
 - (b) The requirement for openness and objectivity contained in the Principles of Public Life; and
 - (c) The requirement that you "operate in a way conducive to promoting good community relations and equality of treatment".

.. How do you respond?

9. What actions have you taken as a result of the ASM Horwath report commissioned by your department?

Other matters.

10. In a May 24, 2012 letter to the Social Development Committee, you said you "met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21 to discuss double glazing specification in NIHE properties". The original draft of this letter refers to a single meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd. We have evidence that you did not discuss double glazing specifications with Fusion21. Why did you not inform the Social Development Committee about the involvement in Turkington Holdings in your decision to review the NIHE double glazing programme?
11. Were you aware Trevor Turkington, the owner of Turkington Holdings Ltd, is a supporter of your party? Did that have any bearing on your meeting and subsequent actions?

12. We have evidence that the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive was not present at the Fusion21 meeting, as your letter states. Why did you tell the Committee he was present?

13. We have evidence that during a March 12, 2012 briefing on the Social Housing Development Programme, you said the number of housing schemes planned for Tiger's Bay, Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark, Ballysillan were "unacceptable". You were told an economic appraisal did not support further new builds in Tiger's Bay, but you did not accept that. You said "the future of Girdwood would rest on the 4 schemes being included firmly on the SHDP". Do you accept this version of events? In whose interests were you acting in promoting those four schemes?

Please confirm receipt of this letter. I reiterate that I would be grateful if you would reply to these questions, preferably in an on-camera interview to be recorded at a mutually convenient time and place. If you would like to do an interview, for production reasons we would need to know your intentions as soon as possible. If you reply by way of a written statement, we would need your responses no later than 5pm on June 12th, 2013.

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton

Producer, Spotlight

Letter from BBC to Mr Brimstone 7 June 2013

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
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TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
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Friday, 7th June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF:

MR STEPHEN BRIMSTONE
MINISTER'S SPECIAL ADVISOR
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD,
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr Brimstone,

I am a producer in the Television Current Affairs department at BBC Northern Ireland. My colleague, John O'Kane, wrote to you in November in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive ("NIHE") to terminate its "response maintenance" contracts with Red Sky Group Limited ("Red Sky") in July 2011. We are currently preparing to transmit a Spotlight programme about that investigation, and you will be notified of the exact date. To date we have not received a reply to the questions that were put to you and I would be very grateful if you would address them. For your convenience, I am enclosing a further copy of that letter.

I also have some additional questions to put to you arising from information that has come to light since November:

1. In our view, your conduct in your telephone conversation with Mrs Jenny Palmer, as outlined in Mr O'Kane's letter, breached the Northern Ireland Special Advisers' Code, in that:
 - a) you were acting to further "the private interests of others", namely the representatives of Red Sky in their desire to be in a position to bid for the contracts that had recently been stripped from Red Sky, using a new company to be formed for that purpose;
 - b) you breached the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity and openness, by seeking to influence a democratic process in the above manner; and
 - c) you were acting for party political purposes, by seeking to influence a member of the NIHE to act in the interests of a political party.

2. We have evidence that on July 5, 2011, you instructed a civil servant, Michael Sands, to ask the Housing Executive to consider a four-month extension of contracts to Red Sky in administration, as opposed to six months. It is our understanding that your conduct in making the request for a contract extension to the NIHE breached the Northern Ireland Code

of Conduct for Special Advisors, in that you were acting to further "the private interests of others". How do you respond?

3. In May 2012 you were sent a draft of a letter (Dept. ref.: SUB/551/2012) for the Minister of Social Development to send to the Chairman of the Social Development Committee. That draft referred to a meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd. That reference was changed to refer to a meeting with the Glazing and Federation and Fusion21. Were you aware of that change or were you responsible for it?
4. In June 2011, the Glass and Glazing Federation issued a press release saying "*a relationship is being established with Mr McCausland's adviser*". Did that relationship lead to the April 2012 meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd?

Please confirm receipt of this letter. I reiterate that I would be grateful if you would reply to these questions, preferably in an on-camera interview to be recorded at a mutually convenient time and place. If you would like to do an interview, for production reasons we would need to know your intentions as soon as possible. If you reply by way of a written statement, we would need your responses no later than 5pm on June 12th, 2013.

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton
Producer

Letter from BBC to Minister 20 June 2013

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC, NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
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TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
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Thursday, 20 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I have not received any acknowledgment of the letter I wrote to you on 7th June, with which I enclosed a further copy of my colleague, John O'Kane's letter to you dated 16th November 2012, which had also met with no response or acknowledgment from you.

Notwithstanding your failure to respond to our questions so far, I have further specific questions to put to you concerning your decision in May 2012 to announce a review of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's ("NIHE") double glazing programme for its portfolio of properties.

The following questions relate to answers you have given publicly in your capacity as Minister: in the Assembly, in Committee hearings, in written answers and in open correspondence.

1. When you announced that you had asked the NIHE "to rigorously review the entire glazing specification" on 8th May 2012, you stated that your concerns had arisen "following discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry". In a number of subsequent answers, you indicated that your concerns arose as a result of the high cost of the NIHE's double glazing programme (see, for example, the answer to Mr Daithi McKay, AQW 11513/11-15, on 25th May 2012). Which of these answers was true? If your position is that high costs were at least partly involved, please provide evidence to show that you had previously felt or expressed such concerns.
2. You have also stated, on a number of occasions (see, for example, your answer to a number of questions in the Assembly on 22nd May 2012), that you had had these concerns "for some time". If that answer (and others to the same effect) was true and not misleading, please state when you first started to feel those concerns, and provide evidence to support that.
3. As stated above, on 8th May 2012, you stated that you had had "discussions [in the plural] with those in the glass and glazing industry". If that answer was true and not misleading, please state with whom and on what dates these discussions (plural) took place.

4. On 16th May 2012, Alex Maskey, chair of the Committee for Social Development, wrote to you (among other things) in relation to the answer you had given in the Assembly on 8th May. With regard to your statement that you had had “discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry”, Mr Maskey asked you “who specifically has provided this advice to you”. In your written response, dated 24th May 2012, you stated as follows:

“... along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines ‘The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors.’”

If that answer was true and not misleading with respect to Ian Young and Jim McKeag, of Turkington Holdings Ltd, who attended the meeting with you on 16th April 2012, please specify precisely in what respect they were acting as representatives of the GGF and what steps you took, or caused to be taken, to establish that they were indeed acting as representatives of the GGF and were duly authorised to do so.

5. If that answer was true and not misleading with respect to Fusion 21, please explain in what respect Fusion 21 are connected to, or representatives of, the GGF. Please also clarify whether the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive attended the meeting on 23rd April with Fusion 21. Please also clarify whether the meeting with Fusion 21 in any way concerned the question of double glazing specifications, and, if so, please provide evidence to support this. Please also clarify whether there was a single meeting with representatives of the GGF and Fusion 21, or more than one.
6. On 5th December 2012, in response to a written question from Mr McKay, you stated that you had “met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation *twice* [our emphasis]”. Please state with whom and on what dates these meetings took place. If your answer is that one of the meetings in question was with Fusion 21, do you still stand by that answer?
7. If you accept that any of the answers referred to above was untrue and misleading, what steps do you propose to take to correct the record?

The following questions concern a meeting held at the Department of Social Development (“DSD”) offices on 16th April 2012

Two of those who attended that meeting, Jim McKeag and Ian Young, are stated in the minute to be “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation” (“GGF”). In fact, they were both representatives of a private company, Turkington Holdings Limited (“Turkington”) and were not acting on behalf of the GGF.

8. Do you accept that the letter from Mr Young dated 2nd February 2012 suggesting a meeting was shown to you, or at least that the contents were referred to you? Do you also accept that, in instructing your private secretary to agree to a meeting, you stated that you believed it would be beneficial for the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also?
9. Do you accept that, in light of the above, there was no proper basis upon which you could have believed that Messrs Young and McKeag were acting on behalf of the GGF?

10. Why did you allow those two representatives to be styled in the minutes as “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”, when they were not?
11. Did you make any checks, or cause any checks to be made, with the GGF to establish whether the Turkingtons representatives had any authority to represent the GGF? Please provide evidence.
12. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to follow up the discussions at the meeting with the GGF? Please provide evidence.
13. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to follow up the discussions at the meeting with Turkingtons? Please provide evidence.
14. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to ensure that what you were being told by the Turkingtons representatives did in fact accord with the views of the GGF?
15. What, if any, independent research did you do, or cause to be done, into the claims made to you by the Turkingtons representatives, before you wrote to the chief executive of the NIHE, instructing him to put all further double glazing on hold whilst a review of the glazing specification was carried out? Please provide full details.

The following questions concern your letter dated 24th May 2012 to Alex Maskey, chair of the Committee for Social Development

A draft of that letter, sent to you on 18th May 2012 by Michael Sands, purporting to explain the basis upon which your announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme was made, has been released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The recommended draft letter stated that you had “met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties”. However, in the final version of that letter signed by you on 24th May 2012, the reference to “Turkington Holdings Ltd” had been changed to “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21”.

16. Since Mr Sands was also present at the 16 April meeting, do you accept that his recommended draft reflected his understanding of the capacity in which Messrs Young and McKeag attended that meeting?
17. Did you cause Mr Sands’ recommended draft to be changed? If not, were you aware of the change that had been made, and did you approve it?

With reference to the suggestion in the letter that a meeting, on 23rd April 2012, with representatives of Fusion 21 concerned double glazing specifications in NIHE properties and had had a bearing on your announcement:

18. Why did you allow the impression to be created that there had been a single meeting with representatives of the GGF and Fusion 21, when in fact there were two, separate meetings?
19. Why did you allow the impression to be created that the meeting with Fusion 21 had anything to do with double glazing specifications in NIHE properties, when it did not?
20. Why did you allow the impression to be created that the chief executive of the NIHE had attended the meeting with Fusion 21, when he had not?

21. Do you accept that, in sending this letter, you misled the chair of an Assembly cross party committee?
22. Do you accept that, in your earlier statement in the Assembly on 8th May when you referred to "discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry", you misled the Assembly as to the nature and extent of those discussions?
23. Do you accept that, in subsequent written answers, you have also repeatedly given a misleading impression as to the nature and extent of your discussions with representatives of the glass and glazing industry, whether members of the GGF or otherwise?
24. It has been suggested to us that your actions in this respect were calculated to conceal the fact that your announcement on 8th May was based solely on a meeting with representatives of a private company, a matter of a few days earlier, by creating the false impression that they had been influenced by representatives of an industry federation and another body. How do you respond?

These are plainly matters of the utmost seriousness. Our Spotlight programme concerning issues surrounding the NIHE's termination of its contracts with Red Sky, and other matters including those referred to above, is in the final stages of being prepared for broadcast. If you wish to have your position reflected in that programme, may we please hear from you by no later than 5pm on **Tuesday, June 25th**.

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton.

Letter from BBC to Minister dated 26 June 2013

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TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
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Wednesday, 26 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

The deadline we set for you to respond to our most recent letter dated 20th June 2013 passed at 5pm yesterday and, once again, we have not had an acknowledgment from you. Even though it is clear that you have no intention of engaging with us, in the interests of responsible journalism, we wish to give you one final opportunity to respond. This will include a further question we wish to put to you, based on some new evidence we have obtained since our letter of 20th June.

We have now received confirmation from the Glass and Glazing Federation ("GGF") that they were not aware of, and did not sanction, the 16th April 2012 meeting attended by Ian Young and Jim McKeag of Turkington Holdings Limited ("Turkingtons"). We also have evidence that it was the understanding of Declan Allen, who attended the meeting on behalf of the NIHE, that Messrs Young and McKeag were representing Turkingtons. Furthermore, Mr Young has confirmed to us that he was at the meeting on behalf of Turkingtons and does not know why you would have said that he and Mr McKeag represented the GGF at that meeting.

In light of the above, do you now accept that you have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of this meeting, in the Assembly, in Committee, in answers to written Assembly questions, and in correspondence with the chairman of the Assembly Committee with oversight of your department?

Your failure to take up in any way the repeated opportunities we have given you to explain your position can only be read as an acceptance that there can be no innocent explanation for your conduct. Our Spotlight programme is now almost finalised, and will be broadcast

without further notice to you. If you do wish to have your position reflected in the programme, may we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



PP

Chris Thornton.
Producer, Spotlight

Letter from Minister to BBC dated 26 June 2013



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsudni.gov.uk

From: The Minister

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1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
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e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
BELFAST
BT2 8HQ

26 June 2013

Dear Chris

I refer to your letter of 26 June 2013 to me in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme which will reference the meeting that was held on 16 April 12 with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and Departmental officials.

My position in relation to the note of the meeting on 16 April is that I did not prepare these minutes which have been a matter of public record for some time. The note records what attendees said with regard to whom they were representing in particular Messrs Young and McKeag and the note records that Mr Young did refer to his company Turkington Holdings although he was representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.

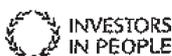
I take great exception to and totally reject and refute the scurrilous accusations that I repeatedly lied about the circumstances of this meeting and I demand that they be withdrawn.

If you are to proceed with these allegations then I will have no choice but to seek legal recourse. If these allegations are to be aired in the Spotlight programme, then I would expect the courtesy of seeing what you are proposing to state, before the programme is aired.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Letter from Minister to BBC dated 26 June 2013



From: the Minister

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Gasworks Business Park
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Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

26 June 2013

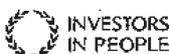
Dear Chris,

I refer to your letters of 7 and 20 June 2013 and that of your colleague, John O'Kane, to me in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to terminate its response maintenance contracts with the Red Sky Group Ltd in July 2011.

My position in relation to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract by the Housing Executive in July 2011 has already been a matter of public record for some time and any responses to the questions you pose, I believe are already in the public domain. It may be useful however to set out the background and present position in relation to contract management by the Housing Executive which has moved on significantly from the issues you now raise.

Shortly after taking up office in May 2011, I expressed my concerns about the issue of contract management, both on foot of briefing on the governance review findings carried out in 2010, and on the issues leading to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract in July 2011.

Whilst there has been a great deal of speculation and innuendo that I sought to either extend the contract with the Red Sky Group or indeed to assign the contract to a new company, this was not the case. I think that any examination of the series of correspondence between myself and the then Chairman of Housing Executive, already in the public domain, makes this abundantly clear.



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

In particular my letter to the then Chairman on 7 July makes it clear that I believed the most appropriate way forward was for an open procurement exercise for the Red Sky Group contracts to be undertaken. This was subject to the administrator being able to provide assurance that those contracts could be serviced until such an exercise could be undertaken. When the Housing Executive advised that the administrator could only provide services until the end of July and thereafter the Company would be sold, and that it would take in the region of four months for an open procurement exercise, I confirmed to the then Chairman that NIHE should proceed with the termination of the Red Sky Group contracts and re-assign those contracts to adjacent contractors to ensure continued provision of services to tenants.

However, in light of my continuing concerns that the issues which led to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract by the Housing Executive may be present in other contracts which had not been the subject of any full investigation, I asked that a forensic investigation was carried out of a sample of Housing Executive maintenance contracts to provide me with assurances in relation to the other contracts and contractors, the quality of services to tenants and the proper use of public funds. This investigation report which is available on the Department's web site identified serious failures and confirmed that I was right to have concerns. This was all the more alarming since the failings identified in this report post-dated the work NIHE had already done in relation to the Red Sky Group contracts.

I then made a statement to the Assembly on 3 July 2012 as I was also aware at that time that the Northern Ireland Audit Office, following significant concerns raised by whistleblowers, MLAs and the media, and my own Department's investigations, had decided to examine the Housing Executive's management of response maintenance contracts and that the Comptroller & Auditor General had also raised concerns relating to the Housing Executive's management of contracts as part of his audit of the 2011-12 accounts.

The Public Accounts Committee *Report on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Management of Response Maintenance Contracts* was published on 20 March 2013. Subsequent to the Department of Finance and Personnel's reply to the PAC, I welcomed this report in my statement of 24 May, accepting the ten recommendations which were made. The Report found that management and oversight of this service has been abjectly poor and despite serious problems with the management of response maintenance contracts being evident from the organisations' own internal assurance regime to senior management for many years, nothing was done to address them.

There are several other matters which I would also like to address. You have sought comment on actions by my Special Adviser. Firstly, with regard to "instructing" a civil servant to ask the Housing Executive to consider a four-month extension of contracts to Red Sky in administration as opposed to six months. I regard this as no more than a practical suggestion to assist in a situation where the Administrator may have found it easier to facilitate a shorter 'hand over' period.

Secondly, you asked about a change which was made to Departmental Submission ref: SUB 551/2012. In the papers released under FOI you will note that the initial

meeting you refer to was held on 16 April 2012 and headed *Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012*. The subsequent submission which you refer to was drafted on 18 May and incorrectly referred to Turkington Holdings Ltd as being present at the 16 April meeting. While staff from Turkington Holdings Ltd were there, it is my understanding that they were not representing the interests of that firm but rather representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, therefore, it was entirely right that the reference was corrected before issue of the letter to the Chair of the Social Development Committee.

You have also referenced alleged comments I made at a meeting on 12 March on the Social Housing Development Programme. I am not aware of any meeting on this date. I did, however, meet the Housing Executive on 8 March but the minute of the meeting does not record the statement you alleged I have made.

On the wider issue of Girdwood one of the key stipulations for the vision is that cross community support is required for its development. It has always been recognised and is specifically stated in the original Masterplan that fundamental to obtaining community support will be an ongoing commitment by government to secure regeneration of the deprived residential areas adjacent to the site. In the context of the Girdwood development that is why 2 of the areas you mention had to be included in the SHDP along side other developments in North Belfast. Ballysillan, as it turned out, on further investigation by the Housing Executive, happened to have an immediate waiting list that merited a scheme.

In your letter on 20 June 2013 you ask a series of questions relating to meetings etc about the specifications for the Programme for Government double glazing target. My motivation for ensuring the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014/15 through the provision of double glazing is also a matter of public record. When I came into office I was astounded to learn that the Housing Executive estimated that 48,000 of their homes required double glazing. I was even more concerned about the apparent lack of haste in dealing with this, as they originally planned to have this work completed by 2021. Therefore I ensured that in the Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive gave a commitment that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014/15 through the provision of double glazing.

However, I also had to ensure that the double glazing programme delivered value for money for the tenants of the Housing Executive and the tax payers of Northern Ireland. That is why I asked the Housing Executive to research the specifications used as I was concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer best value for money. Following the review by NIHE, the revised specification for the procurement and fitting of double glazing has resulted in an estimated saving of £15.1m, a not insubstantial figure. Finally, since my officials also received correspondence on this issue last autumn, I think it is worth restating the role of civil servants with regard to their Ministers, which is at all times to act within the authority of the Minister to whom they are accountable and to support the Minister with clear, well reasoned, timely and impartial advice. It is my role as Minister to take decisions. Throughout this process I have been advised by my officials and I have taken my decisions in the knowledge of that advice.

I am also concerned about the tone and manner of the questions within the Spotlight letters and the inferences from these. I have therefore asked the Departmental Solicitors to consider the contents of these letters and any future broadcasts relating to these matters and I would request that you should note accordingly in this regard.

In making my decisions, my primary concern, from my appointment as Minister to now, has always been to ensure that the services provided by the Housing Executive gave the best possible value for money to both tenants and tax payers.

I have therefore nothing further to add in relation to this matter and my focus is now on ensuring that appropriate contract management arrangements are in place and are efficiently and effectively managed. I have made it clear to the new Chairman, whom I appointed eight months ago, that this is my priority and he has assured me of his full support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Letter from BBC to Minister dated 27 June 2013

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
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TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
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Thursday, 27 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I acknowledge receipt of your two letters of yesterday's date, the first of which was received by email at 14.36, just after our letter was emailed to you. Your second letter, in response to ours, was received by email at 17.16.

We will of course ensure that the relevant parts of your stated position are reflected in the programme but it seems to us that the best way for you to respond would be to take part in an on-camera interview. This is something we first proposed in our letter dated 16th November 2012, and repeated in our letter dated 7th June. We are happy to repeat that offer again now.

If you do wish to take up this offer, for production reasons, the interview would need to be recorded before the end of Friday, 28th June. May we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

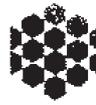
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Thornton'.

Chris Thornton
Producer, Spotlight

Handwritten initials 'PP' in black ink.

Letter from Minister to BBC dated 28 June 2013

From: the Minister



Department for
**Social
Development**

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Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

28 June 2013

Dear Mr Thornton

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

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in relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understanding of the issues to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and your focus appears to be on this one meeting (which only lasted around 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

The official record of the meeting notes at the outset that one of the attendees "advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customer" and also records that the representatives of the GGF advised that if the GGF Guidelines were followed, this could potentially result in savings estimated at the meeting as £26.8m. Indeed the Housing Executive Chief Executive also referred to their proposed review of the specification and that they hoped following Board approval to have new tenders placed and contracts in place in the Autumn. As I said above, in relation to my duty as Minister, if Turkington Holdings Ltd or any other company had asked me for a meeting I would have done so.

My focus, however, on learning of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines was to seek advice on the guidelines from my technical officials. My technical officials advised that the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its glazing specification and should benchmark its approach against that advocated by GGF. I therefore sought to progress this issue with the Housing Executive who were already reviewing their specification. The outcome of my focus in this area has culminated in the identification of estimated savings of £15.1m to the public purse. I also believe this has led to a better standard of work which minimises the disruption to tenants. Throughout this process my position and role in this has always been a matter of public record.

The current position is that, in relation to the Programme for Government target for 2012/13, 8,856 homes have been double glazed against a target of 8,600. This year's target is to complete a further 9,000. I can also confirm that the Housing Executive has taken the procurement process forward for the dedicated double glazing contract under Regulation 19 – the Restricted Procedure – of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which involved the issue of an advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. This is entirely a matter for the Housing Executive in which I have absolutely no role to play and I understand the process is still currently underway.

In my letter to you on 26 June I advised you that I took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that I have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and I demanded that these are withdrawn. To date you have failed to do this and if I do not receive a letter from you

to this effect by 5pm on 1 July 2013, I will then instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this position I am also copying this letter to the Mr Peter Johnston, Director BBC NI.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Letter from BBC to Minister dated 1 July 2013

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
Telephone +44 (0)2890 338 973 Fax +44 (0)2890 338 591



TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
bbc.co.uk

Monday, 01 July 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 28th June 2013.

I propose to deal first with your demand that we withdraw what you refer to as "scurrilous accusations" about the circumstances of the 16th April 2012 meeting, and your threat that you will instigate legal action if we do not give you confirmation to this effect by 5pm today. If you review the various letters we have sent to you on this subject (for clarity, those dated 7th, 20th and 26th June), it is entirely clear from those letters that no "accusations" were being made: we were simply asking you a series of questions. It follows that there are no "accusations" for us to withdraw, still less, to form the subject of any action in defamation. In any event, our letters were clearly marked "For the personal attention of Nelson McCausland", and I am sure your legal advisers will tell you that no action in defamation lies where there has been no publication to any third party. Indeed, it is a requirement of responsible journalism that we should offer you the right of reply to clearly posed questions, in order to achieve our goals of being fair, balanced, accurate and impartial.

We do not dispute that it is part of your role to make yourself available for meetings with individuals or organisations with a valid issue to raise, nor that significant savings were in fact achieved by changing the way in which the replacement double-glazed windows were installed in NIHE properties. What is of interest to us is the circumstances in which you announced that you had asked the NIHE to review its specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing, and to hold further double glazing installations (except in limited circumstances) until that review was completed. On that issue, there continues to be a lack of clarity.

You criticise us for focussing on the 16th April meeting, saying that you had been looking at the issue of double glazing in NIHE properties since June 2011, and that there had been "many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue". However, you have not pointed to any single event prior to the 16th April meeting at which you had been made aware of, or had expressed, concerns about the NIHE's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

Indeed, it is apparent from elsewhere in your letter (second page, fourth paragraph) that you only learnt of the Glass and Glazing Federation ("GGF") guidelines for the first time at the 16th April meeting and that thereafter you sought advice from your technical officials, which led to your announcement in the Assembly on 8th May.

However, our questions relate to the circumstances of your announcement on 8th May, and the answers you have given since, in the Assembly, in Committee hearings, in answers to written questions and in open correspondence. In relation to whether or not Ian Young and Jim McKeag were representing Turkingtons or the GGF at the 16th April meeting, your position as set out in your first letter dated 26th June 2013 appears to be that the minutes were not prepared by you and record what attendees said with regard to whom they were representing. In your second letter of the same date, you go on to say that the "subsequent submission" drafted by Mr Sands "incorrectly" referred to Turkington Holdings Ltd as being present at the 16th April meeting, and that "it was entirely right that the reference was corrected before issue of the letter to the Chair of the Social Development Committee". Leaving aside the evidence we have referred to in our letters to the effect that the GGF were not aware of and did not sanction that meeting, that evidence from other attendees tallies with the apparent understanding of Mr Sands as to the capacity in which Mr Young and Mr McKeag attended that meeting, and that Mr Young does not know why you should have said that he and Mr McKeag represented the GGF at that meeting, you make no mention at all of the reference to Fusion 21. The letter, as issued to the Chair of the Social Development Committee, suggested that your announcement on 8th May followed a meeting you and the Chief Executive of the NIHE had had "with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 (our emphasis)", yet the minutes of that meeting show that it was a separate meeting, that was not attended by the Chief Executive of the NIHE, which had nothing whatsoever to do with double glazing. This is a position that you have also repeated in written answers, without clarifying that the meeting with Fusion 21 did not concern double glazing.

With this in mind, would you now please address these questions:

1. Do you accept that it was incorrect and misleading to suggest that the meeting with Fusion 21 had anything to do with your decision to ask the NIHE to review its specification for the supply and installation of double glazing?
2. If so, can you account for how that reference came to be included in the letter to Alex Maskey?
3. What plans do you have to correct the record?

You can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton.
Producer, Spotlight



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 7

Meeting of 28 June 2013 between Minister and Senior DSD officials

Minister Diary entry 28 June

Created by Emma Murray/DSDNI on 27/06/2013 at 18:37:51

Meeting

Status: Confirmed

Subject	Meeting with Officials		
Venue	Lighthouse Building		
With	Will Haire, Jim Wilkinson, Michael Sands, Susan McCarty		
Contact Name			
Contact Tel No			
Start Date	28/06/2013	Time	13:00 - 14:00

Notes

Office Only Notes

Internal Participants

External Participants Requiring
Access via Reception

Country

Region

Constituency

Arrangements

Outstanding

Facilities Required To Be Booked

Refreshments Required To Be
Booked

Related Documents

Transaction History

Email NIHE and DSD re Spotlight Fols 28 June-1 July 2013

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 01 July 2013 08:27
To: 'records'
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

Margaret

Please see below. Please can you bring to the attention of the relevant personnel.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 01 July 2013 07:52
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

Karen

Can you advise NIHE that in relation to the Minister's meeting on 16 April 2012 the official record taken at the time of the meeting records that the meeting was with representatives of the glass and glazing federation.

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Gibson, Margaret [<mailto:Margaret.A.Gibson@NIHE.GOV.UK>] **On Behalf Of** records
Sent: 28 June 2013 12:13
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen

I have spoken to Declan Allen regarding this matter. There is no email regarding this meeting. What was released under FOI was a copy of a note taken by Declan at the meeting. I have attached a copy of the note. At no time did Declan think that Turkington were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Regards

Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:32
To: records
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

Sorry about this, but need to clarify, for the purposes of the information sought:

- the context is that there was a meeting 16.04.12 with Minister, John McPeake & Declan Allen
- also at the meeting were Turkingtons, though these were taken to be representatives of Glass & Glazing Federation.
- Spotlight, in its correspondence with the Department, has inferred that Declan Allen confirmed that these were representatives from Turkingtons
- When asked yesterday, John McPeake said that this inference must refer to an email released under FOI where Declan Allen refers to Turkingtons attending the meeting.

It is this disclosure that the Minister wishes to have sight of, urgently.

Grateful if you could get back to me as soon as possible, as the Minister is about to go into a meeting with Senior Officials regarding this matter.

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Gibson, Margaret [<mailto:Margaret.A.Gibson@NIHE.GOV.UK>] **On Behalf Of** records
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:19
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen

I have spoken with Declan Allen and he has never emailed Turkingtons or the Glass and Glazing Federation. He did contact the Glass and Glazing Federation by phone for information on best practice within the industry. Please find below a note regarding this, which formed part of a decision letter to Darran Marshall.

The Head of Procurement (HoP) contacted the Glass & Glassing Federation (GGF) at the start of 2012 to ascertain who the main contact would be in Northern Ireland for discussions that we wanted to have in relation to best practice in the industry. The objective being to obtain information that would be used to inform the procurement strategy for our Low and High Rise Double Glazing procurement.

The GGF advised that there was no local NI office and, furthermore, there was no one that the HoP could speak to directly. They advised that they had a technical help line that one could ring to seek advice and guidance on specific technical issues.

The HoP advised that what we wanted to do was to have an information gathering discussion to inform our forthcoming procurement. Unfortunately we were still directed to the technical help line. No further enquiries ensued.

Regards

Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Mills@dscni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 28 June 2013 10:43
To: records
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

Please see below

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 28 June 2013 08:32
To: 'Johnston, Jim HQ'
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: TRIM: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

I have another urgent request regarding the Spotlight FOIs.

1. Very Urgent - would it be possible for you to track down an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons (or Glass & Glazing Federation)? I think the date is on or around 16 April 2012. The Minister would like sight of this.
2. Urgent - could you provide copy of everything that you have released to Spotlight under FOI – The Minister would also like sight of this.

Grateful if you can get back to me this morning (11am is the time of the meeting).

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

Copy of Declan Allens notes from Meet with Turkington 16 April 2012

~~Meeting / Public Meeting~~ ~~Declan Allens~~ 16/4/12

Jim McKinnon - Loughborough Member } RD
Ian Holt / Michael Smith }

- Information scheme for NIHE
- They are installing meters to our account spec
- Having an agreement with a change of spec.
- ~~for house~~ ^{for house + SDK} for house as planning using SDK house
- No retrospective grant would be needed
- Length included - 1 day rather than 2 days

Copy of diary entry for Declan Allen NIHE re Meeting 16 April 2012

16 April 2012 Monday		April 2012							May 2012						
		M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
							1		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			
		30													

Time	TaskPad	Notes
07:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
08:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
09:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
10:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
11:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
12:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
13:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
14:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
15:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
16:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	Meeting with Minister and Turkingtonsm (Parliament Buildings)
17:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	
18:00	<input type="checkbox"/> TaskPad	

Allen, Declan

1

01/07/2013 16:13

Draft Submission prepared for Minister 28 June 2013

10. All documentation prepared for the meeting of 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme. This should include all correspondence, briefing papers, notes/minutes/aide memoire (either handwritten or electronically).

10

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
Telephone +44 (0)2890 338 973 Fax +44 (0)2890 338 591



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Thursday, 27 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I acknowledge receipt of your two letters of yesterday's date, the first of which was received by email at 14.36, just after our letter was emailed to you. Your second letter, in response to ours, was received by email at 17.16.

We will of course ensure that the relevant parts of your stated position are reflected in the programme but it seems to us that the best way for you to respond would be to take part in an on-camera interview. This is something we first proposed in our letter dated 16th November 2012, and repeated in our letter dated 7th June. We are happy to repeat that offer again now.

If you do wish to take up this offer, for production reasons, the interview would need to be recorded before the end of Friday, 28th June. May we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Thornton
Producer, Spotlight

RP



From: Jim Wilkinson
Director of Housing

SUB/xxx/2013

Date: 28 June 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

SPOTLIGHT LETTER

Issue: You wish to respond to a further letter from Spotlight.

Timing: Immediate

Priority: Very Urgent

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Significant media interest

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To consider the suggested draft letter to Spotlight attached.

Detail

You received a further letter from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 which asks you to consider an on camera interview.

2. Spotlight has not responded to your letter on 26 June where you advised that you took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that you have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and you demanded that these are withdrawn.
3. The draft letter refers to copying this to the BBC NI Director. The details are

Mr Peter Johnston
Director BBC NI
BBC Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

Recommendation

4. To consider the suggested draft letter attached for issue.

JIM WILKINSON

Ext 38285

Cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Emma Murray
Chris Barry
Grainne McConnell

DRAFT RESPONSE

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

June 2013

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

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In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understanding of the issues to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and your focus appears to be on this one meeting (which only lasted around 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

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Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

From: the Minister



Department for
**Social
Development**

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

28 June 2013

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Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

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to this effect by 5pm on 1 July 2013, I will then instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this position I am also copying this letter to the Mr Peter Johnston, Director BBC NI.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Email NIHE and BBC re NIHEstatement to Spotlight Fol 1.07.13

Blease, Jonathan

From: Darran Marshall [darran.marshall@bbc.co.uk]
Sent: 01 July 2013 17:53
To: Blease, Jonathan
Subject: RE: meeting
Sensitivity: Private

Thanks for this,
Best,

Darran

From: Blease, Jonathan [mailto:Jonathan.Blease@NIHE.GOV.UK]
Sent: 01 July 2013 16:56
To: Darran Marshall
Subject: meeting
Sensitivity: Private

Darran

Below is our statement regarding the meeting on 16th April

Regards

Jonny

A spokesperson for the Housing Executive said:

"The Housing Executive was asked to attend a meeting on 16th April 2012 to discuss the installation of double glazing in Housing Executive homes with the Minister for Social Development, DSD officials and Turkington Holdings. The meeting focussed on the method used at that time to install windows. The specification and current standards of windows, hinges and frames were also discussed. The Housing Executive explained that it was reviewing the specification for its forthcoming double glazing procurement. The Housing Executive was not aware that the Turkingtons were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation at this meeting.

"The Housing Executive has not been able to discuss our double glazing programme with the Glass and Glazing Federation. We had contacted the Federation in January 2012 as part of the pre-procurement of double glazing contracts. The Federation advised that there was no local Northern Ireland office and no local representative that the Housing Executive could consult with."
ends

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the





Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 8

Requests from other contractors re Double Glazing Programme

Requests from Other Contractors re Double Glazing Programme

A list of all the companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts.

Date of Request	Request from	On behalf of a Company	Additional Attendees at meeting/date
2/02/2012	Ian Young	Turkington Holdings Ltd	Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings Ltd Meeting took place on 16 April 2012
09/05/2012	Sean McCaughan	P K Murphy Construction Ltd	****
11/05/2012	Daithi McKay MLA	Paddy McIlhatton	****
20/06/2012	Sandra Overend MLA	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	****
29/06/2012	William McCrea MP	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	Kenneth Taylor, Superseal Windows Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate Norman Morell, Director of PN Gearing Dr McCrea MP Clr Ian McCrea MLA Clr Paul McLean Meeting took place on 27 September 2012

**** Meeting declined

Papers re PK Murphy Request

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 10 May 2012 08:18
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodali, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: FW .msg; INV 276 2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units.tr5

1. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-4948

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk]

Sent: 09 May 2012 17:14

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Clara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Clara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight

Subject: Invitation INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/276/2012

Invitation From: Sean

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 09/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 16/05/2012.

Re-issued with revised deadline. To be treated urgently.

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 16 May 2012 09:43
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: FW .msg; INV 276 2012 - cleared sub declining.DOCX; INV 276 2012 - cleared sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/276/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/276/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 16 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION
OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS**

Issue: Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

Timing: 16 May 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you decline the invitation to meet at this time and approve the attached draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Mr McCaughan.

Detail

Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

2. You have been concerned, for some time, that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. You have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The review is to be completed urgently and will not have an impact on the target date of 2015.
3. You also met with Ian McCrea MLA, Mervyn Storey MLA and Councillor Paul McClean on 15 May to discuss this.
4. The Housing Executive also provided the results of the review on 15 May and you agreed the category groups where the work can proceed and that NIHE should now write to contractors.

Conclusion

5. As the Housing Executive is to now write to Contractors, I would suggest that it would

not be beneficial to meet with Mr McCaughan at this time. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 17 May 2012 13:36
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: INV 276 - cleared Revised sub declining.DOCX; INV 276 - cleared Revised sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/276/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:43
To: Goodall, Roisin; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: CLOSING INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE
SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS
Attachments: INV 276.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 22/08/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE
SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/276/2012
Raised By: P.K. Murphy

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF
DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
General CC List; Briefing Request List

COR / INV / GM / JOF 276

SPECIAL ADVISER ENSR 22/5

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved ✓
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Signed: *M* Dated: 22/5/12



From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9084

Mr Sean McCaughan
PK Murphy Construction Ltd
91 Sluggan Road
POMEROY
BT70 2UP

Our ref: INV/276/2012

22nd May 2012

Dear Mr McCaughan

I refer to your request to meet Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units to Housing Executive properties. The Minister has asked me to reply to your letter.

I know you are aware of the Minister's recent announcement on this issue where he expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and the Minister therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and this will be completed in the current CSR period, any delay is to be as short as possible.

As part of the Housing Executive's review, the Minister has agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed. As he has asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position, it would not be beneficial for the Minister to meet with you at this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "pp Barbara McConaghie".

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Papers re Request from McIlhattons

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 14 May 2012 14:07
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: DMcKay.pdf; INV 289 2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme Issues relating to contractors sub-contractors.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5109

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 14 May 2012 12:55
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wali, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight
Subject: Invitation INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/289/2012
Invitation From: Daithi McKay

Subject: Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 14/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 23/05/2012.

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:35
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris; Crawford, James
Subject: FW: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: DMcKay.pdf; INV 289 2012 - cleared sub declining.DOCX; INV 289 2012 - cleared sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/289/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/289/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

SUSPENSION OF THE DOUBLE GLAZING SCHEME - ISSUES RELATING TO CONTRACTORS / SUB-CONTRACTORS

Issue: Daithí McKay MLA has written requesting a meeting is set up with Paddy McIlhatton regarding the suspension of the double glazing schemes, particularly to discuss the effect on Contractors and Sub-Contractors.

Timing: 23 May 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

**Recommendation: That you decline the invitation to meet at this time and
approve the attached draft reply for issue to Mr McKay MLA**

Detail

Daithí McKay MLA has written requesting a meeting is set up with Paddy McIlhatton regarding the suspension of the double glazing schemes, particularly to discuss the effect on Contractors and Sub-Contractors.

2. You have been concerned, for some time, that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. You have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The review is to be completed urgently and will not have an impact on the target date of 2015.
3. The Housing Executive also provided information on outstanding schemes on 15 May and you agreed the category groups where the work can proceed and that the Housing Executive should now urgently write to contractors.

Conclusion

4. As the Housing Executive is now writing to Contractors, one of which is McIlhatton's, I would suggest that it would not be beneficial to meet with Mr McKay or Mr McIlhatton at this time. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Steator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 22 May 2012 15:09
To: Goodall, Róisín; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: INV 289.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 22/08/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dspdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dspdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:49
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/289/2012
Raised By: Daithi McKay

Subject: Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

Papers re Sandra Overend Request re SuperSeal

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:33
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; Goodall, Roisin; Best, Christine
Subject: Deadline 30/5/12 - COR/405/2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme
Attachments: ek118000.PDF; COR 405 2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Michael

i) One for you. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5375

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:19
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Clara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/405/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 21/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

✉ Rm 306, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305



✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
1 High Street
Moneymore
Magherafelt BT45 7PB
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

PRIVATE OFFICE

Sandra Overend MLA

21 MAY 2012

SOCIAL DEV'TMENT

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

Friday, 18 May 2012

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister of Social Development
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

I am writing with regards to your recent announcement concerning the review of the NI Housing Executive double glazing programme, with particular reference to company negatively affected by this decision namely Super Seal Window Systems Ltd.

While I recognise the need to ensure that all Housing Executive schemes are implemented in the most cost-effective means surely such considerations should be fully assessed prior to engaging in contract with any suppliers. I request that you detail why the double-glazing scheme has been suspended and what actions will be taken to compensate suppliers for any losses they will sustain.

My constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. were awarded 6 new contracts to fit 5285 windows. In order to fulfill their contractual obligations, Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. ordered the necessary materials which are now sitting in their factory store ready to go. These materials are estimated to cost £500,000 and should they no longer be required the company will experience a loss greater than they can bear.

Several businesses have been placed in vulnerable positions owing to the suspension of this scheme and the implications are far reaching, I therefore, urge you to seriously consider the future of the local economy during this review period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra".

Sandra Overend MLA

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Best, Christine
Sent: 30 May 2012 13:30
To: stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara
Cc: DSD Private Office; Haire, Will; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Henderson, Michael; McConneli, Grainne; Barry, Chris; Mills, Karen; Kerstens, John; Carragher, Damien; Heaney, Donald; Johnston, Stephen; Malcolm, David; Martin, Stephen; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Subject: Submission to Minister re Review of NIHE Double Glazing - Super Seal Ltd
Attachments: Submission to Minister re Review of NIHE Double Glazing - Super Seal Ltd.docx



COR/405/2012

From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 30 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

Issue: Letter from Sandra Overend MLA re Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts they had been awarded.

Timing: 30 May 2012

Priority: Important

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Equality Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to Sandra Overend MLA along the lines of
the attached draft.

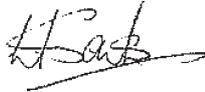
Detail

Super Seal Window Systems six contracts were confirmed by the Housing Executive as part of the contracts they had already awarded prior to your letter to the Chief Executive on 30 April 2012.

2. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

3. That you reply along the lines of the attached.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdn.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: COR/405/2012

Date:

Dear

Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations

I am replying to your letter of 18 May re your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 07 June 2012 14:28
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McCarty, Susan; Best, Christine
Subject: CLOSING COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME
Attachments: f6n22000.PDF

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 07/09/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 07 June 2012 14:23
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/405/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

Answer: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FINAL REPLY CLEARED BY NELSON McCAUSLAND

Copied To For Information:
General CC List

COR / INV / GM / TOF..... COR 1405 / 2012

SPECIAL ADVISER OR B 21/26

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

-
- 1. Approved ✓
 - 2. Noted
 - 3. Meeting to be arranged
 - 4. Further information requested
-

Additional Comments

Signed:

M

Dated:

1/6/12



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: COR/405/2012

31 May 2012

Dear Sandra

REVIEW OF NIHE WINDOW REPLACEMENT INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 18 May regarding your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 20 June 2012 10:59
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 29/06/12 - INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: 120619 Ltr McCausland DSD SuperSeal.doc; INV 380 2012 - Submission Template.tr5

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCor database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is DS1-12-6635, submission template attached.

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens and Karen Mills to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]

Sent: 20 June 2012 10:11

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James

Subject: Invitation INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/380/2012

Invitation From: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

✉ Rm 308, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305

✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
20 High Street
Moneymore
Magherafelt BT45 7PD
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mfa.niassembly.gov.uk

Sandra Overend MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

Monday, 03 February 2014 *

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

URGENT

Thank you for recent letter received last week regarding the Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations. Super Seal Window Systems Ltd remain concerned, however, I would like to meet with you to discuss the situation as a matter of urgency.

Super Seal Window Systems Ltd supply to EGAN Contracts who advised them some time ago that they needed additional windows, and that they should increase their stock levels in order to be able to meet the demand that NIHE were placing on them, in the short timeframe that was available, which I understand was eighteen months. Super Seal therefore increased their number of employees by 15 and worked to increase their stock levels to the specification that was called for by EGAN Contracts.

Super Seal are currently very much in limbo with regard to the future of their business, because so much time, effort, and expense has been put into preparing for such an huge order. The windows for this order had certain specification that was solely for NIHE order and is not therefore suitable for the ordinary commercial market.

They have been unable to get any answers from EGAN or the NIHE. Super Seal would appreciate if you would find the time to meet them as soon as possible, and I believe that you would find it useful to meet on site, at their business, where they could show you their product.

I look forward to a favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Overend MLA

* Please note this document
when printed changes the
date on the letter to
the date of printing

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 29 June 2012 13:36
To: Brimstone, Stephen; O'Hare, Paul
Cc: Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Henderson, Michael; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; O'Reilly, Tommy; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Ward, Deirdre; Wilkinson, Jim
Subject: Deadline 29/06/12 - INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: 120619 Ltr McCausland DSD SuperSeal.doc; INV 380 2012 - Cleared Submission declining.DOCX; INV 380 2012 - Cleared Submission declining.tr5

Folks

Please see attached cleared response for your attention.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 20 June 2012 10:11
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: Invitation INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/380/2012
Invitation From: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 20/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than



INV/380/2012
X/ref: COR/405/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 29 June 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SUPER SEAL WINDOW SYSTEMS LTD

Issue: Sandra Overend MLA has written again on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: As you have already replied on 31 May to Ms Overend MLA on the same subject (COR/405/2012) I recommend that you decline this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA.

Detail

Sandra Overend MLA wrote to you on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

2. You recently replied to Ms Overend confirming that, as announced in your Press Statement of 9 May, you had already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal they would continue. (COR/405/2012 refers.)
3. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

4. That you decline the invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dspdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Room 308
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/380/2012

July 2012

Thank you for your letter on 20 June on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have asked professional staff in my Department to consider the revised specification to ensure that value for money is achieved without compromising tenant safety. When this is completed shortly, and any queries addressed, the Housing Executive will communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors and suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding.

Therefore, as I advised you in my letter of 31 May 2012 that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Windows could in fact proceed, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 05 July 2012 09:50
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: INV 380.pdf

Susan

Closing for information.

Michael

Please update database "date to be closed on TRIM" = 05.10.12

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 05 July 2012 09:33
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/380/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

COR / INV / GM / JOF...380.....

SPECIAL ADVISER CM M 4/4/12

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

-
- 1. Approved ✓
 - 2. Noted
 - 3. Meeting to be arranged
 - 4. Further information requested
-

Additional Comments

Signed: M Dated: 4/2/12



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Room 308
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/380/2012

4 July 2012

Dear Sandra

Thank you for your letter on 20 June on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have asked professional staff in my Department to consider the revised specification to ensure that value for money is achieved without compromising tenant safety. When this is completed shortly, and any queries addressed, the Housing Executive will communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors and suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding.

Therefore, as I advised you in my letter of 31 May 2012 that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Windows could in fact proceed, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Papers re Dr McCrea request Superseal

From: paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk]

Sent: 29 June 2012 17:17

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James

Subject: Invitation INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

1

Reference: INV/400/2012

Invitation From: William McCrea

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 29/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 10/07/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 29 June 2012 15:46
To: O'Hare, Paul
Subject: FW: Meeting request
Attachments: SUPERSEAL.docx

From: DSD Private Office
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:53
To: Crawford, James; Howland, Marie
Subject: FW: Meeting request

For your attention

Caroline McCavana
Correspondence Manager
DSD Private Office
02890 829037 (38037)

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

*DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE*

*Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707*

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Member of Parliament for South Antrim

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

DUP Constituency Office, 5-7 School Street, The Square, BALLYCLARE. BT39 9BE.

☎ TEL: (028) 93 342727 ☎ FAX: (028) 93 342707

✉ E-mail Address: william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk

DATE: 03 February 2014 *
REF: WM/K/SA-12/244

MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Nelson McCausland MLA

Department for Social Development

5th Floor

Lighthouse Building

1 Cromac Place

Gasworks Business Park

Ormeau Road

BELFAST

BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

Sincere regards. I have been approached by the Managing Director of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. based at Kilbegs Industrial Estate, Antrim, in relation to contractual work with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Given that Super Seal is one of the province's largest trade suppliers of uPVC windows and doors, I believe that it would be of benefit to you to hear from the company at this time. I would, therefore, request that you consider meeting with me and company director, Mr. Ken Taylor, at the earliest opportunity. Given the company's business interests in the Castledawson area, it would also be appropriate for Mid Ulster MLA Ian McCrea to attend any such meeting. I thank you for your earnest consideration of this request and look forward to receiving a positive response in short course.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,



* Please note the date on
the letter changes to the
date it is printed

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

IMPORTANT - Please quote our reference number on all correspondence

Shields, Rosemary

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 05 July 2012 10:51
To: Kerstens, John; Kennedy, Alan
Cc: Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Meeting request

I know we agreed this one went a step further than we wanted and resulted in the PO now contacting Rev Mc Crea's office to ask him what issues he wants to discuss, however we now have INV 380 closing and therefore we should refuse this one also.

John will you ring the PO and tell them in light of inv 380 we will be advising that INV 400 is refused.

Roisin

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 04 July 2012 11:44
To: Howland, Marie
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Marie,
Thanks for that. We might have to get an extension on this case depending on when Mr McCrea's office comes back to you and Minister decides

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 04 July 2012 11:40
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

The latest on this is that I have to contact Mr McCrea's office and get a list of the issues they wish to discuss. The Minister will look at the list and decide on the merits of a meeting. We will let you know once we have a decision.

Marie

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 04 July 2012 10:00
To: McShane, Rose
Cc: Kerstens, John; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Rose

Any update on this?

Marie

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 02 July 2012 09:53
To: McShane, Rose
Cc: Crawford, James
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Rose

Housing are processing this INV case. (INV 400/2012).
They have just responded to a similar one from Sandra Overend (currently with the Minister) and are recommending that a meeting does not take place.
However, Mr McCrea suggests that in his case Minister has made it known that he would be agreeable to such a meeting.
They are looking for a steer as to how to respond to this.
Would it be possible to run it past Minister/Stephen?

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

*DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE*

*Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707*

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Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 10 July 2012 14:08
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Barry, Chris; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Crawford, James; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: FW Meeting request.msg; INV 400 2012 - Cleared submission declining.DOCX; INV 400 2012 - Cleared submission declining.tr5
Importance: High

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/400/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 10 July 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Issue: Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

Timing: 10 July 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: As you have already indicated that the Super Seal double glazing contracts can proceed I recommend that you decline this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP.

Detail

Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

2. The six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows have been the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA. (COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers.) You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.

Conclusion

3. In view of the current position and your previous refusal to meet Sandra Overend MLA, I recommend that you decline this invitation also. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire

Heather Cousins

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Deirdre Ward

Norman Sleator

Michael Henderson

Grainne McConnell

Barbara McConaghie

James Crawford

DRAFT RESPONSE



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
Ballyclare
BT39 9BE

Our ref: INV/400/2012
Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

July 2012

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

You are aware that I was concerned for some time that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and I wrote to the Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have

written to Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive, to seek further clarification on a number of issues.

However, in the case of the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has with Super Seal Windows, these are contracts that were in place prior to the review being requested and I agreed that they could proceed. The Housing Executive was to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal. Therefore, in the circumstances, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 12:05
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Susan,
See further email from PO re this INV.
Please advise.

Thanks

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 11 July 2012 12:01
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: RE: Meeting request

John

Rose has just asked that an acceptance letter be drafted 'just in case'

Marie

From: DSD Private Office
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:32
To: Howland, Marie
Subject: FW: Meeting request

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:27
To: DSD Private Office
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Thanks Marie, our submission has been sent to the PO with a recommendation to decline the meeting.

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park*

Belfast

Tel. no. 028 9082 9280

email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

From: Howland, Marie On Behalf Of DSD Private Office

Sent: 11 July 2012 10:59

To: Kerstens, John

Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

This has just come into Private Office.
I will print it off and add it to INV 400 for the Minister.
I will circulate this email on KN for information.

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]

Sent: 11 July 2012 10:33

To: DSD Private Office

Subject: RE: Meeting request

Good morning Marie,

My apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I have spoken this morning with Mr. Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd. Mr. Taylor has indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the NI Housing Executive. Obviously he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.

Mr. Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee. He wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with the Minister and has raised issues concerning the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and again would like to discuss such with the Minister.

I believe that the meeting would be purely for informative purposes and trust that the Minister will be agreeable to such.

I await receipt of your response with interest.

Kind regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: Howland, Marie [<mailto:Marie.Howland@dndni.gov.uk>] On Behalf Of DSD Private Office

Sent: 04 July 2012 15:10

To: MCCREA, William

Subject: RE: Meeting request

Dr McCrea

Just to confirm receipt of your email and let you know that officials are preparing a response.
The Minister has requested further information on specific issues you would like to raise to enable him to make a decision as to whether a meeting would be useful at this point.

Regards

Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:50
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP
Attachments: RE: Meeting request; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:18
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP

Susan,
Please see revised response (accepting invitation) attached.
Alan

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 16 July 2012 13:39
To: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP

FYI
Margaret

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 16 July 2012 12:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: INV 400 - Response to William McCrea MP

The Special Adviser has decreed that the meeting with William McCrea goes ahead.
I would be grateful if we could have a draft letter to this effect. There is no need to change the submission.
For information, this is the further information that Mr McCrea supplied.

Regards

Marie

Marie Howland

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:57
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McCourt, John; Crawford, James
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP
Attachments: RE: Meeting request; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).DOCX; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).tr5

Please see revised response for your approval.

Thanks

Margaret

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: You have indicated you wish to accept this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP.

Detail

Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

2. The six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows have been the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA. (COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers.) You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.
3. Dr McCrea has advised that he has spoken with Mr Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd, who indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour, in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the Housing Executive but he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.
4. Mr Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee, and he wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with you.
5. Dr McCrea has also relayed Mr Taylor's concerns regarding the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same

longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and he would also like to discuss this with you.

Conclusion

6. You have indicated you wish to accept this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN MCCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

From: The Minister

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

**Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE**

Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

Our ref: INV/400/2012

July 2012

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

I would be delighted to accept your invitation and would ask that you contact my Diary Secretary, James Crawford on 9082 9033, in the first instance to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

**NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 16 July 2012 17:07
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL
Attachments: INV 400.pdf

Susan

Minister's response. Not treated as closing because briefing request still to come.

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 16 July 2012 16:08
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/400/2012
Raised By: William McCrea

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
General CC List; Briefing Request List



From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dssdn.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE

Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

Our ref: INV/400/2012

16 July 2012

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

I would be delighted to accept your invitation and would ask that you contact my Diary Secretary, James Crawford on 9082 9033, in the first instance to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 24 July 2012 11:02
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: INV 400 2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Super Seal Window Systems Ltd.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) Briefing request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-7014

ii) When the reply is being sent back please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: james.crawford@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:james.crawford@dsdni.gov.uk>]

Sent: 24 July 2012 10:54

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James

Subject: Invitation INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/400/2012

Invitation From: William McCrea

REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 24 July 2012

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

BRIEFING REQUIRED

Minister has agreed to the above meeting with Mr W McCrea MP and senior management of Super Seal Windows Ltd. scheduled to take place in Minister's Office Parliament Buildings on Tuesday 18 September at 16:00hrs with a pre-brief at 15:45. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and contact numbers of any officials attending with Minister. Please also provide the names of any external attendees...

Please return to Private Office by noon Tuesday 11 September 2012

James Crawford
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38027

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:52
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Smith, Joy
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

From: Crawford, James
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:42
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: McConaghie, Barbara; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Can you please pass on to the relevant Officials.

Many thanks,

Jim

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:20
To: Crawford, James
Subject: RE: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Jim,

Just to update this.

Mr. Norman Morrell is the Director of PN Gearing
Mr. Brendan Mulgrew is the Managing Partner of MW Advocate

Kind regards,

Karan Spence
Parliamentary Assistant to Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 10 August 2012 16:18
To: Crawford, James
Subject: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Good afternoon Jim,

Can I please confirm that those attending the meeting on Tuesday 18th September at 16:00hrs at the Minister's office, Parliament Buildings are as follows:

Dr. William McCrea, Member of Parliament for South Antrim
Cllr. Ian McCrea, Assembly member for Mid Ulster
Cllr. Paul McClean, Magherafelt District Council

Mr. Kenneth Taylor, Managing Director, Super Seal Windows
Mr. Brendan Mulgrew, Super Seal Windows
Mr. Norman Morrell, Super Seal Windows

Kind regards,

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 04 September 2012 15:59
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Barry, Chris; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Crawford, James; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: INV 400 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.DOCX; INV 400 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/400/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 4 September 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH DR MCCREA MP REGARDING SUPERSEAL WINDOWS LTD

Issue: You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review. The meeting has been arranged for 18 September at 16.00, with a pre-brief at 15.45, in your office in Parliament Buildings.

Timing: 11 September 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you note the briefing at Annex A and B.

Detail

You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review. The meeting has been arranged for 18 September at 16.00, with a pre-brief at 15.45, in your office in Parliament Buildings.

2. Dr McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.
3. You will recall that the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows were the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA; COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers. You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.
4. Dr McCrea MP has advised that he has spoken with Mr Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd, who has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour, in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the Housing Executive, but he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been

suspended. Mr Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee and he therefore wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with you. Dr McCrea MP has relayed Mr Taylor's concerns that the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows would not have the same longevity as the Super Seal product.

5. Details of those attending this meeting along with Dr McCrea MP are set out at Annex A.
6. Jim Wilkinson will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is *

Conclusion

7. That you note the briefing and lines to take at Annex B. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

* personal mobile number

3

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Annex A

List of Attendees

Dr William McCrea, Member of Parliament for South Antrim
Cllr Ian McCrea, MLA for Mid Ulster
Cllr Paul McLean, Magherafelt District Council
Mr Kenneth Taylor, Managing Director, Super Seal Windows
Mr Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate
Mr Norman Morrell, Director of PN Gearing

Annex B

DOUBLE GLAZING

Background

1. You had concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and asked the Housing Executive's Chief Executive to review this specification. While this review was taking place, you agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue.
2. Following the Housing Executive's review of the specifications, you wrote to the Housing Executive on the 4 July 2012 seeking clarification on a number of issues. The Housing Executive subsequently replied on 20 July with further details on the specifications. However you wrote again to the Housing Executive on 16 August seeking further clarification on a number of issues.

Lines to take:

- I remain committed to the implementation of the double glazing programme being delivered to all NIHE homes by 2015.
- While this review was taking place I agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue and over 7,000

NIHE homes across the Province will have planned window replacements carried out this year.

- I understand that this includes the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has with Super Seal Windows.
- The review will not have an impact on the target date of 2015 to have all NIHE homes double glazed.
- Reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. The Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.
- I can assure you that the double glazing review will fully consider the guarantee of hinges and other alternative products that may be proposed, to ensure value for money both now and in the long term.

Shields, Rosemary

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 24 September 2012 11:18
To: Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

John- I text Susan and she will do this meeting

Roisin

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 20 September 2012 09:23
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

Roisin,
As discussed this meeting is now arranged for Thursday 27/09 @ 14.00pm with pre-brief @ 13.45 and both Jim and Deirdre have meetings then and Michael is still on A/L. We will need to arrange for a G7 to attend.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 19 September 2012 13:19
To: Best, Christine
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

Christine,
Please see email below.
Can you put meeting into Michael's diary please.
Thanks

Margaret

From: Crawford, James
Sent: 19 September 2012 12:45
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John; Barry, Chris; McConaghie, Barbara; Howland, Marie
Subject: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

John,

Please note that the above meeting has now been rescheduled for Thursday 27 September at 14:00hrs with the pre-brief at 13:45hrs in Minister's Office Lighthouse Building.

Regards,

Meeting with Dr McCrea – 27 September 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Dr McCrea MP
Cllr Ian McCrea MLA
Cllr Paul McLean
Mr Kenneth Taylor, Superseal Windows
Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate
Norman Morell, Director of PN Gearing
Brian (surname unknown)
Susan McCarty, DSD
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Dr McCrea advised that on behalf of Superseal and the manufacturers present that he wanted to raise the issue of changes to the double glazing specification.

Brendan Mulgrew highlighted potential implications if a cheaper hinge is agreed – job reductions in sector and negligible savings per unit.

Dr McCrea challenged the savings previously quoted by the Minister advising that the savings per house would be £5.86 plus it would only have a 10year guarantee and seems daft to change something that has already been proven in the sector.

Brian advised that they have carried an in-depth analysis of both types and met with NIHE who agreed that there is no savings to be made with the exception of the redecoration grants. Brendan advised that he would forward on information that had been provided to NIHE.

The Minister advised that when he became Minister he started to review everything, particularly in housing, to see where potential savings could be made.

Mr Taylor advised that it would cost more to make window to accommodate new proposed hinge. He advised that savings can be made at fabricate/fit stage.

Stephen advised that new contracts will be going out to tender shortly and this issue will be addressed in those.

Message: DS1/13/000278025

From: [Johnston, Jim HQ](#)
To: [Mills, Karen](#)
Cc:
Sent: 2/7/2013 at 07:40
Received: 2/7/2013 at 07:40
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen,

The matter is in hand ☐ I'll update you later this morning.

Jim

From: Mills, Karen [mailto:Karen.Mills@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 02 July 2013 08:14
To: records; Johnston, Jim HQ
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

In my conversation with Margaret on Friday, she indicated that the second part of the request would not be available until Monday at the earliest.

Can you check on the status and let me know how you are progressing with this? It is still a matter of some urgency.

Grateful for any assistance.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast

BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 28 June 2013 08:32
To: 'Johnston, Jim HQ'
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: TRIM: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

I have another urgent request regarding the Spotlight FOIs.

1. Very Urgent - would it be possible for you to track down an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons (or Glass & Glazing Federation)? I think the date is on or around 16 April 2012. The Minister would like sight of this.

2. Urgent - could you provide copy of everything that you have released to Spotlight under FOI □ The Minister would also like sight of this.

Grateful if you can get back to me this morning (11am is the time of the meeting).

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

COR / INV / GMT / JOF.....400.....

SPECIAL ADVISER Agree to meeting 5/3 16/4/97.

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Minister please advise
if you would like to meet
with Mr McCrea in light of
the further info rec'd from
him.

Signed:

Dated:

.....



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 9

Correspondence from the Department for Social Development

DSD Letter re Docs Phase One Letter 29.10.13



2nd Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

29 October 2013

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee – Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 14 October 2013 in which you request the Department provides documentation relevant to the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry which the Committee is of the opinion are important to the Inquiry.

The documents requested are:

1. The letter inviting the Minister to the meeting of 16 April 2012 at which the Minister stated he met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2. Any other correspondence related to the meeting of 16 April 2012 held by the Department.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
4. The draft letter provided to the Minister by a civil servant which after amendment by the Minister became his letter of 24 May 2012 to the Chair of the Committee, in response to the Chair's letter of 16 May 2012.
5. All correspondence held by the NIHE (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012.
6. All correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the Department and the Glass and Glazing Federation concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
7. Information of all meetings held between the Minister and/or the Department and the Glass and Glazing Federation concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
8. Correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the department and Fusion 21 concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.

9. Information of all meetings held between the Minister and/or the Department and Fusion 21 concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
10. Correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the Department and Turkington Holdings Ltd or Turkington Windows and Conservatories between June 2011 and June 2012.

I have attached separately the relevant documents requested from number 1-10 above. However, in relation to number 5 the Housing Executive has advised that extensive checks have been carried out which has produced no correspondence (electronic or written) between the Housing Executive and the Minister or the Department relating to the meeting of 16 April 2012. Also in relation to number 7 there are no documents other than the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 (No 3)

I trust this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

DSD letter re Docs in response to Cttee letter 11.11.13



2nd Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
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BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

9 December 2013

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 11 November 2013 in which you request further information from the Department and the Housing Executive.

The documents requested are:

1. A copy of the diary entry made by the Minister's Diary Secretary for the meeting of 16 April 2012.
2. A copy of the entry in Dr John McPeake's diary for the meeting of 16 April 2012.
3. The NIHE is again asked to provide all correspondence held by the NIHE (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012. If the NIHE cannot provide any documents the Committee would like an explanation to be provided as to why not.
4. All correspondence held by the Department (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012.
5. Any further communication held by the Department and the NIHE (electronic and written) about further meetings between non Departmental attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 (or their associates) and the NIHE as a result of the meeting.
6. All correspondence (electronic and written) held by the Department and the NIHE around agreeing the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012, including any copies of earlier drafts of the minutes.
7. A list of which attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 were given the opportunity to approve the drafted minutes of the meeting.

In relation to requests numbered 1 to 4, the documents are attached separately as a PDF document. In relation to number 5, the Housing Executive has advised the following:

On 10th May 2012 NIHE officials visited a double glazing scheme in Glenbawn Avenue; this was a scheme delivered by Mascott with Turkington as the sub-contractor. The purpose was to examine the scheme that had just been installed using the then existing fitting method. Attendees were:

- David Adamson (NIHE)
- John O'Hagan (NIHE)
- Sean O'Neill (NIHE)
- Geoff Dougan (NIHE)
- John Thompson (Mascott)
- Stephen Gamble (Turkington Windows)
- Ivan – Fitter (Turkington Windows)

On 16th August 2012 representatives of NIHE (David Adamson, Raymond Patty, Sean O'Neill and John O'Hagan) met with representatives of Mascott and with Ian Young and Cary Hyndman of Turkington Holdings to discuss the operation of the fitting protocol and to see new "A" rated windows that Turkington recently had accredited.

In relation to numbers 6 and 7, as your letter of 21 November also relates to these requests, any relevant information will be included in the response to that letter.

At the SDC Inquiry Session on 14 November the Committee also requested a copy of an e-mail, referred to by Dr John McPeake, dated 28 February 2012 from the Department to the Housing Executive to ask him to attend the meeting. This has been provided in relation to number 3.

The Committee also then requested a copy of an e-mail, referred to by Michael Sands, dated 22 May 2012 and this has been attached separately as a PDF document.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

DSD letter re Docs in response to Cttee letter of 18.12.13



2nd Floor
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Telephone: 028 9082 9325
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Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

6 January 2014

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 18 December 2013 in which you requested further information from the Department.

The documents requested are:

- 1 A written submission from Ms Susan McCarty clarifying why she sent an email on 1 July 2013 instructing a member of her staff Ms Karen Mills to clarify with the NIHE that the Minister's meeting of 16 April 2012 was with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation. The submission should include the following:
 - An explanation as to why this clarification was required;
 - Details of who had instructed Ms McCarty to issue such a clarification and when;
 - An explanation as to why Ms McCarty did not query this clarification when she was copied into correspondence indicating that the NIHE were clear in their understanding that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation?
 - Whether Ms McCarty was involved in the meeting with the Minister and his Senior Officials on 28 June 2013 regarding the information released under Fol requests for the Spotlight Programme.
- 2 A copy of the Departmental briefing note provided to the Minister in advance of the meeting on 16 April 2012 with Turkington Holdings.
- 3 A copy of all correspondence sent by Michael Sands to the Department's housing advisory unit or the NIHE to follow up on the issues raised following the meeting on 16 April 2012.
- 4 A list of all the companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts.
- 5 A copy of the Transaction History for the electronic Diary Entry by Chris Barry on 20 March 2012 at 11.04am.

- 6 A copy of the TRIM transaction history from the TRIM system for the minutes/aide memoire of the meeting of 16 April 2012. This should include details of when this document was created and by whom, when the document was amended and by whom, and who made the deletions to the document. Details should also be provided of which staff had access rights to the document and rights to amend the document.
- 7 A copy of the correspondence from the Minister to the Chief Executive of NIHE on 30 April 2012 calling for a review of the double glazing specification.
- 8 Clarity on whether Mascotts or Turkingtons benefitted financially from the savings identified at the meeting of 16 April 2012, as provided for under Section 1.6.4 of the Framework Contract for External Cyclical Maintenance which states that *"The benefits of efficiency savings or innovations are shared between the Contractor and the Employer."*

In relation to numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 please see the PDF document attached with pages numbered (top right hand side) corresponding to the numbers above.

In relation to number 5, a screen print of the diary entry for the meeting on 16 April 2012 with the revision history is attached separately as a word document. I have been advised that due to the limitations of the Knowledge Network system, the record changes are not accessible.

In relation to number 6, a separate PDF document is attached with a table listing the amendment history, along with the versions of the document. In relation to the request for details of which staff had access rights to the document and rights to amend the document, I would advise that documents stored in TRIM (the records management system) are available to everyone in the Department by default, unless other security restrictions have been applied. The creator of a document has the ability to select document access controls and may wish to place document access controls (at any stage) temporarily while editing and drafting a document prior to opening access to everyone. It is not possible to identify which staff (other than the creator) had access rights and rights to amend this document at the time it was created and amended in April and May 2012.

Finally, in relation to number 8, this is a matter for the Housing Executive who advise that Mascotts were not represented at the meeting on 16 April 2012 and in relation to Turkingtons they are not a contractor working for the Housing Executive on either Planned Schemes or Low Rise Double Glazing and therefore no contractual relationship exists. The award of the Contract Lots for the Low Rise Double Glazed Windows has been let on 4 November 2013. Neither Mascotts nor Turkingtons were successful and therefore did not benefit financially from the meeting referred to. In relation to the second reference to another Contract and its Framework Terms, the Housing Executive has advised it does not understand this in the context of the question.

I hope this information is helpful

Yours sincerely



Susan McCarty

Letter from DSD to SDC re Phase One 17.02.14



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17 February 2014

Social Development Committee Inquiry – Review of Evidence Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 23 January 2014 requesting further information from the Department and also the subsequent meeting held on 7 February where we discussed in detail the Committee's requests, including the process required in relation to the request for log reports and read receipts. The information requested is contained in this reply and the attached PDF documents.

You also then wrote a further letter on 13 February in relation to the pre-brief meeting on 16 April 2012 and the information requested is included in this reply.

The documents requested are:

1. A copy of the briefing pack prepared for the Minister for the meeting of 16 April 2012, confirmation as to who the briefing pack was sent to, when it was sent and confirmation from DSD's IT services Department (either in the form of a log or a read receipt email) as to when this briefing pack was opened by the individual recipients.

The briefing pack prepared for the Minister for the meeting of the 16 April 2012 was a hard copy which was destroyed after the meeting. This is normal procedure for hard copy briefing packs once a meeting has been held. The only electronic briefing paper record remaining is the briefing paper (INV 96/2012) which has already been issued to the Committee. However, for ease of reference a further copy is attached.

The document lists on the covering page who this was sent to and the "cc" list at the end lists who this was copied to. I have also enclosed a copy of the e-mail forwarding this document to the Private Office which shows who it was sent to and when.

In relation to confirmation from DSD's IT Services Department (either in the form of a log or a read receipt email) as to when this briefing pack was opened by the individual recipients, a log or read receipt e-mails are not retained. IT Assist has advised that it was not possible to retrieve e-mail content, including attachments, or read receipts, due to their retention policy.

2. In your letter dated 23 January you asked for – "A list of the attendees at the prebrief meeting of 16 April 2012". In your further letter dated 13 February you asked if Dr John McPeake and Mr Declan Allen could provide the Committee with the following information:

- confirmation of whether they attended a scheduled pre-brief meeting on 16 April 2012 in advance of the meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd;
- the names of the other attendees at the pre-brief meeting of 16 April 2012; and
- any recollection of what was discussed at the pre-brief meeting of 16 April 2012.

While the diary has a slot at 15.45-16.00 for a pre-brief, there is no confirmation of any attendees or if the pre-brief actually took place. The briefing submission referred to at 1 above also refers to "There will be a pre-brief at 15.45" However, scheduled pre-briefs sometimes do not occur, for example, due to the time commitment of the Minister, when perhaps earlier meetings may overrun, or the Minister's prior knowledge of the subject.

John McPeake has advised that NIHE did not attend a pre-meeting. Declan Allen's diary indicates a pre-meeting at 15.45 but it is the recollection of the NIHE officers that NIHE and Turkington representatives entered the meeting together.

Stephen Brimstone in his evidence on 9 January 2014 advised "I do not believe that we had one in that instance. I had a personal appointment. It turned out that was unable to stay for the whole meeting that took place with Turkingtons. I had a personal appointment after that meeting — I had to leave the meeting early, actually. I cannot recall whether, in fact, we went straight into that meeting. I cannot recall whether the Minister felt that he knew the issues that were to be discussed and went straight into the meeting. I cannot recall. It is possible that we went straight into the meeting and that there was no pre-briefing before it. That would happen on occasion."

3. A copy of **all** documentation related to the list of companies with an interest in specifications that had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts. This will include the initial request, all correspondence and briefing notes provided to the Minister in relation to the requests and the response from the Department/Minister in respect of these requests.

Documents attached. Note this also relates to Number 4.

4. **All** previous correspondence from McIlhatton windows, SuperSeal and PK Murphy to the Minister or the Department in respect of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

Documents attached. Note this also relates to Number 3.

5. A copy of all documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister's response to Mr Daithi McKay's AQW115/12/11-15 of 10 May 2012.

Documents attached.

6. The Committee notes that a number of changes to the aide memoire and the Minister's diary were made on the 16 May 2012. The Committee would like an explanation as to why these changes were made and any accompanying correspondence requesting these changes (handwritten or electronic).

The Department notes the evidence provided by Barbara McConaghie under oath on 9 January 2014 to the Committee that she had no recollection as to why the aide memoire and diary were amended on 16 May 2012 and therefore cannot add anything further to this.

7. A copy of all documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister's response to the Chair's letter of 16 May 2012.

Documents attached.

8. Details and **all** documentation associated with the meeting between the NIHE and Turkingtons in March 2012 and November 2011 as referred to in Dr Mc Peake's and Turkington's evidence to the Committee on 14 November 2013.

The Housing Executive has advised:

At the SDC meeting on 14th November 2013 John McPeake referred to a meeting between NIHE and Turkingtons in March 2012. He did not refer to a meeting in November. He believes that a representative from Turkingtons claimed to have attended a meeting in November. John McPeake checked with David Adamson in NIHE's Policy and Standards group. David confirmed that he has no diary entry or any other material regarding a suggested meeting in November.

David Adamson has advised that he met with Cary Hyndman of Turkington Holdings on 13 March around 10.30am. He cannot be sure but believes that Ian Young also attended the meeting. David was the only person from NIHE who attended. There are no documents associated with the meeting but David's memory is that Turkington representatives raised a number of "innovative ideas" around the fitting of windows. David advised Turkington Holdings of the performance nature of the NIHE specification and that no one supplier or product is "approved for use" – the onus always on the supplier to demonstrate compliance with the standard specification.

In terms of the fitting method, David's recollection is that the Turkington representatives believed that they could save NIHE considerable sums of money if the windows were fitted in a different way from the approach used at that time by NIHE. He recalls listening to what they said, but would have reminded them, that given the scale of our stock, most would have the "reverse brick detail" and hence relied on a window being fitted from the inside as opposed to their claim that all windows should be fitted from outside.

He does not recall any exchange of any technical literature either from Turkington or indeed from NIHE other than a "business card" handed to him from Cary Hyndman, which is still in his possession.

At David Adamson's request, NIHE has initiated a procedure to recover deleted e-mails from his account for the period in question in order to check if there is any additional information that may be helpful to the Committee. Should anything of relevance be recovered this will be furnished separately.

9. List of attendees at the meeting of the 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme.

A copy of the Diary entry for the meeting with the Minister on 28 June 2013 is attached.

10. **All** documentation prepared for the meeting of 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme. This should include all correspondence, briefing papers, notes/minutes/aide memoire (either handwritten or electronically).

Internal meetings between officials and the Minister do not necessarily have any documentation prepared in advance and may take the form of a general discussion around an issue. Following these internal meetings notes/minutes/aide memoires are not usually prepared.

This meeting was held to discuss generally with Minister the letter he had received from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 requesting Minister to consider an on camera interview. The Minister's response to this letter was issued on 28 June 2013.

Both these letters were copied to the Committee on 10 December 2013. However, for ease of reference copies are enclosed.

There was no briefing prepared for this meeting. However, the submission with the draft letter to the Spotlight Programme which was discussed at the meeting is attached.

11. Confirmation of Mr Brimstone's paternity leave arrangements, including dates of when he went on paternity leave and when he returned.

Mr Brimstone was on paternity leave from Monday 27 February 2012 to Friday 9 March 2012.

12. Confirmation from DSD IT services – including log report and read receipt- as to when emails from Private Office to Mr Brimstone on 22 February 2012 were opened by Mr Brimstone.

Attached separately is an Excel database which provides details of e-mails sent to Mr Brimstone from Private Office staff on 22 February 2012. IT Assist has advised that it was not possible to retrieve e-mail content, including attachments, or read receipts, due to their retention policy.

For information, in relation to the e-mail listed as: "Re: Invitation: INV 96/2012: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes", a copy of this can be found in the documents provided for numbers 3 and 4.

13. An explanation as to why a letter from Turkington Holdings of 2 February 2012 was only dealt with by Departmental officials on 22 February 2012.

Private Office registers show that although this letter was dated 2 February, it was received by the Private Office on 22 February. Private Office is unable to explain why this is the case.

14. A copy of the submission to the Minister which accompanied the draft letter of acceptance in respect of the request from Turkington Holdings on 27 February 2012.

Document is attached.

Yours sincerely



Susan McCarty

DSD letter re Additonal information Phase 1

26.2.14



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26 February 2014

Dear Claire

SDC Inquiry Phase 1

I refer to your e-mail on 19 February 2014 in relation to the meeting on 28 June 2013.

It is difficult with the passage of time to have a clear recollection of the events on a particular day. However, it appears that the following sequence of events occurred:

- 27 June 2013 - 13.40 - Letter received from Spotlight
- 28 June 2013 - 11.55 - second draft letter forwarded to Jim Wilkinson and Michael Sands
- 28 June 2013 - 12.20 – reply from Jim Wilkinson
- 28 June 2013 - 13.00 – Meeting with Minister
- 28 June 2013 - 15.33 – Departmental Solicitor's advice
- 28 June 2013 - 16.04 – Submission and draft letter sent to Minister
- 28 June 2013 - 16.16 – Letter issued by Private Office
- 28 June 2013 - 16.24 – Private Office copies final version to officials

In relation to the information you requested please see additional comments below.

I would be grateful if you could ask Private Office to send the diary entry for the meeting of the 28 June in a similar format to the entry for the Turkington's meeting. That is a diary entry which includes the box for Related Documents and also shows the transaction history.

The reason for the different format is that one was a screen shot and the other was a print of the entry. I have attached the diary entry of the 28 June 2013 in a similar format as the diary entry of 16 April 2012. I have also attached the transaction history. Please note this is the only format that allows the transaction history to be printed.

I understand that you mentioned that this meeting was organised by telephone and not by email but I would be grateful if you could ask Private Office to check again to ascertain if there are any further documents.

I was in fact advising generally that meetings between Minister and officials may at times be arranged via a phone call. The Private Office does not have any further documents.

The diary entry shows that four senior officials attended this meeting. Were these the officials that were invited or were these the officials who attended. Can we have confirmation of who did actually attend this meeting? In addition to the four senior officials, were there any other representatives from Private Office and was the Minister's Special Adviser in attendance?

It is difficult with the passage of time to have a clear recollection to add anything further than what the diary entry states.

You have told me that Private Office would not have commissioned a request for a briefing/draft response to the BBC from Jim Wilkinson, but can we have an explanation as to how Jim was requested to write this letter. Are there any emails between members of the Housing Director's Office and/or Private Office/Permanent Secretary regarding this matter?

It is difficult with the passage of time to recollect the events in detail. However, the Minister had replied to a number of letters from Spotlight and the assumption is that we were advised that the Minister wished to reply to the Spotlight letter of 27 June and to discuss this on 28 June.

Please see documents attached.

I was also wondering about the briefing note prepared by Jim Wilkinson. Was this letter/submission prepared by Jim Wilkinson or some other official in the Housing Director's Office and submitted on behalf of Jim Wilkinson as was the case with other submissions? If so, can we see the original draft and corresponding emails showing that it was cleared for issue.

It is normal civil service practice that a number of officials may be involved in the drafting of letters/submission which are then cleared/approved and submitted by the lead official.

Please see documents attached. Please note the reference in the email from Jim Wilkinson to "Philip" relates to the Departmental Solicitor's Office

Was this letter/submission sent to the Minister and his Special Adviser and all the parties copied into this briefing paper- as listed at the bottom of the briefing paper. Is it possible to get copies of these emails?

The submission forwarded to you on the 17 February 2014 details on the front page that this was sent to:

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland.

The cc list is at the end of the submission.

The relevant e-mail at 16.04 is attached.

From the other submissions that were prepared for Minister there was a formal approval process before the document was issued, can I ask if there are any documents – including emails- regarding the approval process for this letter? For example, was the letter seen by Heather Cousins or Will Haire prior to being sent to Minister? Did the Minister or Stephen Brimstone approve this letter- if so were emails not circulated from Private Office to the Housing Director's office to notify them of the same?

Please see documents attached including emails at 16.04, 16.16 and 16.24

We see from previous information sent under Phase One of the Inquiry that information was collated for the Minister for the meeting of the 28 June 2013. I refer to emails sent by Karen Mills, copied to yourself, in which Karen was looking for documents including an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons and everything released to Spotlight under

the FoI which the Minister wanted sight of. However, we do not have a list of the documents that were presented to the Minister at the meeting of 28 June 2013. I would be grateful if Housing Director's Office and Private Office could check again to confirm which documents the Minister did have sight of at the meeting of 28 June 2013. I would be grateful if we could have sight of all emails regarding the collation of material for this meeting.

As I previously advised on 6 January this meeting was not about the information released under FOI requests for the Spotlight programme. The Spotlight information from NIHE was not received until 2/3 July 2013.

All information available is attached.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

DSD letter dated 26.2.14



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26 February 2014

Dear Claire

SDC Inquiry Phase 1

Further to our meeting today and your subsequent email, I hope the following information will assist to clarify the query in relation to the meeting on 28 June 2013.

In your email you advise of the possible contradiction in evidence in respect of the purpose of the meeting on 28 June 2013 and attach a copy of the emails referred to. You advise that this appears to contradict the evidence I sent the Committee on 6 January 2014 in which I stated that the meeting was not about the Spotlight Fols but about the letter the Minister received from the BBC requesting the Minister to consider an on camera interview.

I previously advised that the emails were part of an exchange of emails between the Department and the Housing Executive following receipt of letters from Spotlight and in particular a letter from Spotlight on 26 June 2013. This letter advised that *"We also have evidence that it was the understanding of Declan Allen, who attended the meeting on behalf of the NIHE, that Messrs Young and McKeag were representing Turkingtons"*.

I verbally spoke to a junior member of my team and advised that a letter had been received from Spotlight with this reference to Declan Allen and it was not clear what this related to. I also said that I understood John McPeake had advised that he believed this reference related to information released by the Housing Executive under Freedom of Information.

I therefore asked her to email a contact in the Housing Executive, in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, about this reference and also to ask for copies of what had been released by the Housing Executive under FOI to Spotlight in order to understand the reference in the Spotlight letter.

The two references in the email on 28 June at 8.32 stating "the Minister would like sight of this" are incorrect. I can only advise that the junior member of my team misunderstood what was happening at this time. The meeting on 28 June was to discuss the letter from Spotlight on 27 June requesting an on camera interview.

The FOI information was delivered to the Department in hard copy from the Housing Executive the following week and was therefore not available for discussion on 28 June 2013. I have attached an email dated 2 July 2013 in which we were still asking the Housing Executive for the FOI information.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan McCarty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Susan McCarty

Further letter to SDC dated 4 March 2014



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4 March 2014

Social Development Committee Inquiry – Review of Evidence Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 23 January 2014 and my subsequent reply dated 17 February 2014 with the further information you requested.

An additional document has been located in the Private Office in relation to your request for;

“A copy of all documentation related to the list of companies with an interest in specifications that had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts. This will include the initial request, all correspondence and briefing notes provided to the Minister in relation to the requests and the response from the Department/Minister in respect of these requests.”

This document is now attached and relates to the decision to agree to the request for a meeting from Dr W McCrea MP in relation to SuperSeal Windows.

I apologise that this was not previously included.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

DALO letter re Inquiry Proceedings 26 March 2014



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26 March 2014

Dear Kevin

Inquiry by the Committee for Social Development into Allegations of Impropriety Surrounding NIHE Contracts

As you are aware the Department is committed to supporting the Committee in its enquiries in as effective a way as possible. To further assist us in doing so and in light of recent developments, it would be helpful if some further clarification could be provided on the Committee's processes and procedures.

As an employer we are particularly conscious of our duty of care to staff who will be witnesses at the Inquiry and feel that it is important that all such witnesses have clarity on the procedures in place, particularly when they are being questioned under oath. For this reason we have kept Trade Union side informed of this approach to the Committee. The Chairperson helpfully made a statement about the nature of the protection that is available to witnesses but we feel that it would be important for the Committee to set out full guidance for those who are to give evidence to the inquiry. We believe it should be possible to provide such guidance prior to any further witnesses being asked to give evidence. While this is sought on behalf of the Department, you may also wish to consider ensuring that the agreed process is available to all witnesses.

From our experience of the inquiry to date we believe that the following issues require clarification and should therefore be part of any guidance the Committee may wish to issue:

Decisions on witnesses being placed under oath/ affirmation

To date not all witnesses have been asked to take the oath/affirmation. Explanations have been offered as to why some witnesses have been asked and some have not been asked to take the oath/ affirmation. We would suggest that it is important that there is clarity on the reasons why the oath/affirmation may or may not be required, not least to ensure that witnesses are clear about the requirements of the Committee in this regard.

Effect of the administration of the oath

We would suggest that a brief explanation of the significance of evidence being taken on oath be given to witnesses who are going to be asked to affirm or swear before giving evidence.

Areas of questioning

To ensure that witnesses have the opportunity to prepare to assist the Committee, each witness has received a letter setting out particular areas of questioning. So that witness preparation is appropriately focused and to ensure witnesses are in a position to be as helpful to the Committee as possible, clarity is requested on whether it will be in these areas alone that the witness will be questioned by the Committee, and if it is only in these areas that witnesses can expect to be questioned.

Potential criticism

If a witness is likely to face questioning which explores potential criticism of that witness's conduct then we would suggest that the witness should be told in advance of the likely nature of those criticisms. This is the normal approach in a public inquiry on the basis of fairness to witnesses and since this inquiry is being conducted in public the same approach seems appropriate.

Procedures

The Chairperson has made clear at the most recent session that witnesses have ample opportunity to challenge the process of the Inquiry and the way in which their evidence is sought. He said that witnesses *"have every opportunity when they finish their evidence, during their evidence, after their evidence has been given, if they feel that I have done wrong, then they have every opportunity to challenge that."* The Department would be grateful for guidance that sets out the procedures for a witness to challenge the questioning or any other aspects of the process of the inquiry.

It is the understanding of the Department that witnesses are to answer questions that are directed to elicit facts and not opinion. We would be grateful for advice on how a witness should respond where he or she feels that the question aims to elicit an opinion, particularly in circumstances where the witness considers an expression of opinion to be inappropriate.

Access to advice

Given the nature of some of the Committee's processes, particularly when evidence is sought under oath, we would also wish the Committee to acknowledge the need for witness access to advice during its proceedings. The Department's understanding is that fair process requires that witnesses should be able to have access to such advice, including legal advice, if they consider that they require such advice during questioning by the inquiry. In light of this, the Department feels that witnesses should be accompanied by legal advisers should they wish to be so accompanied. This will assist the witnesses to participate fairly and effectively in the inquiry. In these circumstances, the Department would be grateful for the Committee's guidance on firstly, the procedure which should apply when a witness wishes to seek advice during questioning and secondly, on how interventions by legal advisers can be facilitated.

These proposals are made in the context of the work of the inquiry to date, our wish to give maximum assistance to the Committee and to fulfil our duty of care responsibilities to our staff.

Yours sincerely



Billy Crawford

Letter from Will Haire to SDC dated 16 April 2014



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16 April 2014

Dear Kevin

SDC Inquiry – Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 10 April 2014 in which you sought clarity on a number of points in relation to the evidence Will Haire gave to the Committee on 3 April 2014.

Please see attached at Annex A the response from Will Haire in relation to the points raised in your letter.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Billy Crawford'.

Billy Crawford

Response to the points raised in the SDC letter date 10 April 2014 Annex A

In relation to point number 1 in your letter, the note from Private Office that I made reference to (Hansard transcript page 4) is the email from the Private Office to Michael Sands on 22 May 2012.

In relation to point number 2, I assume you are referring to my statement “The Minister had had the evidence before” (Hansard transcript page 9). The fact is that in relation to the meeting on the 16 April 2012, the Minister had made clear his understanding and his position to departmental officials and his Private Office, so that the note of the meeting of 16 April 2012, subsequent related correspondence and Assembly Questions were amended and referred to the meeting as being with the Glass and Glazing Federation. This was clearly the Minister’s position since the meeting in April 2012.

This is also within the context of the role of civil servants with regard to their Ministers, which is at all times to act within the authority of the Minister to whom they are accountable and to support the Minister with clear, well reasoned, timely and impartial advice. It is the Minister’s role to take decisions and I advised the Committee of this on 3 April 2014 when I stated that “The Minister makes the decision. He’s the head of the Department, it’s the Minister’s decision. He makes decisions and the system then puts that in place” (Hansard transcript page 5).

The evidence in relation to the Minister’s decision includes the amended note of the meeting on 16 April 2012, the email from the Private Office to Michael Sands on 22 May 2012 and amendments to Assembly Questions, for example, AQW 11512/11-15. Copies are attached for ease of reference.

In addition, the Minister had his own understanding of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and had the advice of his Special Adviser, who had been present at the pre-meeting on 25 January 2012 with Trevor Turkington and Ian Young, and who has given evidence to the Committee including his belief, until November 2013, that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation.

DSD Letter re Inquiry Cost savings



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28 May 2014

SDC Inquiry Phase One Savings On NIHE Double Glazing

I refer to your letter of 15 May 2014 when you advised the Committee had reviewed the evidence under Phase One of the Inquiry arising from the BBC NI Spotlight programme and has now sought more information on the savings realised following the review of the double glazing programme. You were advised in January that the Housing Executive stated the overall value of the double glazing contracts is circa £23m and that this combined cost, following secondary competitions, represents an average saving of around 21.5% when compared to the average costs in the previous contract.

The Housing Executive has now advised the savings from the tender process will only be exactly known on the final reconciliation of the schemes. Additionally as a substantial portion of the savings comes from redecoration allowances the savings can only be accurately assessed once the schemes are complete.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Roisin Goodall'.

Roisin Goodall



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 10

Committee Approach - Procedural Fairness

Clerk Memo Procedural Fairness

To: Committee for Social Development
From: Dr Kevin Pelan, Clerk to the Committee for Social Development
Date: 13 November 2013
Subject: Briefing on Procedural Fairness in Inquiry

Background

In preparing for its inquiry the Committee commissioned legal advice on a number of issues including procedural fairness.

The Committee discussed the advices and recognised the need to be cognisant of the issues they raised as the inquiry proceeded and to seek further legal advice as and when required.

Members will note that the primary aim of the inquiry is to make findings of fact which will inform consideration by the Assembly of matters set out in the Committee's terms of reference. The Committee's findings of fact may carry considerable weight particularly where they make findings about the actions of individuals. The Committee should be aware of the potential impact any findings may have on the reputation of an individual and seek to ensure that procedural fairness is afforded to individuals who will be affected by its findings.

Procedural fairness is a shorthand for a number of steps which may be taken to ensure fairness in an administrative decision-making process.

In seeking to minimise the risk of legal challenge to the Committee's findings and procedures and ensure witnesses are treated fairly, the Committee is asked to agree the following approach as to how the inquiry will be conducted.

Proposed approach to ensure procedural fairness

The Committee's role is to consider and evaluate evidence in the context of its agreed terms of reference and report its findings to the Assembly. It is suggested that —

- I. All witnesses should be made aware in advance of their appearance before the Committee of the issues on which they are likely to be questioned and (where necessary) there should be disclosure of evidential material sufficient to enable the witness to give meaningful and focused answers. COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT Room 412, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX Tel: 028 9052 1864
- II. Witnesses should be advised in advance of any meeting at which an oath or affirmation will be required.
- III. Witnesses should be afforded a fair opportunity to put their own cases and to correct or contradict any statement which is inconsistent with evidence previously received by the Committee.
- IV. Where the Committee's findings refer adversely to an individual, and those findings are to be included in the Committee's report to the Assembly, the Committee may wish to give that person the opportunity to comment on those findings before publication.
- V. Members should declare any interest relevant to proceedings.
- VI. Where a member of the Committee has evidence relating to the inquiry this should be shared with all Members prior to any witness session.
- VII. The Committee should not normally consider any evidence provided anonymously.

DALO letter re Inquiry Proceedings 26 March 2014



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Dr Kevin Pelan
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BELFAST BT4 3XX

26 March 2014

Dear Kevin

Inquiry by the Committee for Social Development into Allegations of Impropriety Surrounding NIHE Contracts

As you are aware the Department is committed to supporting the Committee in its enquiries in as effective a way as possible. To further assist us in doing so and in light of recent developments, it would be helpful if some further clarification could be provided on the Committee's processes and procedures.

As an employer we are particularly conscious of our duty of care to staff who will be witnesses at the Inquiry and feel that it is important that all such witnesses have clarity on the procedures in place, particularly when they are being questioned under oath. For this reason we have kept Trade Union side informed of this approach to the Committee. The Chairperson helpfully made a statement about the nature of the protection that is available to witnesses but we feel that it would be important for the Committee to set out full guidance for those who are to give evidence to the inquiry. We believe it should be possible to provide such guidance prior to any further witnesses being asked to give evidence. While this is sought on behalf of the Department, you may also wish to consider ensuring that the agreed process is available to all witnesses.

From our experience of the inquiry to date we believe that the following issues require clarification and should therefore be part of any guidance the Committee may wish to issue:

Decisions on witnesses being placed under oath/ affirmation

To date not all witnesses have been asked to take the oath/affirmation. Explanations have been offered as to why some witnesses have been asked and some have not been asked to take the oath/ affirmation. We would suggest that it is important that there is clarity on the reasons why the oath/affirmation may or may not be required, not least to ensure that witnesses are clear about the requirements of the Committee in this regard.

Effect of the administration of the oath

We would suggest that a brief explanation of the significance of evidence being taken on oath be given to witnesses who are going to be asked to affirm or swear before giving evidence.

Areas of questioning

To ensure that witnesses have the opportunity to prepare to assist the Committee, each witness has received a letter setting out particular areas of questioning. So that witness preparation is appropriately focused and to ensure witnesses are in a position to be as helpful to the Committee as possible, clarity is requested on whether it will be in these areas alone that the witness will be questioned by the Committee, and if it is only in these areas that witnesses can expect to be questioned.

Potential criticism

If a witness is likely to face questioning which explores potential criticism of that witness's conduct then we would suggest that the witness should be told in advance of the likely nature of those criticisms. This is the normal approach in a public inquiry on the basis of fairness to witnesses and since this inquiry is being conducted in public the same approach seems appropriate.

Procedures

The Chairperson has made clear at the most recent session that witnesses have ample opportunity to challenge the process of the Inquiry and the way in which their evidence is sought. He said that witnesses *"have every opportunity when they finish their evidence, during their evidence, after their evidence has been given, if they feel that I have done wrong, then they have every opportunity to challenge that."* The Department would be grateful for guidance that sets out the procedures for a witness to challenge the questioning or any other aspects of the process of the inquiry.

It is the understanding of the Department that witnesses are to answer questions that are directed to elicit facts and not opinion. We would be grateful for advice on how a witness should respond where he or she feels that the question aims to elicit an opinion, particularly in circumstances where the witness considers an expression of opinion to be inappropriate.

Access to advice

Given the nature of some of the Committee's processes, particularly when evidence is sought under oath, we would also wish the Committee to acknowledge the need for witness access to advice during its proceedings. The Department's understanding is that fair process requires that witnesses should be able to have access to such advice, including legal advice, if they consider that they require such advice during questioning by the inquiry. In light of this, the Department feels that witnesses should be accompanied by legal advisers should they wish to be so accompanied. This will assist the witnesses to participate fairly and effectively in the inquiry. In these circumstances, the Department would be grateful for the Committee's guidance on firstly, the procedure which should apply when a witness wishes to seek advice during questioning and secondly, on how interventions by legal advisers can be facilitated.

These proposals are made in the context of the work of the inquiry to date, our wish to give maximum assistance to the Committee and to fulfil our duty of care responsibilities to our staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Billy Crawford', with a period at the end. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Billy Crawford

Letter to Dalo re Response to DSD Letter of 26 March Inquiry Proceedings 10.04.14

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Our Ref: CSD/022/2013/2/SK

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10 April 2014

Dear Billy,

**Inquiry by the Committee for Social Development into Allegations of Impropriety
Surrounding NIHE Contracts**

The Committee considered your letter of 26 March 2014 requesting guidance on processes relating to the current Inquiry. As you know the Committee agreed to proceed with the evidence session and also agreed that I should write to you highlighting the Committee's approach to the issues you have raised.

Decisions on witnesses being placed under oath/affirmation

The Department seeks clarification on the reasons why an oath/affirmation may be required.

The Committee agreed that where it had received conflicting evidence it would consider whether it was necessary to take additional evidence under oath or affirmation.

Effect of the administration of the oath

The Department suggests the Committee provide a brief explanation to witnesses of the significance of giving evidence under oath/affirmation.

Where Departmental officials have been requested to give evidence under oath or affirmation Committee officials have engaged with the Department to ascertain whether the Department, as part of its duty of care to its staff, have advised them of the potential legal implications of doing so.

In addition, prior to officials giving evidence under affirmation the Chair has confirmed with them that they were aware the potential legal implications associated with this.

Furthermore, in the recent commissioning letters issued to witnesses they were advised of the potential implications of giving evidence under oath/affirmation which they know to be false. The letter also advised that witnesses may wish to seek their own legal advice on this matter.

Relevant paragraph of letter to witnesses:

Mr XX should be aware that there are legal implications for a witness giving false evidence or making a false statement, which he/she knows to be false, under oath/affirmation to the Committee. In such circumstance it is possible that a complaint could be made to the PSNI to investigate whether an offence has been committed under the Perjury (NI) Order 1979, however, Mr XX may wish to seek his own legal advice on this issue.

Areas of questioning

The Department seeks clarification on the scope of questioning that witnesses are likely to face i.e. whether it will be restricted to those areas highlighted in commissioning letters to witnesses which indicate conflict in evidence.

As per its position on procedural fairness (see Appendix A) the Committee has issued letters to witnesses highlighting the areas where conflicting evidence has been received and which the Committee will wish to seek clarification, or further information, on. However, these are not intended as being prescriptive as individual members may wish to pursue other relevant lines of questioning. It is the role of the Chair to determine whether a particular line of questioning is in order.

Potential Criticism

The Department seeks advance notice where an official may be subject to potential criticism and the likely nature of this criticism.

The Committee would find it difficult to anticipate that a particular evidence session is likely to result in criticism of an individual as this is likely to depend upon responses given to questions during the meeting. However, as noted above, the Committee advises witnesses in advance of the meeting of the issues on which it requires clarification or further information. The Committee believes this should provide witnesses with sufficient direction to adequately prepare for the evidence session.

In addition, following the completion of the oral evidence sessions the Committee will reflect on all the evidence it has heard and the written submissions it has received from witnesses. The Committee's approach to procedural fairness will underpin its review of the evidence and its subsequent report.

Procedures

- *The Department would be grateful for guidance that sets out the procedures for a witness to challenge the questioning or any other aspects of the process of the inquiry.*

One of the roles of the Chairperson of a statutory Committee is to keep order. On page 194 of appendix 5 of the Committee Staff Guide (Guide to the Role of Committee Chairpersons) it states:

Chairpersons should ensure that members' contributions are relevant to the subject under discussion. It is for the chairperson to advise members that they are out of order if the point they raise is not relevant.

Should witnesses feel that questioning is not relevant or inappropriate they should ask the Chairperson for a ruling.

In addition, any witness who has concerns about the process of the inquiry can bring its concerns to the attention of the Committee for consideration.

- *It is the understanding of the Department that witnesses are to answer questions that are directed to elicit facts and not opinion. We would be grateful for advice on how a witness should respond when he or she feels that the question aims to elicit an opinion, particularly in circumstances where the witness considers an expression of opinion to be inappropriate.*

The Committee's focus is to establish facts relating to the Inquiry. Where a witness feels they are being asked to express an opinion and believe this is inappropriate, they should voice their concerns to the Chair who will then make a ruling.

Access to advice

The Department has stated that where evidence is sought under oath/affirmation it wished the Committee to acknowledge the need for 'witness access to advice during its proceedings' and it 'feels that witnesses should be accompanied by legal advisers should they wish to be so accompanied...

In these circumstances, the Department would be grateful for the Committee's guidance on firstly, the procedure which should apply when a witness wishes to seek advice during questioning and secondly, on how interventions by legal advisers can be facilitated'

As already noted, letters to witnesses have included a suggestion that they may wish to seek their own legal advice prior to attending the Committee to give evidence.

It should also be noted that the Committee has not received a formal request from an official to be able to access advice during a witness session.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Pelan

Dr Kevin Pelan

Clerk, Committee for Social Development

Appendix A

Framework for Procedural Fairness

All witnesses should be made aware in advance of their appearance before the Committee of the issues on which they are likely to be questioned and (where necessary) there should be disclosure of evidential material sufficient to enable the witness to give meaningful and focused answers.

Witnesses should be advised in advance of any meeting at which an oath or affirmation will be required.

Witnesses should be afforded a fair opportunity to put their own cases and to correct or contradict any statement which is inconsistent with evidence previously received by the Committee.

Where the Committee's findings refer adversely to an individual, and those findings are to be included in the Committee's report to the Assembly, the Committee may wish to give that person the opportunity to comment on those findings before publication.

Members should declare any interest relevant to proceedings.

Where a member of the Committee has evidence relating to the inquiry this should be shared with all Members prior to any witness session.

The Committee should not normally consider any evidence provided anonymously.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 11

Minority Report

Minority Report

Minority report on allegations that the Minister deliberately misled the Committee for Social Development

Introduction

1. During discussions at the meeting of the Committee for Social Development on the 17 June 2013 two positions emerged in respect of whether the Minister had deliberately misled the Committee. The position of the majority of members was that the Minister had deliberately misled the Committee for Social Development in relation to the status of Turkington officials who had attended a meeting with the Minister on 16 April 2012. The Committee's report was subsequently agreed at its meeting of 24 June 2013.
2. However, by the Minister's own admission in his evidence to the Committee on 12 December 2013 he acknowledged that he had *'inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter'*. This refers to the letter sent by the Minister to the Chair of the Committee on 24 May 2012 in which the Minister refers to having met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation. It is clear from the Minister's evidence that his intentions were in no way deliberate.
3. This position is supported by a minority of members and reflected in the following points.

Motivation for meeting

4. It is clear from the Minister's evidence that his sole motivation in agreeing to meet Turkington's on 16 April 2012 was to discuss the potential savings relating to the NIHE double-glazing programme. It is worthwhile noting in relation to this that the Minister, Departmental officials and NIHE officials were of the opinion that this was an appropriate course of action to take and that there was no impropriety in his agreeing to meet an organisation to discuss potential cost savings.
5. Indeed the Minister has stated that had he been aware at the time that the meeting had been scheduled with Turkington officials he would still have gone ahead with the meeting. Members accept this reflects the Minister's focus on the cost savings that could be potentially be realised rather than the designation of the attendees at the meeting.
6. Furthermore, the outcome of these discussions contributed to the ongoing review of the NIHE double-glazing programme which it is estimated will result in an average saving of around 21.5% when compared to the average costs in the previous contract. Members recognise the savings can only accurately assessed once the schemes are complete.

Development and perpetuation of misunderstanding

7. The Minister has made clear to the Committee, and it is supported in evidence from the Permanent Secretary and SpAd, that his understanding of the status of the Turkington employees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 originated from his discussions with the SpAd. The SpAd was under the impression, following the meeting of 25 January 2012 with Turkington's, they would be writing to the Minister as representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
8. Given that the letter from Turkington's requesting a meeting with the Minister and the subsequent meeting of the 16 April 2012 referred repeatedly to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines; and Turkington's stated they were members of the GGF, it is clear from his evidence that the Minister was left with the genuine understanding that the Turkington attendees had been representing the Glass and Glazing Federation at the meeting of 16 April 2012.

9. In addition, in a letter to the Committee dated 7 March 2014, Mr Trevor Turkington stated that at the meeting of 25 January the *'Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) was referred to on numerous occasions'*. He also stated that *'I can only presume that the references to the GGF during the meeting led Mr Brimstone to conclude that the letter was to be issued by the Federation rather than Turkington's'*.
10. The members therefore accept the Minister's explanation that the changes to the letter to the Chair of the Committee, his diary, minutes of the meeting of 16 April and Assembly Questions were based on his genuine understanding that the meeting of the 16 April 2012 had been with Turkington's. The changes were therefore to reflect accurately his then understanding of events.

Transparency regarding Turkington's

11. It is clear that the Minister never tried to hide the fact that Turkington employees attended the meeting of 16 April 2012. The letter requesting a meeting with the Minister is clearly indicated as a letter from Turkington's and this is circulated as such in the Department to relevant officials. There is also reference to Turkington's in the final iteration of the note of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
12. Also, in an answer to a 2012 Assembly Question from Daithi McKay regarding which representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation he had met recently, the Minister replied *"In relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation I met with the Managing Director and the General Manager of Turkington Holdings on 16 April 2012"*. The members believe that this indicates the Minister's then understanding that Turkington's were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation at the meeting of 16 April 2012. In addition, it shows that the Minister did not try to hide the fact that he had met with Turkington's.
13. Claims that the Minister sought to remove Turkington's from the record do not therefore stand up to scrutiny.
14. Furthermore, as noted in Mr Haire's evidence when asked what the effect on the Department would have been had the attendees actually continued to be referred to as Turkington's he replied *"None at all"*. Officials therefore expressed a clear view that they would have been content for the meeting to go ahead whether the request had originated for the Glass and Glazing Federation or from Turkington's directly. On this point Members note that the Minister had no reason to mislead the Committee as to the designation of the attendees.

Lack of Departmental Challenge

15. Members do not accept the concerns raised by the Committee regarding the lack of challenge exhibited by Departmental officials. Rather, members note that the designation of attendees was not an important issue at the time of the meeting. Given this and the Minister's understanding of the status of attendees at the meeting, it was reasonable for officials to reflect this understanding in official records and communications.
16. It should also be emphasised that the Minister noted that the status of attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 was immaterial to him and what was important was the potential cost savings that had been highlighted to him during the meeting.

Conclusion

17. The Minister acknowledged he was wrong in his understanding of the status of the Turkington attendees when he came before the Committee on the 12 December and repeated this on the 3 April 2014.
18. He acknowledged that he *'inadvertently unintentionally misinformed the Committee in the letter'*.
19. On the basis of the evidence they heard during the inquiry the minority of members who agree this report accept the Minister's revised position and that his actions were in no way deliberate.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 12

List of Witnesses

List of Witnesses

Mr Nelson McCausland	Minister for Social Development
Mr Will Haire	Permanent Secretary Department for Social Development
Mr Stephen Brimstone	Special Advisor to Minister McCausland
Mr Michael Sands	Deputy Director Housing Division, Department for Social Development
Ms Barbara McConaghie	Former Private Secretary to Minister McCausland
Mr Declan Allen	Head of Procurement, Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Dr John McPeake	Chief Executive ¹ , Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Mr Jim McKeag	Managing Director, Turkington Holdings Limited
Mr Ian Young	Former Divisional Manager, Turkington Holdings Limited
Mr Giles Willson	Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs, Glass and Glazing Federation

1 Retired March 2014



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 13

Excerpt from transcript of BBC NI Spotlight programme

Excerpt from transcript of BBC NI Spotlight programme - Phase One

Excerpt from transcript of BBC NI Spotlight programme – Re Double Glazing Programme

MMA (Mandy McAuley, Reporter): It remains to be seen if the Permanent Secretary's action will result in Brian Rowntree's removal from his current post. A DSD spokeswoman said Mr Haire was carrying out his duty to report actions he believes conflict with the Civil Service Code of Ethics. But Nelson McCausland's close involvement in Housing Executive contracts didn't end with Red Sky. For several months, Spotlight has been investigating a decision he made to alter a multi-million pound housing contract. In 2011, the Stormont Executive announced a massive project for social housing: a pledge to put double glazing in every Housing Executive home – up to 40,000 properties – by 2015.

NMC (Nelson McCausland, Minister): There are companies out there that are looking for work in the construction industry. There are tenants who are waiting for double glazing. This is something where we cannot consider, and I will not allow any possibility of failure.

MMA: But six months in, Nelson McCausland suddenly told the Housing Executive to put the project on hold.

NMC: Following discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry, I now have considerable concern around the value for money of the Housing Executive's current specification to contractors for window installation.

MMA: Nelson McCausland said changing the specifications around the windows contract would save money. In a letter to Spotlight, he says that what he described as the not insignificant sum of £15million has been saved, but those window companies that had tooled up to meet the previous specifications were forced to cut back. This glazing consultant has seen the effects for himself.

Willie Montgomery (WM): Well, local manufacturers are looking at lay-offs simply because, since this kicked off, there's been no contracts let. There's been a hold put on everything. I would visit most of the companies that supply the Housing Executive and I have seen lay-offs, I've seen order books greatly reduced and they're all sitting at the minute and if they have a few weeks' work ahead of them, that's about it. So there is, there's major implications there for company closures, at worst, and lay-offs.

MMA: What those companies didn't know what(was) that Nelson McCausland made the decision shortly after meeting with executives from one of their rivals, Turkington Holdings. Turkington Holdings is owned by Trevor Turkington. One part of his business is Turkington Windows which is in the installation business. Trevor Turkington has also publicly supported the DUP. In the 2011 Assembly election, he nominated Upper Bann MLA, Stephen Moutray.

Daithí McKay, MLA (DM): The owner of the company concerned is quite clearly a supporter of the Democratic Unionist Party, therefore, it's all the more important that whenever a member of that Party meets with Turkingtons, that that is transparent...it's made transparent to the Assembly.

MMA: But unfortunately, Mr McCausland has not succeeded in making this entirely clear to everyone. The Assembly's Social Development Committee, which oversees Nelson McCausland's Department, asked him on whose advice he'd decided to suspend the double glazing programme. The Minister wrote back saying his decision followed a meeting he had held with both the Glass and Glazing Federation, a trade industry body, and Fusion21, a social enterprise body based on Merseyside. We spoke to the Glass and Glazing Federation but they

weren't aware of an official Federation meeting with the Minister. Spotlight has obtained a draft version of the letter sent by Nelson McCausland to the Social Development Committee. The draft, prepared for the Minister by a senior civil servant who was present, describes the meeting as having taken place with Turkingtons, but the letter that was sent by Nelson McCausland doesn't mention Turkingtons. Instead, as we know, he says the meeting took place with the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21.

DM: I think it's quite obvious that the Minister is misleading the Assembly Committee so the question has to be asked, why that is and is it something to do with the fact that he suspended the double glazing scheme shortly after he held this meeting.

MMA: In a letter to Spotlight, Mr McCausland says that while staff from Turkington Holdings were at that meeting, "it is my understanding that they were not representing the interests of that firm, but rather representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, therefore, it is entirely right that the reference was corrected before issue of the letter". He also points out that the official minute is entitled "Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation", but we have spoken to one of the Turkington executives who attended the meeting with Mr McCausland to discuss the double glazing programme. Ian Young, no longer with the firm, said Nelson McCausland was told Turkingtons are members of the Glass and Glazing Federation but says they did not tell him they were there on the Federation's behalf. He says he doesn't know why Mr McCausland subsequently portrayed their discussions as a Glass and Glazing Federation meeting.

Michael Copeland, MLA (MC): You've two people saying two entirely different things and I think the Department...or the Social Development Committee would be very anxious to clarify what the truth is. There's a smell about this and if that proves to be justified, I fear Minister McCausland will be faced with a series of questions and answering them could be extremely embarrassing.

MMA: Mr McCausland has also told MLAs in the Assembly that he met the Glass and Glazing Federation.

NMC: The Glass and Glazing Federation, I think, is a useful point of reference and that's why I met with them.

MMA: It is possible Mr McCausland thought that the men from Turkingtons were there as representatives of the Federation, but the Housing Executive has told us that their two officials who attended the meeting were not aware that the men from Turkingtons were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation. What is even harder to understand is why Nelson McCausland changed the draft letter to say that he also met Fusion21, the social enterprise body from Merseyside with whom, he said, he had also discussed double glazing specifications. We spoke to Fusion21 who said they met Mr McCausland but did not advise him on double glazing.

DM: That is extremely serious because the Minister has misled the Assembly Committee. He has misled members of the Assembly and the Minister has to be held account for the fact that he has done this, but aside from that, aside from what goes on in the Assembly, this has put people's jobs at risk. There are many companies in this area where staff have had to be cut back, people have had to be put on notice because of the fact this scheme has been suspended, so the Minister needs to answer to those people as much as he has to answer to members of the Assembly.



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Northern Ireland
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Appendix 14

Phase One Supplementary Evidence



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From: The Minister

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Our ref: SUB/551/2012

24 May 2012

Dear Alex

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



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29 October 2013

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee – Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 14 October 2013 in which you request the Department provides documentation relevant to the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry which the Committee is of the opinion are important to the Inquiry.

The documents requested are:

1. The letter inviting the Minister to the meeting of 16 April 2012 at which the Minister stated he met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.
2. Any other correspondence related to the meeting of 16 April 2012 held by the Department.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
4. The draft letter provided to the Minister by a civil servant which after amendment by the Minister became his letter of 24 May 2012 to the Chair of the Committee, in response to the Chair's letter of 16 May 2012.
5. All correspondence held by the NIHE (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012.
6. All correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the Department and the Glass and Glazing Federation concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
7. Information of all meetings held between the Minister and/or the Department and the Glass and Glazing Federation concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
8. Correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the department and Fusion 21 concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.

9. Information of all meetings held between the Minister and/or the Department and Fusion 21 concerning the suspension of the NIHE double glazing window replacement scheme.
10. Correspondence (electronic and written) between the Minister and/or the Department and Turkington Holdings Ltd or Turkington Windows and Conservatories between June 2011 and June 2012.

I have attached separately the relevant documents requested from number 1-10 above. However, in relation to number 5 the Housing Executive has advised that extensive checks have been carried out which has produced no correspondence (electronic or written) between the Housing Executive and the Minister or the Department relating to the meeting of 16 April 2012. Also in relation to number 7 there are no documents other than the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 (No 3)

I trust this is helpful.

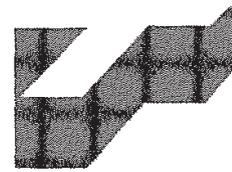
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan McCarty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Susan McCarty

No 1.

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HOLDINGS
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Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

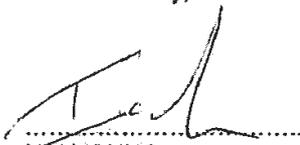
This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP

No 2.



From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

29 February 2012

Dear Ian

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B McConaghie".

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

No 3.

Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Ian Young, Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers.

The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing .

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

The representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation advised that if the guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications and supply.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however,

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indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

The representatives offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

No 4.

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around

H

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

No 6.

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 12 November 2012 13:46
To: 'pamela@gkpolitical.com'
Subject: Glass and Glazing Federation/glazing in NI

Pamela

Thank you for your email which has been passed to me to reply.

Regarding your request for information about the review into the specification for supply and fitting of double glazing being conducted by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), I have been advised that you should contact the NIHE directly at info@nihe.gov.uk.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Kind regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Pamela Mulcahy [<mailto:pamela@gkpolitical.com>]
Sent: 08 November 2012 12:07
To: McHugh, Oliver
Subject: Glass and Glazing Federation/glazing in NI

Hi Oliver,

I'm emailing on behalf of the Glass and Glazing Federation. You may recall that my colleague Emma was looking to compile a case study on glazing in Northern Ireland earlier this year.

This is still ongoing, and I'm trying to piece together the background to the current situation – I'm afraid I'm not well versed in the GGF's Northern Ireland affairs. I was wondering if you could perhaps help me to understand more about the review taking place in relation to the Housing Executive specification for the supply and fitting of double-glazed windows, which the Minister referred to during Oral Answers on Social Development on 18th September.

I'd also be glad to learn more about the specific concerns the Minister has, and whether these involve GGF members (if you happen to be aware of this). Finally, if you could offer any insight into how the tendering process may be revised for the future I'd be grateful.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

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Pamela

Pamela Mulcahy
GK Political
9 Dartmouth Street
London
SW1H 9BL
Mob: 07950 796280
Office: 020 7340 1150
www.gkpolitical.com

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Any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of GK Political.
UK Registered company no. 6784144

No 8.

PRIVATE OFFICE
06 MAR 2013
SOCIAL DEV'MENT

Fusion21 Northern Ireland
Gortfoyle Business Centre,
104 – 108 Spencer Road,
Londonderry.
8th February.

Mr. Nelson McCauseland, MLA
Minister for Social Development,
Lighthouse Building,
Belfast.

Dear Mr. McCauseland,

Following on from a meeting this morning with your Advisor Stephen Brimston, I am writing to request the opportunity to meet with you to introduce Fusion21 Ltd. Fusion21 are a Liverpool based social enterprise, they are a market leader in sustainable procurement within the social housing sector, linking procurement to sustainable job creation and skills training. Fusion21 uses public procurement as a means of training local people and tackling worklessness.

I have met with Mr Will Hare, and Mr David Malcolm from your department, and also Mr Brian Rowntree and Mr John McPeake from the Housing Executive, as the Fusion21 model fits within the policy for procurement for the social housing sector in Northern Ireland. Procurement experts from both organisations are travelling to Liverpool to meet with the Fusion21 team at the beginning of March, and meet with some of our clients to gain first hand knowledge of how the model works.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, and await your reply,

Yours sincerely,

Janis Simpson Mahoney,
Managing Director, Northern Ireland.



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dspdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Janis Simpson Mahoney
Fusion 21 NI
Gortfoyle Business Centre
104-108 Spencer Road
LONDONDERRY

Our ref: INV/127/2012

20 March 2012

Dear Ms Simpson Mahoney

Thank you for your recent correspondence to Minister McCausland requesting a meeting to discuss Fusion 21.

Minister McCausland would be delighted to meet with you. Please contact Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry on (028) 9082 9033 to arrange a mutually convenient date, time and location.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B Mc Conaghie".

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

From: Malcolm, David
Sent: 14 May 2012 12:43
To: Janis Simpsonmahoney
Subject: RE: Window Contract for HE

Hi Janis

Need to be cautious here, this will be advertised and i dont want to get involved in anything that could be perceived as offering anyone an unfair advantage etc. There's o question it will not be put out to open competition and i appreciate that might not suit your model.

It will be a NIHE contract and id suggest you speak to Declan about how they plan to mange and run it, i suspect Declan will be equally cautious about your or anyone's involvement for similar reasons.

Sorry to seem reluctant to get into this but it is an NIHE contract in the first instance and there are wider issues around it that could be perceived as unhelpful for me to engage you at this stage in any detail and for that it would be best you speak directly to Declan on behalf of NIHE.

Housing Division
Level 2 Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 02890829268
Mobile: 07748644090

From: Janis Simpsonmahoney [mailto:Janis.Simpsonmahoney@fusion21.co.uk]
Sent: 14 May 2012 12:30
To: Malcolm, David
Subject: Window Contract for HE

HI David,

Thank you for taking the time to speak to me last week and to bring me up to date on the position regarding the Housing Executive Window Contract.

Following on from our conversation I went back to Fusion21 Head of Procurement and Chief Executive to see if this now created any opportunity for Fusion21 to become involved to deliver the cost savings and social outcomes' as presented to you.

Having had the discussions a number of issues became apparent to us and I thought that it might be useful to highlight the outcomes of our discussions.

Normally Fusion21 do not tender directly for contracts as we would act as the tendering organisation for our member organisations. The prices submitted to you recently were based on this arrangement. Acting as the integrator Fusion21 divorce the supply chain and hence better prices are achieved. We believe that if you go back out to OJEU as previous then you will not benefit from the cost savings or social outcomes that Fusion21 have demonstrated.

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By working with the Housing Executive, either on its own or with other housing associations as a consortium we would be able to work in partnership with the group, facilitating the tendering process and work to drive down the costs whilst increasing the social outcomes.

We would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this proposal in more detail, realising that there is probably only a small window of time to do this. If, however, this is not acceptable I would welcome the opportunity to speak to you regarding the social outcomes element of the programme as Fusion21 could still work with the successful contractor to deliver the jobs as detailed in our submission to you.

I would really appreciate the opportunity to chat this over with you in a bit more detail and if this would be possible the best number to get me on is the mobile 07841213535.

Many thanks

Janis

Janis Simpson-Mahoney
Regional Director
Fusion21 NI

No 9

Meeting with Fusion 21 – 23 April 2012 .

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone, Special Adviser
Janis Simpson Mahoney, MD
Dave Neilson, CE
Chris Murray, Independent Chair
David Malcolm, DSD
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Janis took the opportunity to advise the Minister of Fusion 21s model which is a social enterprise which promotes public procurement and how this could be applied in Northern Ireland. At this stage Janis advised that she had already met with Departmental officials in DSD and DEL and had discussions with Housing Associations and Cameron Watt, NIFHA and outcomes has been positive. This led to a discussion on how the process could work in NI and how this would provide ownership at a local level. Janis confirmed that procurement must be from within NI and that companies would compete to get onto the list. Stephen enquired if this procurement was for housing only. Dave advised that it could be reciprocated across education, health and sport. He advised that the model had been tried and tested in Liverpool and the outcome lead to job creation.

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

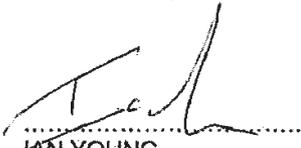
We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



10

If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP

10



From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

29 February 2012

Dear Ian

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
PRIVATE OFFICE
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276

e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



17 FEB 2012

SOCIAL DEV 'MENT

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

3rd February 2012

Dear Minister,

I am sure that as Minister you share our concern that budget allocations made by the Northern Ireland Executive to departments are delivered without underspend having to be returned to HM Treasury at the end of the financial year especially in these difficult economic times.

In light of this concern we are pleased to inform you that Turkington Holdings and South Ulster Housing Association have had discussions around 40 x 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings as part of a development on the Mahon Road, Portadown.

We are delighted that the South Ulster Housing Association have on the back of these discussions come up with an exciting and imaginative proposal which will deliver extremely good value, high quality family social housing in this already mixed housing development. We understand that this exciting proposal has now been submitted to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive for consideration as part of the 2011/12 Social Housing Development Programme.

If we can be of any further assistance or if you would like to discuss further please have your officials make contact and we will make ourselves available to you.

Kind Regards,

Trevor Turkington O.B.E.
Turkington Holdings





2nd Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

9 December 2013

Thank you for your letter dated 11 November 2013 in which you request further information from the Department and the Housing Executive.

The documents requested are:

1. A copy of the diary entry made by the Minister's Diary Secretary for the meeting of 16 April 2012.
2. A copy of the entry in Dr John McPeake's diary for the meeting of 16 April 2012.
3. The NIHE is again asked to provide all correspondence held by the NIHE (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012. If the NIHE cannot provide any documents the Committee would like an explanation to be provided as to why not.
4. All correspondence held by the Department (electronic and written) between the NIHE and the Minister and/or the Department concerning the meeting of 16 April 2012.
5. Any further communication held by the Department and the NIHE (electronic and written) about further meetings between non Departmental attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 (or their associates) and the NIHE as a result of the meeting.
6. All correspondence (electronic and written) held by the Department and the NIHE around agreeing the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012, including any copies of earlier drafts of the minutes.
7. A list of which attendees at the meeting of 16 April 2012 were given the opportunity to approve the drafted minutes of the meeting.

In relation to requests numbered 1 to 4, the documents are attached separately as a PDF document. In relation to number 5, the Housing Executive has advised the following:

On 10th May 2012 NIHE officials visited a double glazing scheme in Glenbawn Avenue; this was a scheme delivered by Mascott with Turkington as the sub-contractor. The purpose was to examine the scheme that had just been installed using the then existing fitting method. Attendees were:

- David Adamson (NIHE)

- John O'Hagan (NIHE)
- Sean O'Neill (NIHE)
- Geoff Dougan (NIHE)
- John Thompson (Mascott)
- Stephen Gamble (Turkington Windows)
- Ivan – Fitter (Turkington Windows)

On 16th August 2012 representatives of NIHE (David Adamson, Raymond Patty, Sean O'Neill and John O'Hagan) met with representatives of Mascott and with Ian Young and Cary Hyndman of Turkington Holdings to discuss the operation of the fitting protocol and to see new "A" rated windows that Turkington recently had accredited.

In relation to numbers 6 and 7, as your letter of 21 November also relates to these requests, any relevant information will be included in the response to that letter.

At the SDC Inquiry Session on 14 November the Committee also requested a copy of an e-mail, referred to by Dr John McPeake, dated 28 February 2012 from the Department to the Housing Executive to ask him to attend the meeting. This has been provided in relation to number 3.

The Committee also then requested a copy of an e-mail, referred to by Michael Sands, dated 22 May 2012 and this has been attached separately as a PDF document.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

/o

Created by Chris Barry/DSDNI on 20/03/2012 at 11:04:54

Meeting

Status: Confirmed

Subject	INV/96/2012 with Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation		
Venue	Min Off LB		
With			
Contact Name	Lynda Woods		
Contact Tel No	02838 332807		
Start Date	<input type="text" value="16/04/2012"/>	Time	<input type="text" value="16:00 - 16:45"/>

Notes	John McPeake to also attend.
Office Only Notes	

Internal Participants	
External Participants Requiring Access via Reception	Jim McKeag Ian Young

Country	
Region	
Constituency	

Arrangements	Outstanding
Facilities Required To Be Booked	
Refreshments Required To Be Booked	

Related Documents

INV 96 2012 Final briefing.m RE Meeting with Minister McCausland.1

Transaction History

2.

16 April 2012 Monday		April 2012							May 2012						
		M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		30							28	29	30	31			

Time	Event	TaskPad
07 ⁰⁰	Graduate shadow: Katrina Killen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TaskPad
08 ⁰⁰		
09 ⁰⁰		
10 ⁰⁰	CXBC/Pre Board	
11 ⁰⁰		
12 ⁰⁰	Meeting to discuss Meeting with the Minister on Double Glazing (Chief Executive's Office)	
13 ⁰⁰		
14 ⁰⁰		
15 ⁰⁰		
16 ⁰⁰	15:45-17:15 Meeting with Minister McCausland and Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings to discuss Double Glazing of NIHE Houses (Minister's Office, Parliament Buildings)	
17 ⁰⁰		
18 ⁰⁰		
	19:00 - 20:30 St Patrick's and St Joseph's Housing Committee - Presentation on the University of Ulster's proposal for their new Campus(Carrick Hill Community Centre)	

McPeake, John

1

01/07/2013 16:21

3

Goodall, Roisin

Subject: FW: INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 28 February 2012 11:40
To: 'Hughes, Lynda'
Cc: 'Pritchard, Gary'; 'Finnegan, Colette'; Kennedy, Alan; Barry, Chris
Subject: INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Lynda,
 Minister has agreed to meet Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all NIHE properties by 2015.
 Minister's Special Advisor has suggested that your CX Dr McPeake should also be in attendance. Therefore I would be grateful if you could alert his Secretary about this. Minister's diary secretary will be in touch in due course.

Thanks

John Kerstens
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Level 2
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
 email john.kerstens@dssni.gov.uk

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
 Barbara

From: marie.howland@dssni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dssni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
 Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

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3 (1)

Goodall, Roisin

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 01 July 2013 08:27
To: 'records'
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

Margaret

Please see below. Please can you bring to the attention of the relevant personnel.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 01 July 2013 07:52
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

Karen

Can you advise NIHE that in relation to the Minister's meeting on 16 April 2012 the official record taken at the time of the meeting records that the meeting was with representatives of the glass and glazing federation.

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Gibson, Margaret [<mailto:Margaret.A.Gibson@NIHE.GOV.UK>] **On Behalf Of** records
Sent: 28 June 2013 12:13
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen

I have spoken to Declan Allen regarding this matter. There is no email regarding this meeting. What was released under FOI was a copy of a note taken by Declan at the meeting. I have attached a copy of the note. At no time did Declan think that Turkington were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Regards

Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:32
To: records
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

Sorry about this, but need to clarify, for the purposes of the information sought:

- the context is that there was a meeting 16.04.12 with Minister, John McPeake & Declan Allen
- also at the meeting were Turkingtons, though these were taken to be representatives of Glass & Glazing Federation.
- Spotlight, in its correspondence with the Department, has inferred that Declan Allen confirmed that these were representatives from Turkingtons
- When asked yesterday, John McPeake said that this inference must refer to an email released under FOI where Declan Allen refers to Turkingtons attending the meeting.

It is this disclosure that the Minister wishes to have sight of, urgently.

Grateful if you could get back to me as soon as possible, as the Minister is about to go into a meeting with Senior Officials regarding this matter.

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Gibson, Margaret [<mailto:Margaret.A.Gibson@NIHE.GOV.UK>] **On Behalf Of** records
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:19
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen

I have spoken with Declan Allen and he has never emailed Turkingtons or the Glass and Glazing Federation. He did contact the Glass and Glazing Federation by phone for information on best practice within the industry. Please find below a note regarding this, which formed part of a decision letter to Darran Marshall.

The Head of Procurement (HoP) contacted the Glass & Glassing Federation (GGF) at the start of 2012 to ascertain who the main contact would be in Northern Ireland for discussions that we wanted to have in relation to best practice in the industry. The objective being to obtain information that would be used to inform the procurement strategy for our Low and High Rise Double Glazing procurement.

The GGF advised that there was no local NI office and, furthermore, there was no one that the HoP could speak to directly. They advised that they had a technical help line that one could ring to seek advice and guidance on specific technical issues.

The HoP advised that what we wanted to do was to have an information gathering discussion to inform our forthcoming procurement. Unfortunately we were still directed to the technical help line. No further enquiries ensued.

Regards

Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 28 June 2013 10:43
To: records
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

Please see below

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 28 June 2013 08:32
To: 'Johnston, Jim HQ'
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: TRIM: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

I have another urgent request regarding the Spotlight FOIs.

1. Very Urgent - would it be possible for you to track down an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons (or Glass & Glazing Federation)? I think the date is on or around 16 April 2012. The Minister would like sight of this.
2. Urgent - could you provide copy of everything that you have released to Spotlight under FOI – The Minister would also like sight of this.

Grateful if you can get back to me this morning (11am is the time of the meeting).

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

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3. (ii)

Page 1 of 2

Blease, Jonathan

From: Darran Marshall [darran.marshall@bbc.co.uk]
Sent: 01 July 2013 17:53
To: Blease, Jonathan
Subject: RE: meeting
Sensitivity: Private

Thanks for this,
Best,

Darran

From: Blease, Jonathan [mailto:Jonathan.Blease@NIHE.GOV.UK]
Sent: 01 July 2013 16:56
To: Darran Marshall
Subject: meeting
Sensitivity: Private

Darran

Below is our statement regarding the meeting on 16th April

Regards

Jonny

A spokesperson for the Housing Executive said:

“The Housing Executive was asked to attend a meeting on 16th April 2012 to discuss the installation of double glazing in Housing Executive homes with the Minister for Social Development, DSD officials and Turkington Holdings. The meeting focussed on the method used at that time to install windows. The specification and current standards of windows, hinges and frames were also discussed. The Housing Executive explained that it was reviewing the specification for its forthcoming double glazing procurement. The Housing Executive was not aware that the Turkingtons were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation at this meeting.

“The Housing Executive has not been able to discuss our double glazing programme with the Glass and Glazing Federation. We had contacted the Federation in January 2012 as part of the pre-procurement of double glazing contracts. The Federation advised that there was no local Northern Ireland office and no local representative that the Housing Executive could consult with.”
ends

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the



4.

McCarty, Susan

From: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:42
To: DSD Private Office; Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stephen Brimstone
Subject: RE: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: Turkington.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

4. (i)

McCarty, Susan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 15:12
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Will do

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dssdni.gov.uk*

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 27 February 2012 14:40
To: Bowsie, Margaret; Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Mills, Karen; Dodds, Ciara
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Cleared for issue please

John - have alerted John McPeake - if not can we please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 27 February 2012 11:07
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Susan, please see draft reply attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 09:50
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Alan,
Draft submission accepting attached for clearance.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

When advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

4. (ii)

McCarty, Susan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 28 February 2012 11:40
To: 'Hughes, Lynda'
Cc: 'Pritchard, Gary'; 'Finnegan, Colette'; Kennedy, Alan; Barry, Chris
Subject: INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Lynda,
 Minister has agreed to meet Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all NIHE properties by 2015.
 Minister's Special Advisor has suggested that your CX Dr McPeake should also be in attendance. Therefore I would be grateful if you could alert his Secretary about this. Minister's diary secretary will be in touch in due course.

Thanks

John Kerstens
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Level 2
 Hawthorn Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
 email john.kerstens@dssni.gov.uk

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited.
 Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
 Barbara

From: marie.howland@dssni.gov.uk [mailto:marie.howland@dssni.gov.uk]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
 Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

4-(iii)

McCarty, Susan

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 20 March 2012 11:53
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) Briefing request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-2001

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 20 March 2012 11:44
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington
REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 20 March 2012

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

BRIEFING REQUIRED

The Minister has agreed to the above meeting to take place on Monday 16 April at 16.00 in the Minister's office, Parliament Buildings, with a pre-brief at 15.45. Attending will be Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings; and John McPeake from NIHE. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and mobile contact numbers of any officials attending with the Minister..

Please return to Private Office by Wednesday 11/04/2012

Chris Barry
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38033

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

4(IV)

McCarty, Susan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 06 April 2012 13:38
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - Draft briefing for meeting.tr5

Alan,
Draft sub attached for meeting.
Chris in PO confirmed that John McPeake has been advised of the meeting.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
Email john.kerstens@dssdni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington
REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 20 March 2012

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

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Chris Barry
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38033

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Briefing Request List

4 (6)

Goodall, Roisin

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 01 July 2013 08:27
To: 'records'
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

Margaret

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Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 01 July 2013 07:52
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: Spotlight FOIs

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Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

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Sent: 28 June 2013 12:13
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen

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Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:32
To: records
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

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Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

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To: Mills, Karen
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

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The HoP advised that what we wanted to do was to have an information gathering discussion to inform our forthcoming procurement. Unfortunately we were still directed to the technical help line. No further enquiries ensued.

Regards

Margaret

Margaret Gibson
Assistant Access to Information Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

From: Mills, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 28 June 2013 10:43
To: records
Subject: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Margaret

Please see below

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 28 June 2013 08:32
To: 'Johnston, Jim HQ'
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: TRIM: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

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2. Urgent - could you provide copy of everything that you have released to Spotlight under FOI – The Minister would also like sight of this.

Grateful if you can get back to me this morning (11am is the time of the meeting).

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

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McCarty, Susan

From: Fiona.Lundie@dsdni.gov.uk
Sent: 22 May 2012 16:00
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; henry.johnston@dsdni.gov.uk; psdirectorursd; Heaney, Donald; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan; Martin, Stephen; McIntyre, Patricia; Malcolm, David; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose
Subject: Submission: SUB/551/2012 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS
Attachments: elo58300.PDF

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Fiona Lundie
Private Office
To: Sands Michael (Mr)
Date: 22/05/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
O'Neill Eilish
Johnston Henry (Mr)
Heaney Donald
Carragher Damien
McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Martin Stephen (Mr)
McIntyre Patricia (Ms)
Malcolm David (Mr)
McConaghie Barbara
McShane Rose (Mrs)

SUB/551/2012: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 18/05/2012 and has requested that the letter to Alex Maskey be amended. See attached letter with amendments. Para 3 - remove Turkington Holdings Ltd and replace with "Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation". Also, Fusion 21?

I would be grateful if you could provide further advice on this point to be with the Private Office by noon on 24/05/2012.

Many thanks.

Fiona Lundie (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38037

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdb.gov.uk
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

From: The Minister

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

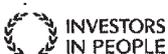
My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

Helps of Glass & Glazing Federation

Insulation?

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around



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frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



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Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

10 December 2013

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 21 November 2013 in which you request further information from the Department and the Housing Executive.

The documents requested are:

1. A written submission by Barbara McConaghie describing her role at the meeting of 16 April 2012. The written submission should include any information Ms McConaghie can give of her knowledge and understanding of the meeting as well as the following:
 - a) What Ms McConaghie understood to be the reason for her attending the meeting and whether she was requested to take notes at the meeting.
 - b) Whether Ms McConaghie took notes at the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know whether the notes were forwarded to anyone and if so to whom; and the Committee would also like to receive a copy of the notes.
 - c) Whether Ms McConaghie was requested to draft minutes of the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know who the minutes were sent to and would also like to receive a copy of the first draft. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie was asked to amend the draft minutes, by whom and the nature of the amendment. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie had sight of the final version of her minutes.
 - d) Whether Ms McConaghie had knowledge of the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 that were provided to the Committee in your letter of 29 October 2013. It would be helpful if Ms McConaghie could be sent a copy of the minutes that were provided to the Committee in order that she may correctly address this last point.
2. Information from the Department on the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 that were provided to the Committee in your letter of 29 October 2013 to include:
 - a) Who the minutes were written by.
 - b) When the minutes were written.

- c) Whether there was only one draft of the minutes written. If there was more than one draft the Committee would like to receive a copy of all drafts.
 - d) A copy of any correspondence (written or electronic) sent within the Department in connection with the minutes.
3. A copy of all correspondence (electronic and written) received by the Department from the BBC regarding the meeting of 16 April 2013 and all correspondence (electronic and written) sent to BBC NI regarding the meeting of 16 April 2013.
4. A copy of all correspondence (electronic and written) received by the Department from the BBC regarding the letter (draft and final version) of 24th May 2012 from the Minister to the Chair and all correspondence (electronic and written) sent to the BBC regarding the letter (draft and final version) of 24th May 2012 from the Minister to the Chair.
5. Any further information the Department holds in regards to the letter of 24th May 2012 (draft and final version) that was sent from the Minister to the Chair of the Committee to include:
 - a) A copy of the email from the Private Office to Michael Sands which gave instructions to change the drafted letter.
 - b) The name of the official who decided that the letter drafted by Michael Sands should be changed and from whom this official received instruction.
6. A copy, from the Department, of the email the Department sent to the NIHE General Information Department on 28 February 2013 that gave advanced warning of the meeting of 16 April 2012.
7. Further information from the NIHE:
 - a) A copy of the entry in Declan Allen's diary regarding the meeting of 16 April 2012.
 - b) The personal notes taken by Declan Allen at the meeting of 16 April 2012.

In relation to numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7, the relevant documents are now attached (in two PDF documents). In relation to numbers 5 and 6, the relevant documents have already been forwarded to you with my letter dated 9 December 2013.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Susan McCarty

3 & 4

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Friday, 7th June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF:

MR STEPHEN BRIMSTONE
MINISTER'S SPECIAL ADVISOR
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD,
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr Brimstone,

I am a producer in the Television Current Affairs department at BBC Northern Ireland. My colleague, John O'Kane, wrote to you in November in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive ("NIHE") to terminate its "response maintenance" contracts with Red Sky Group Limited ("Red Sky") in July 2011. We are currently preparing to transmit a Spotlight programme about that investigation, and you will be notified of the exact date. To date we have not received a reply to the questions that were put to you and I would be very grateful if you would address them. For your convenience, I am enclosing a further copy of that letter.

I also have some additional questions to put to you arising from information that has come to light since November.

1. In our view, your conduct in your telephone conversation with Mrs Jenny Palmer, as outlined in Mr O'Kane's letter, breached the Northern Ireland Special Advisers' Code, in that:
 - a) you were acting to further "the private interests of others", namely the representatives of Red Sky in their desire to be in a position to bid for the contracts that had recently been stripped from Red Sky, using a new company to be formed for that purpose;
 - b) you breached the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity and openness, by seeking to influence a democratic process in the above manner; and
 - c) you were acting for party political purposes, by seeking to influence a member of the NIHE to act in the interests of a political party.

2. We have evidence that on July 5, 2011, you instructed a civil servant, Michael Sands, to ask the Housing Executive to consider a four-month extension of contracts to Red Sky in administration, as opposed to six months. It is our understanding that your conduct in making the request for a contract extension to the NIHE breached the Northern Ireland Code

of Conduct for Special Advisors, in that you were acting to further "the private interests of others". How do you respond?

3. In May 2012 you were sent a draft of a letter (Dept. ref.: SUB/551/2012) for the Minister of Social Development to send to the Chairman of the Social Development Committee. That draft referred to a meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd. That reference was changed to refer to a meeting with the Glazing and Federation and Fusion21. Were you aware of that change or were you responsible for it?
4. In June 2011, the Glass and Glazing Federation issued a press release saying "*a relationship is being established with Mr McCausland's adviser*". Did that relationship lead to the April 2012 meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd?

Please confirm receipt of this letter. I reiterate that I would be grateful if you would reply to these questions, preferably in an on-camera interview to be recorded at a mutually convenient time and place. If you would like to do an interview, for production reasons we would need to know your intentions as soon as possible. If you reply by way of a written statement, we would need your responses no later than 5pm on June 12th, 2013.

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton
Producer

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Friday, 7th June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I am a producer in the Television Current Affairs department at BBC Northern Ireland. My colleague, John O'Kane, wrote to you in November in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive ("NIHE") to terminate its "response maintenance" contracts with Red Sky Group Limited ("Red Sky") in July 2011. We are currently preparing to transmit a Spotlight programme about that investigation, and we will inform you of the exact date. To date we have not received a reply to the questions that were put to you and I would be very grateful if you would address them. For your convenience, I am enclosing a further copy of that letter.

I also have some additional questions to put to you arising from information that has come to light since November.

With regard to the 27th June 2011 meeting you attended along with Peter Robinson, Stephen Brimstone, DUP colleagues, DSD officials and representatives of Red Sky, then in administration:

1. Can you account for the fact that neither the NIHE nor the administrators of Red Sky were represented?
2. Do you think it was appropriate to discuss the affairs of a company in administration in the absence of the administrators, and the possible extension of that company's contract in the absence of the both the administrators and the NIHE (a body at arm's length to your department) as contracting party?
3. What did you understand by the "irregularities" referred to by Peter Cooke at that meeting?
4. Do you think it was appropriate to be involved in discussions the object of which was to assist the representatives of Red Sky in their desire to be in a position to bid for the

contracts that had recently been stripped from Red Sky, using a new company to be formed for that purpose?

5. At what stage did you become aware that this was the intention of Mr Cooke and Mr Rooney?
6. In the minutes of that meeting, you are recorded as having expressed a wish "to have the administrator in place until the end of August to allow all issues relating to the handover of the contracts to be considered, *during this time the proposed new company might also be able to progress matters*" [our italics]. It is evident from subsequent events that that desire was acted upon. Do you accept that, in so doing, you were favouring a proposed new company over other potential purchasers of the business, in circumstances where you had no basis for forming a view as to the ability of the proposed new company to fulfil any contract?
7. What, if any, steps did you take to ensure that the NIHE was made fully aware of what had been discussed?
8. In our view, your conduct as evidenced by the minute of the meeting and subsequently in correspondence with the Housing Executive breached the Ministerial Code, in the following respects:
 - (a) The requirement that you "must at all times observe the highest standards of propriety and regularity involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relationship to the stewardship of public funds";
 - (b) The requirement for openness and objectivity contained in the Principles of Public Life; and
 - (c) The requirement that you "operate in a way conducive to promoting good community relations and equality of treatment".

How do you respond?

9. What actions have you taken as a result of the ASM Horwath report commissioned by your department?

Other matters.

10. In a May 24, 2012 letter to the Social Development Committee, you said you "met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion21 to discuss double glazing specification in NIHE properties". The original draft of this letter refers to a single meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd. We have evidence that you did not discuss double glazing specifications with Fusion21. Why did you not inform the Social Development Committee about the involvement in Turkington Holdings in your decision to review the NIHE double glazing programme?
11. Were you aware Trevor Turkington, the owner of Turkington Holdings Ltd, is a supporter of your party? Did that have any bearing on your meeting and subsequent actions?

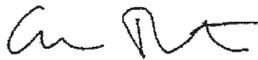
12. We have evidence that the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive was not present at the Fusion21 meeting, as your letter states. Why did you tell the Committee he was present?

13. We have evidence that during a March 12, 2012 briefing on the Social Housing Development Programme, you said the number of housing schemes planned for Tiger's Bay, Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark, Ballysillan were "unacceptable". You were told an economic appraisal did not support further new builds in Tiger's Bay, but you did not accept that. You said "the future of Girdwood would rest on the 4 schemes being included firmly on the SHDP". Do you accept this version of events? In whose interests were you acting in promoting those four schemes?

Please confirm receipt of this letter. I reiterate that I would be grateful if you would reply to these questions, preferably in an on-camera interview to be recorded at a mutually convenient time and place. If you would like to do an interview, for production reasons we would need to know your intentions as soon as possible. If you reply by way of a written statement, we would need your responses no later than 5pm on June 12th, 2013.

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton

Producer, Spotlight

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Thursday, 20 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

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MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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BELFAST, BT7 2JB

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Dear Minister,

I have not received any acknowledgment of the letter I wrote to you on 7th June, with which I enclosed a further copy of my colleague, John O'Kane's letter to you dated 16th November 2012, which had also met with no response or acknowledgment from you.

Notwithstanding your failure to respond to our questions so far, I have further specific questions to put to you concerning your decision in May 2012 to announce a review of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's ("NIHE") double glazing programme for its portfolio of properties.

The following questions relate to answers you have given publicly in your capacity as Minister: in the Assembly, in Committee hearings, in written answers and in open correspondence.

1. When you announced that you had asked the NIHE "to rigorously review the entire glazing specification" on 8th May 2012, you stated that your concerns had arisen "following discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry". In a number of subsequent answers, you indicated that your concerns arose as a result of the high cost of the NIHE's double glazing programme (see, for example, the answer to Mr Daithí McKay, AQW 11513/11-15, on 25th May 2012). Which of these answers was true? If your position is that high costs were at least partly involved, please provide evidence to show that you had previously felt or expressed such concerns.
2. You have also stated, on a number of occasions (see, for example, your answer to a number of questions in the Assembly on 22nd May 2012), that you had had these concerns "for some time". If that answer (and others to the same effect) was true and not misleading, please state when you first started to feel those concerns, and provide evidence to support that.
3. As stated above, on 8th May 2012, you stated that you had had "discussions [in the plural] with those in the glass and glazing industry". If that answer was true and not misleading, please state with whom and on what dates these discussions (plural) took place.

4. On 16th May 2012, Alex Maskey, chair of the Committee for Social Development, wrote to you (among other things) in relation to the answer you had given in the Assembly on 8th May. With regard to your statement that you had had "discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry", Mr Maskey asked you "who specifically has provided this advice to you". In your written response, dated 24th May 2012, you stated as follows:

"... along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors."

If that answer was true and not misleading with respect to Ian Young and Jim McKeag, of Turkington Holdings Ltd, who attended the meeting with you on 16th April 2012, please specify precisely in what respect they were acting as representatives of the GGF and what steps you took, or caused to be taken, to establish that they were indeed acting as representatives of the GGF and were duly authorised to do so.

5. If that answer was true and not misleading with respect to Fusion 21, please explain in what respect Fusion 21 are connected to, or representatives of, the GGF. Please also clarify whether the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive attended the meeting on 23rd April with Fusion 21. Please also clarify whether the meeting with Fusion 21 in any way concerned the question of double glazing specifications, and, if so, please provide evidence to support this. Please also clarify whether there was a single meeting with representatives of the GGF and Fusion 21, or more than one.
6. On 5th December 2012, in response to a written question from Mr McKay, you stated that you had "met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation twice [our emphasis]". Please state with whom and on what dates these meetings took place. If your answer is that one of the meetings in question was with Fusion 21, do you still stand by that answer?
7. If you accept that any of the answers referred to above was untrue and misleading, what steps do you propose to take to correct the record?

The following questions concern a meeting held at the Department of Social Development ("DSD") offices on 16th April 2012

Two of those who attended that meeting, Jim McKeag and Ian Young, are stated in the minute to be "representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation" ("GGF"). In fact, they were both representatives of a private company, Turkington Holdings Limited ("Turkington") and were not acting on behalf of the GGF.

8. Do you accept that the letter from Mr Young dated 2nd February 2012 suggesting a meeting was shown to you, or at least that the contents were referred to you? Do you also accept that, in instructing your private secretary to agree to a meeting, you stated that you believed it would be beneficial for the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also?
9. Do you accept that, in light of the above, there was no proper basis upon which you could have believed that Messrs Young and McKeag were acting on behalf of the GGF?

10. Why did you allow those two representatives to be styled in the minutes as “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation”, when they were not?
11. Did you make any checks, or cause any checks to be made, with the GGF to establish whether the Turkingtons representatives had any authority to represent the GGF? Please provide evidence.
12. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to follow up the discussions at the meeting with the GGF? Please provide evidence.
13. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to follow up the discussions at the meeting with Turkingtons? Please provide evidence.
14. What, if any, steps did you take or cause to be taken to ensure that what you were being told by the Turkingtons representatives did in fact accord with the views of the GGF?
15. What, if any, independent research did you do, or cause to be done, into the claims made to you by the Turkingtons representatives, before you wrote to the chief executive of the NIHE, instructing him to put all further double glazing on hold whilst a review of the glazing specification was carried out? Please provide full details.

The following questions concern your letter dated 24th May 2012 to Alex Maskey, chair of the Committee for Social Development

A draft of that letter, sent to you on 18th May 2012 by Michael Sands, purporting to explain the basis upon which your announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme was made, has been released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The recommended draft letter stated that you had “met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties”. However, in the final version of that letter signed by you on 24th May 2012, the reference to “Turkington Holdings Ltd” had been changed to “representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21”.

16. Since Mr Sands was also present at the 16 April meeting, do you accept that his recommended draft reflected his understanding of the capacity in which Messrs Young and McKeag attended that meeting?
17. Did you cause Mr Sands’ recommended draft to be changed? If not, were you aware of the change that had been made, and did you approve it?

With reference to the suggestion in the letter that a meeting, on 23rd April 2012, with representatives of Fusion 21 concerned double glazing specifications in NIHE properties and had had a bearing on your announcement:

18. Why did you allow the impression to be created that there had been a single meeting with representatives of the GGF and Fusion 21, when in fact there were two, separate meetings?
19. Why did you allow the impression to be created that the meeting with Fusion 21 had anything to do with double glazing specifications in NIHE properties, when it did not?
20. Why did you allow the impression to be created that the chief executive of the NIHE had attended the meeting with Fusion 21, when he had not?

21. Do you accept that, in sending this letter, you misled the chair of an Assembly cross party committee?
22. Do you accept that, in your earlier statement in the Assembly on 8th May when you referred to "discussions with those in the glass and glazing industry", you misled the Assembly as to the nature and extent of those discussions?
23. Do you accept that, in subsequent written answers, you have also repeatedly given a misleading impression as to the nature and extent of your discussions with representatives of the glass and glazing industry, whether members of the GGF or otherwise?
24. It has been suggested to us that your actions in this respect were calculated to conceal the fact that your announcement on 8th May was based solely on a meeting with representatives of a private company, a matter of a few days earlier, by creating the false impression that they had been influenced by representatives of an industry federation and another body. How do you respond?

These are plainly matters of the utmost seriousness. Our Spotlight programme concerning issues surrounding the NIHE's termination of its contracts with Red Sky, and other matters including those referred to above, is in the final stages of being prepared for broadcast. If you wish to have your position reflected in that programme, may we please hear from you by no later than 5pm on **Tuesday, June 25th.**

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton.

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Wednesday; 26 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

The deadline we set for you to respond to our most recent letter dated 20th June 2013 passed at 5pm yesterday and, once again, we have not had an acknowledgment from you. Even though it is clear that you have no intention of engaging with us, in the interests of responsible journalism, we wish to give you one final opportunity to respond. This will include a further question we wish to put to you, based on some new evidence we have obtained since our letter of 20th June.

We have now received confirmation from the Glass and Glazing Federation ("GGF") that they were not aware of, and did not sanction, the 16th April 2012 meeting attended by Ian Young and Jim McKeag of Turkington Holdings Limited ("Turkingtons"). We also have evidence that it was the understanding of Declan Allen, who attended the meeting on behalf of the NIHE, that Messrs Young and McKeag were representing Turkingtons. Furthermore, Mr Young has confirmed to us that he was at the meeting on behalf of Turkingtons and does not know why you would have said that he and Mr McKeag represented the GGF at that meeting.

In light of the above, do you now accept that you have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of this meeting, in the Assembly, in Committee, in answers to written Assembly questions, and in correspondence with the chairman of the Assembly Committee with oversight of your department?

Your failure to take up in any way the repeated opportunities we have given you to explain your position can only be read as an acceptance that there can be no innocent explanation for your conduct. Our Spotlight programme is now almost finalised, and will be broadcast

without further notice to you. If you do wish to have your position reflected in the programme, may we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,



RP

Chris Thornton.
Producer, Spotlight

314



From: the Minister

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Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

26 June 2013

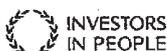
Dear Chris,

I refer to your letters of 7 and 20 June 2013 and that of your colleague, John O'Kane, to me in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to terminate its response maintenance contracts with the Red Sky Group Ltd in July 2011.

My position in relation to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract by the Housing Executive in July 2011 has already been a matter of public record for some time and any responses to the questions you pose, I believe are already in the public domain. It may be useful however to set out the background and present position in relation to contract management by the Housing Executive which has moved on significantly from the issues you now raise.

Shortly after taking up office in May 2011, I expressed my concerns about the issue of contract management, both on foot of briefing on the governance review findings carried out in 2010, and on the issues leading to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract in July 2011.

Whilst there has been a great deal of speculation and innuendo that I sought to either extend the contract with the Red Sky Group or indeed to assign the contract to a new company, this was not the case. I think that any examination of the series of correspondence between myself and the then Chairman of Housing Executive, already in the public domain, makes this abundantly clear.



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In particular my letter to the then Chairman on 7 July makes it clear that I believed the most appropriate way forward was for an open procurement exercise for the Red Sky Group contracts to be undertaken. This was subject to the administrator being able to provide assurance that those contracts could be serviced until such an exercise could be undertaken. When the Housing Executive advised that the administrator could only provide services until the end of July and thereafter the Company would be sold, and that it would take in the region of four months for an open procurement exercise, I confirmed to the then Chairman that NIHE should proceed with the termination of the Red Sky Group contracts and re-assign those contracts to adjacent contractors to ensure continued provision of services to tenants.

However, in light of my continuing concerns that the issues which led to the termination of the Red Sky Group contract by the Housing Executive may be present in other contracts which had not been the subject of any full investigation, I asked that a forensic investigation was carried out of a sample of Housing Executive maintenance contracts to provide me with assurances in relation to the other contracts and contractors, the quality of services to tenants and the proper use of public funds. This investigation report which is available on the Department's web site identified serious failures and confirmed that I was right to have concerns. This was all the more alarming since the failings identified in this report post-dated the work NIHE had already done in relation to the Red Sky Group contracts.

I then made a statement to the Assembly on 3 July 2012 as I was also aware at that time that the Northern Ireland Audit Office, following significant concerns raised by whistleblowers, MLAs and the media, and my own Department's investigations, had decided to examine the Housing Executive's management of response maintenance contracts and that the Comptroller & Auditor General had also raised concerns relating to the Housing Executive's management of contracts as part of his audit of the 2011-12 accounts.

The Public Accounts Committee *Report on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Management of Response Maintenance Contracts* was published on 20 March 2013. Subsequent to the Department of Finance and Personnel's reply to the PAC, I welcomed this report in my statement of 24 May, accepting the ten recommendations which were made. The Report found that management and oversight of this service has been abjectly poor and despite serious problems with the management of response maintenance contracts being evident from the organisations' own internal assurance regime to senior management for many years, nothing was done to address them.

There are several other matters which I would also like to address. You have sought comment on actions by my Special Adviser. Firstly, with regard to "instructing" a civil servant to ask the Housing Executive to consider a four-month extension of contracts to Red Sky in administration as opposed to six months. I regard this as no more than a practical suggestion to assist in a situation where the Administrator may have found it easier to facilitate a shorter 'hand over' period.

Secondly, you asked about a change which was made to Departmental Submission ref: SUB 551/2012. In the papers released under FOI you will note that the initial

meeting you refer to was held on 16 April 2012 and headed *Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012*. The subsequent submission which you refer to was drafted on 18 May and incorrectly referred to Turkington Holdings Ltd as being present at the 16 April meeting. While staff from Turkington Holdings Ltd were there, it is my understanding that they were not representing the interests of that firm but rather representing the Glass and Glazing Federation, therefore, it was entirely right that the reference was corrected before issue of the letter to the Chair of the Social Development Committee.

You have also referenced alleged comments I made at a meeting on 12 March on the Social Housing Development Programme. I am not aware of any meeting on this date. I did, however, meet the Housing Executive on 8 March but the minute of the meeting does not record the statement you alleged I have made.

On the wider issue of Girdwood one of the key stipulations for the vision is that cross community support is required for its development. It has always been recognised and is specifically stated in the original Masterplan that fundamental to obtaining community support will be an ongoing commitment by government to secure regeneration of the deprived residential areas adjacent to the site. In the context of the Girdwood development that is why 2 of the areas you mention had to be included in the SHDP along side other developments in North Belfast. Ballysillan, as it turned out, on further investigation by the Housing Executive, happened to have an immediate waiting list that merited a scheme.

In your letter on 20 June 2013 you ask a series of questions relating to meetings etc about the specifications for the Programme for Government double glazing target. My motivation for ensuring the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014/15 through the provision of double glazing is also a matter of public record. When I came into office I was astounded to learn that the Housing Executive estimated that 48,000 of their homes required double glazing. I was even more concerned about the apparent lack of haste in dealing with this, as they originally planned to have this work completed by 2021. Therefore I ensured that in the Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive gave a commitment that the thermal efficiency of all Housing Executive properties would be improved by 2014/15 through the provision of double glazing.

However, I also had to ensure that the double glazing programme delivered value for money for the tenants of the Housing Executive and the tax payers of Northern Ireland. That is why I asked the Housing Executive to research the specifications used as I was concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer best value for money. Following the review by NIHE, the revised specification for the procurement and fitting of double glazing has resulted in an estimated saving of £15.1m, a not insubstantial figure. Finally, since my officials also received correspondence on this issue last autumn, I think it is worth restating the role of civil servants with regard to their Ministers, which is at all times to act within the authority of the Minister to whom they are accountable and to support the Minister with clear, well reasoned, timely and impartial advice. It is my role as Minister to take decisions. Throughout this process I have been advised by my officials and I have taken my decisions in the knowledge of that advice.

I am also concerned about the tone and manner of the questions within the Spotlight letters and the inferences from these. I have therefore asked the Departmental Solicitors to consider the contents of these letters and any future broadcasts relating to these matters and I would request that you should note accordingly in this regard.

In making my decisions, my primary concern, from my appointment as Minister to now, has always been to ensure that the services provided by the Housing Executive gave the best possible value for money to both tenants and tax payers.

I have therefore nothing further to add in relation to this matter and my focus is now on ensuring that appropriate contract management arrangements are in place and are efficiently and effectively managed. I have made it clear to the new Chairman, whom I appointed eight months ago, that this is my priority and he has assured me of his full support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

3 of 4



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
BELFAST
BT2 8HQ

26 June 2013

Dear Chris

I refer to your letter of 26 June 2013 to me in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme which will reference the meeting that was held on 16 April 12 with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and Departmental officials.

My position in relation to the note of the meeting on 16 April is that I did not prepare these minutes which have been a matter of public record for some time. The note records what attendees said with regard to whom they were representing in particular Messrs Young and McKeag and the note records that Mr Young did refer to his company Turkington Holdings although he was representing the Glass and Glazing Federation.

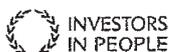
I take great exception to and totally reject and refute the scurrilous accusations that I repeatedly lied about the circumstances of this meeting and I demand that they be withdrawn.

If you are to proceed with these allegations then I will have no choice but to seek legal recourse. If these allegations are to be aired in the Spotlight programme, then I would expect the courtesy of seeing what you are proposing to state, before the programme is aired.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

3 & 4

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TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
bbc.co.uk

Thursday, 27 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I acknowledge receipt of your two letters of yesterday's date, the first of which was received by email at 14.36, just after our letter was emailed to you. Your second letter, in response to ours, was received by email at 17.16.

We will of course ensure that the relevant parts of your stated position are reflected in the programme but it seems to us that the best way for you to respond would be to take part in an on-camera interview. This is something we first proposed in our letter dated 16th November 2012, and repeated in our letter dated 7th June. We are happy to repeat that offer again now.

If you do wish to take up this offer, for production reasons, the interview would need to be recorded before the end of Friday, 28th June. May we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris Thornton'.

Chris Thornton
Producer, Spotlight

PP

344

From: the Minister



Department for
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Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
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Belfast
BT2 8HQ

28 June 2013

Dear Mr Thornton

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues, as my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. This is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, then I will not be deterred from doing so. My aim, in relation to the double glazing programme, has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards.



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understanding of the issues to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and your focus appears to be on this one meeting (which only lasted around 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

The official record of the meeting notes at the outset that one of the attendees "advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customer" and also records that the representatives of the GGF advised that if the GGF Guidelines were followed, this could potentially result in savings estimated at the meeting as £26.8m. Indeed the Housing Executive Chief Executive also referred to their proposed review of the specification and that they hoped following Board approval to have new tenders placed and contracts in place in the Autumn. As I said above, in relation to my duty as Minister, if Turkington Holdings Ltd or any other company had asked me for a meeting I would have done so.

My focus, however, on learning of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines was to seek advice on the guidelines from my technical officials. My technical officials advised that the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its glazing specification and should benchmark its approach against that advocated by GGF. I therefore sought to progress this issue with the Housing Executive who were already reviewing their specification. The outcome of my focus in this area has culminated in the identification of estimated savings of £15.1m to the public purse. I also believe this has led to a better standard of work which minimises the disruption to tenants. Throughout this process my position and role in this has always been a matter of public record.

The current position is that, in relation to the Programme for Government target for 2012/13, 8,856 homes have been double glazed against a target of 8,600. This year's target is to complete a further 9,000. I can also confirm that the Housing Executive has taken the procurement process forward for the dedicated double glazing contract under Regulation 19 – the Restricted Procedure – of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which involved the issue of an advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. This is entirely a matter for the Housing Executive in which I have absolutely no role to play and I understand the process is still currently underway.

In my letter to you on 26 June I advised you that I took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that I have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and I demanded that these are withdrawn. To date you have failed to do this and if I do not receive a letter from you

to this effect by 5pm on 1 July 2013, I will then instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this position I am also copying this letter to the Mr Peter Johnston, Director BBC NI.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

3 # 4

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Monday, 01 July 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 28th June 2013.

I propose to deal first with your demand that we withdraw what you refer to as "scurrilous accusations" about the circumstances of the 16th April 2012 meeting, and your threat that you will instigate legal action if we do not give you confirmation to this effect by 5pm today. If you review the various letters we have sent to you on this subject (for clarity, those dated 7th, 20th and 26th June), it is entirely clear from those letters that no "accusations" were being made: we were simply asking you a series of questions. It follows that there are no "accusations" for us to withdraw, still less, to form the subject of any action in defamation. In any event, our letters were clearly marked "For the personal attention of Nelson McCausland", and I am sure your legal advisers will tell you that no action in defamation lies where there has been no publication to any third party. Indeed, it is a requirement of responsible journalism that we should offer you the right of reply to clearly posed questions, in order to achieve our goals of being fair, balanced, accurate and impartial.

We do not dispute that it is part of your role to make yourself available for meetings with individuals or organisations with a valid issue to raise, nor that significant savings were in fact achieved by changing the way in which the replacement double-glazed windows were installed in NIHE properties. What is of interest to us is the circumstances in which you announced that you had asked the NIHE to review its specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing, and to hold further double glazing installations (except in limited circumstances) until that review was completed. On that issue, there continues to be a lack of clarity.

You criticise us for focussing on the 16th April meeting, saying that you had been looking at the issue of double glazing in NIHE properties since June 2011, and that there had been "many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue". However, you have not pointed to any single event prior to the 16th April meeting at which you had been made aware of, or had expressed, concerns about the NIHE's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

Indeed, it is apparent from elsewhere in your letter (second page, fourth paragraph) that you only learnt of the Glass and Glazing Federation ("GGF") guidelines for the first time at the 16th April meeting and that thereafter you sought advice from your technical officials, which led to your announcement in the Assembly on 8th May.

However, our questions relate to the circumstances of your announcement on 8th May, and the answers you have given since, in the Assembly, in Committee hearings, in answers to written questions and in open correspondence. In relation to whether or not Ian Young and Jim McKeag were representing Turkingtons or the GGF at the 16th April meeting, your position as set out in your first letter dated 26th June 2013 appears to be that the minutes were not prepared by you and record what attendees said with regard to whom they were representing. In your second letter of the same date, you go on to say that the "subsequent submission" drafted by Mr Sands "incorrectly" referred to Turkington Holdings Ltd as being present at the 16th April meeting, and that "it was entirely right that the reference was corrected before issue of the letter to the Chair of the Social Development Committee". Leaving aside the evidence we have referred to in our letters to the effect that the GGF were not aware of and did not sanction that meeting, that evidence from other attendees tallies with the apparent understanding of Mr Sands as to the capacity in which Mr Young and Mr McKeag attended that meeting, and that Mr Young does not know why you should have said that he and Mr McKeag represented the GGF at that meeting, you make no mention at all of the reference to Fusion 21. The letter, as issued to the Chair of the Social Development Committee, suggested that your announcement on 8th May followed a meeting you and the Chief Executive of the NIHE had had "with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 (our emphasis)", yet the minutes of that meeting show that it was a separate meeting, that was not attended by the Chief Executive of the NIHE, which had nothing whatsoever to do with double glazing. This is a position that you have also repeated in written answers, without clarifying that the meeting with Fusion 21 did not concern double glazing.

With this in mind, would you now please address these questions:

1. Do you accept that it was incorrect and misleading to suggest that the meeting with Fusion 21 had anything to do with your decision to ask the NIHE to review its specification for the supply and installation of double glazing?
2. If so, can you account for how that reference came to be included in the letter to Alex Maskey?
3. What plans do you have to correct the record?

You can contact me by phoning 028 90338385 or 07767 463369, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Thornton,
Producer, Spotlight

BBC 15
7(b)

Minister / Public Meeting Parliament. Bldg 16/4/12

for Mr. Kargin - Loughborough Member Michael Daulton } B.N.
Ear. Peter /

- 12 month scheme for NIHE
- They are indicative notes to our current spec
- Savings are achievable with a change of spec.
- ^{for house & SOIL} for house or planning using SOIL house
- No retrospective grant would be needed
- Complet. install = 1 day rather than 2 days

Your Ref: CSD/017/2011/AMcP

To: Social Development Committee

From: Barbara McConaghie

Date: 2 December 2013

INQUIRY INTO ALLEGATIONS, ARISING FROM A BBC NI SPOTLIGHT PROGRAMME AIRED ON 3 JULY 2013, OF IMPROPRIETY OR IRREGULARITY RELATING TO NIHE MANAGED CONTRACTS AND CONSIDERATION OF ANY RESULTING ACTIONS

I refer to your letter of 21 November 2013 which was passed to me on 29 November 2013 for a reply.

Please see my response below to each of the queries raised in your letter.

1a What Ms McConaghie understood to the reason for her attending the meeting and whether she was requested to take notes at the meeting.

As Private Secretary to Minister McCausland it was part of my role to normally attend internal and external meetings involving the Minister. As with all meetings I attended I would take a manuscript note of the discussions and replace this with an electronic Private Office internal memoir.

1b Whether Ms McConaghie took notes at the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know whether the notes were forwarded to anyone and if so to whom; and the Committee would also like to receive a copy of these notes.

I took notes at the meeting and these were typed up as an internal document (as described above) and would have been forwarded to the lead official in attendance (in this case Michael Sands) for his consideration/amendments/follow-up action as required. Copy attached at Annex 1.

1c Whether Ms McConaghie was requested to draft minutes of the meeting. If so the Committee would like to know who the minutes were sent to and would also like to receive a copy of the first draft. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie was asked to amend the draft minutes, by whom and the nature of the amendment. The Committee would also like to know whether Ms McConaghie had sight of the final version of her minutes.

I was not requested to draft minutes of any meetings but to note the discussion as part of my normal duties. A first draft of the internal memoir was not circulated by me to anyone other than the lead official in attendance, Michael Sands. Responsibility for contents of the draft is passed to the lead official and I am not normally required to make any amendments. I cannot recall who requested subsequent amendments. I confirm that I had sight of the final document based on the copy of the version provided to me by the Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer, and as recorded on the Department's electronic records management system.

1d Whether Ms McConaghie had knowledge of the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2012 that were provided to the Committee in your letter of 29 October 2013. It would be helpful if Ms McConaghie could be sent a copy of the minutes that were provided to the Committee in order that she may correctly address this last point.

As Private Secretary in both DCAL and DSD during the period June 2009 to January 2013 I would have been responsible for the initial record of many hundreds of meetings held with the Minister. Having read the copy provided I can recall the memoir, however, I have no access to any Ministerial correspondence since I left the post of Private Secretary.



Barbara McConaghie

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 20,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland

Stephen Brimstone

Michael Sands

John McPeake, NIHE

Declan Allen, NIHE

Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)

Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings

Ian Young, Turkington Holdings

Barbara McConaghie, DSD

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Minister McCausland
 Stephen Brimstone
 Michael Sands
 John McPeake, NIHE
 Declan Allen, NIHE
 Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
 Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
 Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
 Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing.

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

Turkingtons claim that if the Glass & Glazing Federation guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however,

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The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Ian Young, Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing .

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

The representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation advised that if the guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications and supply.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

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The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

The representatives offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.



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Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

6 January 2014

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 18 December 2013 in which you requested further information from the Department.

The documents requested are:

- 1 A written submission from Ms Susan McCarty clarifying why she sent an email on 1 July 2013 instructing a member of her staff Ms Karen Mills to clarify with the NIHE that the Minister's meeting of 16 April 2012 was with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation. The submission should include the following:
 - An explanation as to why this clarification was required;
 - Details of who had instructed Ms McCarty to issue such a clarification and when;
 - An explanation as to why Ms McCarty did not query this clarification when she was copied into correspondence indicating that the NIHE were clear in their understanding that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation?
 - Whether Ms McCarty was involved in the meeting with the Minister and his Senior Officials on 28 June 2013 regarding the information released under Fol requests for the Spotlight Programme.
- 2 A copy of the Departmental briefing note provided to the Minister in advance of the meeting on 16 April 2012 with Turkington Holdings.
- 3 A copy of all correspondence sent by Michael Sands to the Department's housing advisory unit or the NIHE to follow up on the issues raised following the meeting on 16 April 2012.
- 4 A list of all the companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts.
- 5 A copy of the Transaction History for the electronic Diary Entry by Chris Barry on 20 March 2012 at 11.04am.
- 6 A copy of the TRIM transaction history from the TRIM system for the minutes/aide memoire of the meeting of 16 April 2012. This should include details of when this document was

created and by whom, when the document was amended and by whom, and who made the deletions to the document. Details should also be provided of which staff had access rights to the document and rights to amend the document.

7 A copy of the correspondence from the Minister to the Chief Executive of NIHE on 30 April 2012 calling for a review of the double glazing specification.

8 Clarity on whether Mascotts or Turkingtons benefitted financially from the savings identified at the meeting of 16 April 2012, as provided for under Section 1.6.4 of the Framework Contract for External Cyclical Maintenance which states that *"The benefits of efficiency savings or innovations are shared between the Contractor and the Employer."*

In relation to numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 please see the PDF document attached with pages numbered (top right hand side) corresponding to the numbers above.

In relation to number 5, a screen print of the diary entry for the meeting on 16 April 2012 with the revision history is attached separately as a word document. I have been advised that due to the limitations of the Knowledge Network system, the record changes are not accessible.

In relation to number 6, a separate PDF document is attached with a table listing the amendment history, along with the versions of the document. In relation to the request for details of which staff had access rights to the document and rights to amend the document, I would advise that documents stored in TRIM (the records management system) are available to everyone in the Department by default, unless other security restrictions have been applied. The creator of a document has the ability to select document access controls and may wish to place document access controls (at any stage) temporarily while editing and drafting a document prior to opening access to everyone. It is not possible to identify which staff (other than the creator) had access rights and rights to amend this document at the time it was created and amended in April and May 2012.

Finally, in relation to number 8, this is a matter for the Housing Executive who advise that Mascotts were not represented at the meeting on 16 April 2012 and in relation to Turkingtons they are not a contractor working for the Housing Executive on either Planned Schemes or Low Rise Double Glazing and therefore no contractual relationship exists. The award of the Contract Lots for the Low Rise Double Glazed Windows has been let on 4 November 2013. Neither Mascotts nor Turkingtons were successful and therefore did not benefit financially from the meeting referred to. In relation to the second reference to another Contract and its Framework Terms, the Housing Executive has advised it does not understand this in the context of the question.

I hope this information is helpful

Yours sincerely



Susan McCarty

Number 1

1. *A written submission from Ms Susan McCarty clarifying why she sent an email on 1 July 2013 instructing a member of her staff Ms Karen Mills to clarify with the NIHE that the Minister's meeting of 16 April 2012 was with representatives from the Glass and Glazing Federation. The submission should include the following:*
 - *An explanation as to why this clarification was required;*
 - *Details of who had instructed Ms McCarty to issue such a clarification and when;*
 - *An explanation as to why Ms McCarty did not query this clarification when she was copied into correspondence indicating that the NIHE were clear in their understanding that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation?*
 - *Whether Ms McCarty was involved in the meeting with the Minister and his Senior Officials on 28 June 2013 regarding the information released under Fol requests for the Spotlight Programme.*

Written Submission

This submission relates to my memory of events around that time.

Background

The e-mail on 1 July 2013 is part of an exchange of e-mails between the Department and the Housing Executive following receipt of letters from Spotlight and in particular a letter from Spotlight on 26 June 2013. This letter advised that "*We also have evidence that it was the understanding of Declan Allen, who attended the meeting on behalf of the NIHE, that Messrs Young and McKeag were representing Turkingtons*".

I verbally spoke to a junior member of my team and advised that a letter had been received from Spotlight with this reference to Declan Allen and it was not clear what this related to. I also said that I understood John McPeake had advised that he believed this reference related to information released by the Housing Executive under Freedom of Information.

I asked her to e-mail a contact in the Housing Executive, in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, about this reference and also to ask for copies of what had been released by the Housing Executive under FOI to Spotlight in order to understand the reference in the Spotlight letter.

E- mail on 1 July 2013 - *An explanation as to why this clarification was required;*

I was advised of the Housing Executive's e-mail dated 28 June 2013 stating "*At no time did Declan think that Turkington were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation*". Attached to this was what appeared to be a fragment of paper with a few difficult to decipher hand written notes.

At that time, whilst I was not at the meeting on the 16 April 2012, I was aware of the note of the meeting on 16 April 2012 which recorded it was with representatives of

Number 1

the Glass and Glazing Federation. I saw this note when it had been released as an official record under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act at a later date in 2012.

I was therefore aware that Declan Allen had been at the meeting on 16 April 2012 but I was not sure if he was aware of or had been previously copied into the note of the meeting. Taking account of the fact the meeting had been held over a year ago and the details may not be fully remembered with the passage of time, my e-mail was simply asking the member of my team to advise the Housing Executive of the note of the meeting which recorded it was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Details of who had instructed Ms McCarty to issue such a clarification and when;

No one instructed me to issue this clarification.

An explanation as to why Ms McCarty did not query this clarification when she was copied into correspondence indicating that the NIHE were clear in their understanding that the meeting was with the Glass and Glazing Federation?

As per above, I was not at the meeting on 16 April 2012 but had seen the note of the meeting when it had been released as an official record under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act at a later date in 2012. I was advised of the Housing Executive's response on 28 June 2013 and my e-mail on 1 July was merely to advise that the note of the meeting recorded that the meeting was with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation.

Whether Ms McCarty was involved in the meeting with the Minister and his Senior Officials on 28 June 2013 regarding the information released under FOI requests for the Spotlight Programme.

I attended a meeting with the Minister on 28 June 2013. This was not about the information released under FOI requests for the Spotlight programme. This meeting was held to generally discuss with Minister the letter he had received from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 requesting Minister to consider an on camera interview. The Minister's response to this letter was issued on 28 June 2013.

Both these letters were copied to the Committee on 10 December 2013.

SUSAN MCCARTY
Housing, Director's Office

Number 2



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 11 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS: DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES

Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

Timing: 11 April 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You are invited to note this short briefing.

Detail

You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

2. Ian Young advised in his letter on 2 February that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the Programme for Government, it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

5. It is envisaged that this meeting will primarily be an informal listening exercise with Turkington Holdings who feel they have a lot to offer both the Department and the Housing Executive in relation to the installation of double glazing to NIHE properties.
6. Michael Sands will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is

██████████.*

Conclusion

7. You are invited to note this briefing. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

** redacted as personal mobile number*

Number 3
Housing Advisory Unit

Shields, Rosemary

Subject: FW: NIHE double glazing standards/requirements -

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 17 April 2012 10:07
To: Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Cc: Malcolm, David; Carragher, Damien; Wilkinson, Jim; 'deirdre.ward@dndni.gov.uk'
Subject: NIHE double glazing standards/requirements

Norman,

I attended a meeting yesterday afternoon with Minister and Turkington's Builders re Double Glazing in NIHE homes. The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing at an NIHE estimated cost of £2,300 per home or £92m.

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

Turkingtons claim that if the Glass & Glazing Federation guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay redecoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Could you please research the Glass & Glazing Federation guidelines and advise.

Thanks

M

E-mail Message

From: O'Reilly, Thomas [EX:/o=NIGOV/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=0815888]
To: Sleator, Norman (DSD) [EX:/o=NIGOV/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=temp-0319979]
Cc:
Sent: 24/04/2012 at 14:03
Received: 24/04/2012 at 14:03
Subject: FW: NIHE double glazing standards/requirements

Norman

I thought I sent you this reply on Thursday afternoon and since I can't find it in my records, I figure I didn't !

So, here it is

Thomas

Below is an extract from the Glass and Glazing Federation's (GGF) website that explains who they are.

"About the GGF

The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) represents companies who make, supply or fit, glass and glass related products in the UK and internationally.

The GGF is the main representative organization for companies involved in all aspects of the manufacture of flat glass and products and services for all types of glazing, in commercial and domestic sectors.

Members of the GGF include companies that manufacture and install energy efficient windows, in homes and commercial buildings, the performance glass used in every type of building from houses to high-rise tower blocks and the components that are used to manufacture every type of glazing."

A search on the GGF site shows six NI businesses are members of this organisation. It would appear that the majority of NI companies in the window industry for one reason or another, do not feel the need to join the GGF. The companies listed below are members of GGF.

J Hunter Glazing

Excel Glass Ltd

Thermoseal Group Ltd (Glass only)

Turkington Windows & Conservatories (4 listings for various addresses)

Getty Glass Ltd

BDG Group Ltd

With regards to the specifics raised by Turkington I would comment as follows.

The costs and savings identified by Turkington are theoretically possible.

However, they have not presented any evidence to show any un-necessary expenditure in past or current window replacement contracts.

2. The guidelines referred to by Turkington are in a GGF publication titled "The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors". Annex 'A' pages 19 - 22 describes removal techniques for wood, metal and PVC-U framed windows and doors. As far as my own experience is concerned over the past 30+ years, these are the techniques used by all window installers throughout the Province. The issue that Turkington may be alluding to is, that tenderers are being directed to price a more expensive method of removal as per the NIHE specification - "Cutting away the plaster reveals and then re plaster" rather than the method described in the GGF guidance which has the potential to be less destructive and less expensive.

3. The 'Hotel' type hinges referred to, are reversible hinges that allows the window sash to rotate fully allowing residents to clean both sides of the window from within the safety of their home. These are sometimes specified for 1st floor windows as a health and safety feature. My understanding is they are not widely used in Housing Association dwellings and therefore the NIHE practice of specifying them, if that is indeed their practice, may be out of step with that

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of Housing Associations.

4. It is NIHE policy that tenants can apply for a redecoration allowance if their home has been damaged by the Housing Executive while carrying out repairs. For example, for a 3 bedroom house the standard allowance would be £555. However, if you are in rent arrears part or all of the redecoration allowance may be offset against the rent you owe. Redecoration allowance is not an automatic entitlement.

Advice

5. NIHE should be asked to review their specification - for the removal of existing windows - to assess if making reference to the technique described in the GGF guidelines or developing a description of their own that reflects the actual techniques used by the industry, could lead to saving in tender prices.

6. An opportunity exists to harmonize the window specification used by NIHE and Housing Associations. A technical group should be set up to discuss the various options currently in use and if change would deliver any benefits in terms of capital cost, ease of use and reduced maintenance costs.

7. The fitting of replacement windows when executed with care, may not necessarily lead to the payment of a redecoration allowance. NIHE should be asked to consider the appropriateness of this allowance on window replacement contracts and provide data on the payment on the allowance on previous contracts.

E-mail Message

From: O'Reilly, Thomas [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=0815888]
To: Sleator, Norman (DSD) [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Temp-0319979]
Cc:
Sent: 26/07/2012 at 10:28
Received: 26/07/2012 at 10:28
Subject: RE: Double Glazing Programme

Norman

I wasn't aware that the Minister was going to approve the window specification!

With regards to the specification on the attached document, section 1.6 Opening Vent & Hinge Performance Standards, describes the performance criteria for:

- 3 different types of casement window hinge arrangements for storm-proof and flush casements.
- Specification for storm-proof casement top & side hung friction stays
- Specification for flush casement top & side hung friction stays and
- Specification for top swing fully reversible hinges.

The specification for the hinges is pretty standard and as you would expect, I believe the issue that was raised with Minister by Turkington Windows was NIHE's preference for top swing fully reversible hinges. The information provided by John McPeake is a general technical specification which lists all hinge types that could be used. It does not indicate which hinge type NIHE propose to use for their window replacement programme, therefore, we don't know if they took onboard our previous comments regarding the use of fully reversible hinge for all situations.

I cannot comment Window Energy Rating (WER) figures because no information have been provided.

Thomas

From: Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Sent: 25 July 2012 17:23
To: O'Reilly, Thomas
Subject: FW: Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Private

Thomas

Any comments?

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Regards

Norman

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 25 July 2012 10:23
To: Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Private

Norman,

Could you have someone have a look at this latest from the NIHE, pl. I particularly would welcome comments about the hinges and the use of A rated glass which, according to their figures, will save a tenant 57p per week over 20 years, similarly, asking bidders to quote two prices for A and B rated glass. Min is on Leave at the moment but I would appreciate a response by 2 August.

Ta

M

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 25 July 2012 09:53
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Private

To see

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Lucas, Maureen [mailto:Maureen.Lucas@NIHE.GOV.UK]

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Sent: 24 July 2012 09:10
To: McGrugan, Samuel
Subject: FW: Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Private

Mr McGrugan

Please find attached letter from the Chief Executive in relation to the above matter.

Regards

Maureen Lucas

Personal Assistant

Telephone: 02890318721

Fax: 02890439803

email: maureen.lucas@nihe.gov.uk

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

Northern Ireland
Housing Executive

Chief Executive
Dr John McPeake

2 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8PB

Sam McGrugan
Housing Division
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

19 July 2012

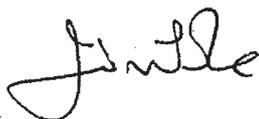
Dear Sam

I refer to correspondence received from the Social Development Committee requesting information on the technical specification of the new hinges to be used as part of the double glazing programme.

I have appended below an extract from the draft window specification which provides the requested details on the hinges. However, please note that the window specification has not yet been approved by the Minister for Social Development.

I hope this information is useful.

Yours sincerely



John McPeake
Chief Executive



Telephone 028 9031 8720 Fax 028 9043 9803
Typetalk no : 18001 03448 920 900 Email: john.mcpeake@nihe.gov.uk



✓

1.6 OPENING VENT & HINGES Performance Standards

Compliance with -

- BS 6375 – 1 : 2009
- BS 6375 – 2 : 2009

Associated Performance Criteria

- Opening Vents must provide for **Egress, Easy Clean & Child Restriction**
- There must be a correct correlation of hinge / friction stay capability with maximum vent weight and vent sizes; the table below is for guidance purposes and each window must be fully assessed by the manufacturer as to the appropriate vent sashes permissible and importantly achievable –

WINDOW STYLES & VENTS – SIZE LIMITATIONS

CASEMENT WINDOWS TOP HUNG "OPEN OUT"	Storm-proof Casement See attached Schedule of Common Window Designs	Flush Casement Projecting Top Hung
Maximum Vent Width	1200mm	
Maximum Vent Height	1200mm	1588mm
Maximum Vent Weight	Up to 40kg	Up to 60kg
Maximum Outer Frame	3000mm W x 3000mm H	
Minimum Size	300mm W x 300mm H	
See attached Schedule of Common Window Designs		



- Testing and accreditation –
 - UKAS laboratory tested to **BS EN 1670 : 2007**
 - Minimum corrosion resistance requirement
 - Class 3 / 300 hours red rust, 96 hours white rust
 - Tested to over 20,000 opening cycles under 40kg operational load
 - Have been tested to the equivalent of **BS 7950** security test – 3Kn perpendicular load for 1Kn lateral load
- Be manufactured from corrosion resistant stainless steel parts (ferric or austenitic); where plastic parts exist, these to be glass reinforced nylon
- In open position, the opening vent is moved outside the frame to maximise the escape aperture (almost 90° or better) and achieve an unobstructed openable area that satisfies the egress requirements of Part E of the Building Regulations
- Easy clean position meets the requirements of **BS 8213** (minimum 95mm gap between opening vent and frame)
- With in-built restrictor that combines a child resistant lever to limit window opening for maximum child safety and a quick release function to allow window to be fully opened for easy cleaning or emergency egress and automatic re-location



CASEMENT WINDOWS SIDE HUNG "OPEN OUT"	Storm-proof Casement See attached Schedule of Common Window Designs	Flush Casement Side Hung / Projecting Side Hung
Maximum Vent Width	700mm	900mm
Maximum Vent Height	1300mm	
Maximum Vent Weight	Up to 40kg	Up to 50kg
Max Window Perimeter	4000mm	
Minimum Size	300mm W x 300mm H	

REVERSIBLE WINDOWS TOP SWING "OPEN OUT"	Reversible	See attached Schedule of Common Window Designs
Maximum Vent Width	1500mm	
Maximum Vent Height	1500mm	
Maximum Vent Weight	60kg	
NOTE: The vent height must not exceed the width		

SPECIFICATION

Storm-proof Casement Top & Side Hung Friction Stays / Hinges with Integral / In-built Restrictor

- Stays / Hinges must have capability as stated above – that is appropriate hinge capacity to reflect a typical double glazing weight of approximately 20kg/m²; the use of these friction stays / hinges is subject to a **maximum loading of 40kg.**



- **Mechanical Guarantee / Warranty required (as minimum) is 10 years**
- **Product must be BBA accredited or a Secured by Design Licensed Product**

SPECIFICATION

Flush Casement Projecting Top & Side Hung Friction Stays with Initial (Face-Fit) or Concealed Restrictor fitted

- **Stays / Hinges must have capability as stated above - that is appropriate hinge capacity to reflect a typical double glazing weight of approximately 20kg/m² ; the use of these friction stays / hinges is subjected to the following –**
 - **Projecting Top Hung - a maximum loading of 60kg**
 - **Projecting Side Hung – a maximum loading of 50kg**
- **Testing and Accreditation**
 - **UKAS laboratory tested to BS EN 1670 : 2007**
 - **Minimum corrosion resistance – Class 3 / 300 hours red rust, 96 hours white rust**
 - **Tested to over 25,000 opening cycles and 1000 full reversals under 50kg operational load**
 - **Have been tested to the equivalent of BS 7950 security test – 3Kn perpendicular load for 1Kn lateral load**
- **All friction stays must be clearly marked with manufacturer's name or trademark**



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- Be heavy, electro-galvanised steel arms and top gliders to **BS EN 10029 : 1991** with anodised / powder coated aluminium slide tracks and nylon gliders / rollers.
- Have built-in controlled and adjustable friction facility
- Be suitable for groove fixing
- Be used in conjunction with an initial or concealed restrictor with automatic reset and with following provision -
 - Top Hung opening vents – 2No.
 - Side Hung opening vents – 1No.
- Mechanical Guarantee / Warranty required (as a minimum) - **10 years**
- Product must be BBA accredited or a Secured by Design Licensed Product

SPECIFICATION

Top Swing Fully Reversible Hinges with Initial & Integral Restrictor

- Stays / Hinges must have capability as stated above - that is appropriate hinge capacity to reflect a typical double glazing weight of approximately 20kg/m² ; the use of these fully reversible hinges is subjected to a **maximum loading of 60kg**
- Testing and Accreditation
 - UKAS laboratory tested to **BS EN 1670 : 2007**



1.7 HARDWARE / IRONMONGERY Performance Standards

Compliance with -

- **BS 7950 : 1997**
- **BS 6375 – 1 : 2009**
- **BS 6375 – 2 : 2009**

SPECIFICATION

Friction Stays / Fully Reversible Hinges

- All as stated above

SPECIFICATION

Espagnolettes

- Testing and Accreditation
 - UKAS laboratory tested to **BS EN 1670 : 2007**
 - Minimum corrosion resistance – Class 3 / 300 hours red rust, 96 hours white rust
 - Satisfy the requirements of **BS 7950 : 1997** in terms of security
- “Twin Cam” high performance “no crop” security locking system
 - Operate with up to four pairs of mushroom cams travelling towards each other locking into a double-sided security keep
 - Fully adjustable cams +/- 1mm
 - Keeps with a night latch locking facility
- Have an enhanced grade zinc alloy gearbox
- Mechanical Guarantee / Warranty required (as a minimum) - **10 years**
- Product must be BBA accredited or a Secured by Design Licensed Product



- Minimum corrosion resistance –
Class 3 / 300 hours red rust, 96 hours
white rust
 - Tested to over 25,000 opening cycles and
1000 full reversals under 50kg operational
load
 - Have been tested to the equivalent of **BS
7950** security test – 3Kn perpendicular load
for 1Kn lateral load
- All friction stays must be clearly marked with
manufacturer's name or trademark
 - Be heavy, electro-galvanised steel arms and top
gliders to **BS EN 10029 : 1991** with anodised /
powder coated aluminium slide tracks and nylon
gliders / rollers.
 - Have built-in controlled and adjustable friction
facility
 - Be suitable for groove fixing
 - To be fitted with an initial and integral child
restrictor, a reverse restrictor having automatic
re-engagement and a turn lever mechanism
attached to the restrictor which maintains all of
the safety features on the open out movement of
the window, but allows the user to pull the
window closed when the turn lever attached to
the restrictor is not set to hold open the window
 - Mechanical Guarantee / Warranty required (as a
minimum) - **10 years**
 - Product must be BBA accredited or a Secured
by Design Licensed Product



E-mail Message

From: O'Reilly, Thomas [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=0815888]
To: Sleator, Norman (DSD) [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Temp-0319979]
Cc:
Sent: 10/08/2012 at 15:16
Received: 10/08/2012 at 15:16
Subject: RE: Double Glazing - Asbestos

Norman

I would expect NIHE to carry out sample surveys of each house type say between 5-10% rather than surveying all of the properties.

The places where asbestos is most likely to be found are.

- Man made roof slates
- Barge and soffit boards
- Rainwater goods and soil vent stacks
- In old DPC's. Not absolutely sure about this though
- PVC floor tiles
- Under cold water storage tanks

Thomas

-----Original Message-----

From: Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Sent: 10 August 2012 09:21
To: O'Reilly, Thomas
Subject: Double Glazing - Asbestos

Hi Thomas. Michael Sands advised me that as a duty of care to contractors NIHE is carrying out Asbestos surveys in dwellings where windows are to be replaced at 200 pounds per dwelling - MS thinks its all dwellings rather than a sample. 25000 dwellings at 200 equals 5m! Any thought? Norman

This was sent from my Blackberry Device.

E-mail Message

From: Sleator, Norman (DSD) [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=TEMP-0319979]
To: Sands, Michael [EX:/O=NIGOV/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=0596453]
Cc:
Sent: 13/08/2012 at 16:00
Received: 13/08/2012 at 15:59
Subject: NIHE Window Replacement Programme - Letter from John McPeake 20 July 2012

Michael

Please find below HAU comments in relation to John McPeake's letter to Minister 20 July 2012 which is in response to Minister's letter 4 July 2012:

1. Based on survey work NIHE advises that as of 1 June 2012 it has identified 22,690 properties which require double glazing with work to some 7,000 properties to be carried out this year.

2. NIHE advises that assuming 22,690 units the estimated costs are:

[a] Baseline - "Current specification / Traditional fitting" would be £63.5m including re-decoration grants [all dwellings] of £11.3m

[b] Proposed - "Current specification / Revised fitting for 7,000 units plus Revised specification / Revised fitting for 15,690" would be £48.4m including redecoration grants [15% of dwellings due to differing structures] of £1.7m.

HAU Comments:

Of the total saving between [a] and [b] of £15.1m, some £9.6m is attributable to savings in relation to the reduction in redecoration grants and some £5.5m to various changes in specification including changing to the type of frame, hinge and glass.

Hinges - NIHE has estimated savings of between £50 and £80 per dwelling and a total saving of c£500k depending upon the outcome of the procurement exercise. At £50 per dwelling this represents 10,000 dwellings and at £80 per dwelling 6,250 dwellings. Therefore the £500k may be understated. On the basis that this only applies to the new procurement of 15,690 dwellings, there being no specification changes to this year's 7,000 units, then the savings could potentially be in the range £785k [£50pd] to c£1.26m [£80pd]. HAU would suggest that the Department asks NIHE to explain this apparent difference in assumptions.

Extra Over Costs - WER 'A' rating vs WER 'B' Rating:

NIHE has estimated the extra cost of WER 'A' Rating over WER 'B' rating to be £200. By opting for 'B' Rating on the 15,690 dwellings in the new procurement, which is still in excess of the new Building Regulations 2012 minimum of 'C' rating, further savings in the order of £3.14m might be possible. However, NIHE is estimating a 20% saving arising from its proposed procurement strategy which, if realised, would reduce the extra cost to £2.51m (£160pd). So by opting for 'B' Rating specification the cost of the works in the new procurement could be reduced from the estimated £48.4m to almost £45m.

NIHE advises that based on a modest energy saving of approximately £25pa per dwelling, by installing 'A' Rated glass rather than 'B' Rated glass the payback period on the extra capital cost of £160 per dwelling will be less than 7 years or at the upper end of £200 per dwelling 8 years.

NIHE also proposes 'A' Rating on the basis of future proofing against possible increases in thermal performance in Building Regulations standards.

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Finally, NIHE proposes to seek prices for both the 'A' Rated glass and 'B' Rated glass. There is merit in this if an objective of the exercise is to validate estimated costs. Clearly 'B' rated windows will have a lower capital cost.

Procurement Strategy:

NIHE advises that the form of contract, the governance and management arrangements, including KPIs and the service credit [penalty] arrangements developed following the Gateway Review will apply. HAU assumes that this comment from NIHE relates to the Gateway Review carried out autumn 2010 and that the Review referred to may not be specific to the Double Glazing Procurement. The Department may wish to seek further assurance by way of confirmation that a Risk Potential Assessment [RPA] has been carried out, the outcome of which may or may not determine the need for a programme specific Gateway Review or internal peer review. The Gateway Review Process is a key assurance mechanism designed to provide an objective view of a programme or project's ability to deliver on time and to budget. The NIHE Board has approved the proposed procurement strategy for the new double glazing programme.

Happy to discuss

Norman

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PRIVATE OFFICE

23 JUL 2012

SOCIAL DEV'TMENT

Housing

Chief Executive
Dr John McPeake

2 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8PB

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
DSD Private Office
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

20th July 2012

Dear *Minister*

NIHE WINDOW REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME – REVISION TO SPECIFICATION

Thank you for your letter of 4th July regarding our window replacement programme and more specifically, the revisions to the specification. You raised a number of issues with me and I will respond to each in turn.

Estimated Number of Dwellings Requiring Double Glazing

As has previously been advised, the original estimates were based on the data held by the Housing Executive in its administrative systems. This data was incomplete and as result it was decided to conduct a survey of all properties to provide a reliable measure of the scale of this work programme.

I can confirm that the survey work was completed in May. On the basis of the survey we have identified 22,690 properties that require double glazing as of 1st June 2012.

Estimated Costings of Existing Compared to New Contracts

We do not have detailed costings in the format that you have requested. Works costs are deemed to be included in the cost of the windows and are not separately available.

In answering your question about how the current costs might compare to future contract costs I am conscious that it is important to make a distinction between the current specification windows fitted in the traditional way and current specification windows fitted using the revised method. The following paragraphs set out the cost analysis/assumptions for these three groups.



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INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

- On the basis of schemes completed in the last quarter of 2011/12 (i.e. before changing the fitting method), the unit cost inclusive of all material and works was approximately £2,300 per property. We do not have a break down of this cost that separates out building works as this is included with the cost of the window frame. As you are aware, because of the fitting method, redecoration grant would have been paid in most cases where double glazing was installed using the traditional method. The average redecoration grant paid last year was approximately £500 per property, although the actual amount will depend on the scale of the work and the circumstances of the tenant (i.e. whether they qualified for the higher rate or the lower rate payment). Together, the unit cost for the traditional fitting of current specification double glazing is thus approximately £2,800. Looking to the current year, we anticipate installing double glazing in around 7,000 properties, which would have had a total cost of £19.6m had we proceeded to fit all windows in the traditional way.
- Following earlier correspondence with your office the Housing Executive was instructed to apply the revised fitting method to schemes going forward and in advance of any further changes to the specification. The main impact of this change has been a significant reduction in the need for redecoration grant. Our experience to date indicates that there will still be a small proportion of properties where, by virtue of their design or condition, additional building works will be required, thus triggering redecoration grant. Although it is still early days with the new fitting method, it would seem that work to 10-15% of properties may still trigger redecoration grant, giving an average total unit cost of £2,375. Thus, we estimate that fitting double glazing to 7,000 properties using the current specification but the revised fitting method will cost approximately £16.6m, a saving of some £3m.
- Since the introduction of the revised fitting method, one emerging issue has been that some tenants' roller, vertical or venetian blinds do not fit within the window reveals. Whilst we have asked the contractors to do what they can to accommodate blinds, there will be some instances where this is not possible. Blinds are treated as fixtures and fittings and thus do not fall within the scope of redecoration allowance payments. Steps have been taken to ensure that tenants are advised of this potential issue as part of the consultation process. It is possible that some tenants may refuse the work as a result. It is also possible that we will get complaints about this matter.
- Moving forward, we have proposed a number of changes to the specification, including changing the frame type, changing the hinges (for most installations) and changing the glass. You have asked specifically about the rating and the hinges and I will deal with those later.

Our current analysis is that changing the hinges will reduce the cost, ceteris paribus, by between £50 and £80 per property. Changing to an A-rated design will increase the costs by about £200 per property.

Procurement savings are expected to reduce the overall cost by at least 20% over the current specification. We thus anticipate that the unit price of the new specification will be in the order of £1,950. If we were in the position to complete double glazing on the 7,000 properties in the current year's programme, allowing for 10-15% redecoration, the costs would be in the order of £14.1m.

- As of June 1st we estimate that some 22,690 dwellings require double glazing. Assuming that we have 15,690 of those that will be completed under the new procurement (revised spec; revised fitting) and 7,000 under the current approach (current spec; revised fitting) the overall cost of double glazing for the 22,690 units is estimated to be in the order £48.4m, of which £31.8m would relate to the new dedicated double glazing contract. The redecoration cost assumed with the total £48.4m is £1.7m assuming that 15% of properties are affected. By comparison, if the 22,690 properties had double glazing fitted in the traditional way, the total cost is estimated to be in the order of £63.5m, of which £11.3m would relate to redecoration payments.
- In summary, the estimated costs of the various specification and fitting method combinations assuming 22,690 dwellings to be double glazed are as follows:

	Method	Works	Redecoration	Total
1	Current specification; Traditional fitting	£52.2m	£11.3m	£63.5m
2	Current specification; Revised fitting	£52.2m	£1.7m	£53.9m
3	Revised specification; Revised fitting (Assumes 7,000 as per method 2; 15,690 as per method 3)	£46.7m	£1.7m	£48.4m

- The costs detailed above are, for the most part, estimates made by our technical staff following research with the supply chain and other bodies. It is difficult to be precise at this time but our recent experience with major procurements show that tender prices have consistently undercut estimated prices. So, it is conceivable, that the dedicated procurement for double glazing could deliver a higher specification at significantly below current prices. However, until we go to market the pricing data presented above are best estimates.

The Move to "A" Rated Windows

The Housing Executive's current specification calls for "B" rated windows. We have been providing windows at this standard for six years, throughout which time the Building Regulations required at least an "E" rated window. Historically, the Housing Executive has sought an appropriate balance between the cost of provision and the payback in terms of energy cost to tenants in recognition of the high levels of fuel poverty in the social housing stock.

In our most recent consideration a view was taken to move to a Windows Energy Rating Scheme (WER) "A" rated window. The 2009 House Condition Survey indicated that 57% of our tenants were in fuel poverty. Since that survey, fuel prices have increased and incomes have shown little or no growth. It is expected that when the results for the most recent survey are available in September that the fuel poverty figure is likely to be considerably higher.

Fuel poverty is the interplay of income, fuel prices and thermal efficiency of the home. The Housing Executive has limited ability to influence the first two factors, but it can significantly impact on the energy efficiency of our tenant's homes by providing efficient heating systems and adequate insulation standards. These issues are well understood in your Department's Fuel Poverty Strategy and the priority that you as Minister have placed on this type of work.

In the severe freeze over Christmas / New Year 2010/11 we had more than 20,000 properties damaged many of which because tenants simply could not afford to run their heating systems. We are equally aware that the Continuous Tenant Omnibus Survey shows that 77% of NIHE tenant households have no one in paid employment; in other words, almost four tenant households in five are workless, reliant wholly on pensions or benefits. It is our assessment that when installing double glazing for the first time, and recognising that the windows will in operation for 20 years or more during which time no doubt building regulations will change several more times, we should strive to increase the thermal efficiency of the windows. This will reduce the energy load required to heat the home, and improve comfort levels, which we believe is especially important for the elderly and vulnerable.

Estimates on the likely savings depend on the type of property, the type of heating and insulation, the occupation and use of the dwelling, and its location. But as general rule, the more energy efficient the windows, the greater the saving. For example, the Glass and Glazing Federation calculate that the energy saving for an average tenancy using a WER "A" Rated window as opposed to the Building Regulation standard WER "C" rated would save our tenants approximately £600 over the expected life of the windows.

The Energy Savings Trust has estimated that moving from single glazing to "B" rated windows will save an average of £165 per annum reflecting a saving of approximately 18% in typical energy demand. Estimates for "A" rated windows indicate savings in excess of £200 per annum compared to single glazed windows.

It is estimated that at current prices the "A" rated windows will cost about £200 more than 'B' rated windows. We expect at least a 20% reduction in unit costs through the dedicated procurement which would make the price differential closer to £160. Even a modest saving in energy bills of £25 per year would mean that the additional costs over a 'B' rated window would be covered in less than seven years.

It is also worth noting that a WER "C" rated window, as will be required by Building Regulations as a minimum, will not perform to a sufficient level to carry the "Energy Saving Trust Recommended" logo. The choice of a WER "A" rated window not only provides this further assurance and enhanced energy efficiency but also contributes to carbon and Co2 emission reduction. The higher specification has been calculated to save 2 tonnes of Co2 and half a tonne of carbon emission over the life of the window. As emission controls, industry and regulatory standards develop, this will help sustainability and future proof the Housing Executive stock.

However, in recognition that the move to "A" rated windows will add additional cost it is our intention in the procurement process that bidders will also price for "B" rated windows, which would give us the option of using either depending on actual prices and the availability of resources.

Hinges

The revised specification calls for the introduction of a top and side swing friction stay for our low-rise stock. Our specification will ensure that we meet our statutory and landlord obligations. Whilst Building Regulations is a requirement for all sectors, provision in accordance with BS 8213-1: 2004 is essential requirement for a social landlord.

The hinge as specified will provide, in all habitable rooms, the following health and safety features:

- Satisfactory entry and egress arrangements in the event of a fire in all casement sizes;
- Child restrictor features to prevent finger trapping or falling out of upper floor windows;
- Easy clean arrangements which are convenient for the tenant and which also mitigate the risk of unsafe practices during window cleaning.

It is accepted that many private buyers would not be concerned with these features but as a landlord with responsibility for the wellbeing of our tenants, particularly in terms of health and safety risks that could be attributed to the property, these issues are important to us.

These health and safety features are all provided as part of our current hinge specification but we are satisfied that the revised specification, suitably amended to include the provisions noted above, will meet our requirements for the low-rise stock at lower cost than the current specification. It is our assessment, however, that they do not meet the requirements for the high-rise stock, which is why we have opted to retain the higher quality hinge, with its ability to handle additional loads associated with wind sheer and the heavier windows that are typical in such properties. We have estimated that the savings in hinge costs will be at least £500k, but again the precise savings will depend on the outcome of the procurement.

Procurement Strategy

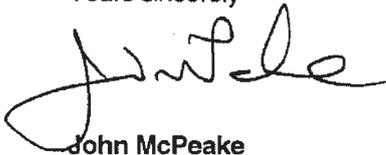
Lastly, as requested, I attach a copy of our May 2012 Board Paper entitled "Double Glazing Procurement Strategy" This paper provides details on the rationale and the nature of the procurement but the main features of it may be summarised as follows:

- A single Framework contract structured into three Lots (Belfast, North Region, South Region).
- It is intended to have one contractor per Lot, with two in reserve to provide contingency. No contractor can be allocated more than one Lot.
- A secondary competition amongst the five Framework members will be used to allocate the available Lots and thus determine which firms get the work and which firms are designated as contingency.
- The Framework will be for 24 months with the option to extend by a further 24 months.
- Prices are fixed for the first 24 months, but will be subject to CPI uplift in years 3 and 4 (if extended).
- The form of contract, the governance and management arrangements, including the KPIs and the "service credit" (penalty) arrangements developed following the Gateway Review will apply.

We had hoped to publish the Contract Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union at the end of June. However, because of the need to clarify a number of issues and a decision to have further discussions with the industry we are not yet in a position to publish the Notice. It remains our intention to go to the market in order that we can have the new contract in place before the expiration of the existing planned maintenance contracts. This is achievable provided that we publish the Notice no later than early September.

I trust that I have adequately answered the concerns that you have raised. Needless to say the Housing Executive would be happy to meet with your officials on these matters should that be deemed necessary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John McPeake', written in a cursive style.

John McPeake
Chief Executive

		Board Meeting Date: 30 May 2012	Housing and Regeneration/DPS Author: Tim Gough	For Approval	Paper classification: Not Protectively Marked	Paper No:
Title of Paper Double Glazing Procurement Strategy		Risk assessment completed? No N/A				
Purpose: To seek approval for the Double Glazing Procurement Strategy		Equality Screening complete? No No N/A				
Recommendation: That the Board approve the Strategy for the Double Glazing Procurement and the Head of Procurement is authorised to proceed with the publication of the Contract Notices for the procurements in the Official Journal of the European Union and on the Housing Executive website and then to proceed to tender.		Rural Areas/Issues involved? No No N/A				
Director of Housing & Regeneration Date		Expenditure to be approved Within budget? £ 0000.00 N/A				
Director of Design & Property Services Date		Names of individuals consulted internally/externally: Head of Procurement, Works Procurement Board, Director of Housing & Regeneration				
		List necessary compliance issues identified: (E.g. Health & Safety, Environmental impacts, TSN, Human Rights, building form, age sensitive, FOI, other issues?) Public Contracts Regulations 2006, Standing Orders				

Northern Housing

Introduction

1. This paper is to seek approval to the Double Glazing Procurement Strategy and to seek authority for the Head of Procurement to proceed to tender.
2. The procurement strategy was presented to the Works Procurement Board on 14th May 2012 and they requested that it be amended generally in line with the principles of the revised Planned Schemes Procurement Strategy.
3. The procurement will provide one Double Glazing Framework across Northern Ireland for the supply and fit of double glazed pvc windows to approximately 25,000 dwellings.

Double Glazing Procurement Strategy (See Appendix "A")

4. The Housing Executive intends entering into a framework agreement with between 3 and 5 members who are capable of providing the Service across Northern Ireland.
5. It is proposed that there will be three Lots awarded under this framework agreement based on the new Housing Executive Regions:
 - o Belfast Region (1 Lot)
 - o North Region (1 Lot)
 - o South Region (1 Lot)
6. The framework agreement will be for a period of 24 months from date of commencement (November 2012) with the possibility to extend for a further 2 years until October 2016.
7. The procurement will be carried out in accordance with Regulation 15 (the Open procedure) as set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (the Regulations). The framework agreement will be established in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Regulations.
8. All those who express an interest in tendering for the provision of the Service will be provided with the tender documentation and will be invited to tender. The tender submission will consist of four parts, an Invitation to Tender, a Pre-qualification

Agreement Housing

Questionnaire, a Quality Submission, a Provincial Pricing Document and one, or more, Regional Pricing Document(s), as appropriate according to the specific Lot(s) in which the tenderer has expressed an interest.

9. Tenderers will be assessed on a "most economically advantageous" basis, according to quality and price. Quality will be scored out of 300 marks and price 700 marks.
10. Quality will be assessed by way of a Quality Submission submitted by each tenderer and will be scored by the Evaluation Committee with tenderers being required to meet a minimum threshold in each section. All tenderers meeting the minimum thresholds will have their Provincial Pricing Document opened and evaluated.
11. Tenderers will be asked to insert their rates and prices against the notional quantities in a Framework All-Province Price List (the Provincial Pricing Document). The Provincial Pricing Document will be opened and points allocated in respect of price in accordance with the tender price evaluation criteria specified in the Invitation to Tender. The Quality and Tender Price marks will be added together to give the total Tender Score. The 5 highest scoring tenders will be considered the Most Economically Advantageous Tenderers and will become Framework Members. In the event of one or more Tenderer achieving the same Tender Score, the Tenderer with the higher price score will be awarded the higher ranking.

Evaluation of Regional Pricing Documents and award of Regional Work Packages

12. Concurrent with the tender procedure for appointment to the framework agreement, tenderers will be asked to submit (as part of their tender response) prices for each Lot(s) in which they are interested. The tenderers will be invited to price (percentage adjustment against a pre-priced Provincial Price List) for each Lot. The Price submitted by Tenderers for each Lot will either be a confirmation of their Provincial Price (price for carrying out the work anywhere in the Northern Ireland) or a downward adjustment if they feel they can deliver the work packages within a specific Lot at a more competitive price.
13. The Framework Member who has submitted the lowest price for that Lot will be appointed to carry out the work packages within that Lot for the period of the framework agreement. The Housing Executive reserves the right to invite eligible framework members to compete for specific planned schemes as required.
14. No Framework Member will be appointed to more than one of the three possible Lots (i.e. there will be a minimum of 3 Framework Members/Contractors appointed to the Lots under the framework agreement).

National Housing

15. The Lot prices will be fixed for 2 years with an appropriate inflationary uplift, based on the Consumer Prices Index, applied to the tendered rates for the third and fourth years of the contract.

Benefits

16. The overall benefits of this procurement is that it:
- Is designed to maximise the commercial interests of the organisation
 - Provides clear guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the individual officers involved in the procurement as required under the Corporate Procurement Strategy
 - Provides for better governance reporting
 - Provides for better measurement of supplier/contractor performance, driving behavioural change and maintaining quality
 - Details clear guidance on the management of poor performance or breaches of contract and how to escalate if necessary through the governance structure
 - Provides for regular reporting on performance so that issues can be addressed early
 - Uses NEC Contracts which:
 - Comply with NI Procurement Board's preferred form of contract
 - Stimulate good management of the relationship between the two parties to the contract
 - Is a clear and simple document using language and a structure which are straightforward and easily understood
17. Governance for the delivery of these strategies is controlled by the Business Unit Assurance Group, the Works Procurement Board and the Housing Executive Board.

Northern Ireland Housing

18. The following key dates are relevant to the procurement:

Consultant Procurement			
Works Procurement Board	14/05/12	14/05/12	14/05/12
NIHE Board Approval - Strategy	30/05/12	30/05/12	30/05/12
Tender Stage			
Publish Contract Notice in OJEU	29/06/12	29/06/12	29/06/12
Issue Tenders	29/06/12	29/06/12	29/06/12
Tender Return	29/06/12	10/08/12	10/08/12
Evaluate Tenders	13/08/12	17/08/12	17/08/12
Analyse Tender Prices	20/08/12	24/08/12	24/08/12
Prepare Board Report	28/08/12	28/08/12	28/08/12
NIHE Board Approval	26/09/12	26/09/12	26/09/12
Alcatel	27/09/12	08/10/12	08/10/12
Award Contracts	09/10/12	09/10/12	09/10/12
Contract DOP	01/11/12	01/11/12	01/11/12

Recommendation

19. That the Board:

- a. Approve the Double Glazing Procurement Strategy and
- b. Authorise the Head of Procurement to proceed with the publication of the Contract Notices for the Double Glazing Contract in the Official Journal of the European Union and the Housing Executive website and then to proceed to tender.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012
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**Northern Ireland Housing Executive
 Double Glazing Procurement Strategy
 May 2012**

- 1.0 Purpose of Paper**
- 1.1 This paper sets out the procurement strategy for the provision of Double Glazing to Housing Executive stock commencing in November 2012.
- 1.2 This strategy paper must be read in conjunction with the NIHE Corporate Procurement Strategy June 2011 and both strategies must inform this procurement process.
- 2.0 Background**
- 2.1 A Board Paper entitled "Double Glazing" and submitted to the September 2011 Board Meeting set out the target objective of achieving double glazing to 100% of NIHE Properties by 2021.
- 2.2 The "Draft Programme for Government", recently announced, requires delivery of the above target objective now by March 2015. This requires a significant number of dwellings to be addressed each year for the next three years and may have significant impact on other programmes.
- 3.0 Scope of the Contract**
- 3.1 This procurement will provide one Double Glazing Framework across Northern Ireland for the supply and fit of double glazed pvc windows to 25,000 dwellings.
- 3.2 The framework will be in place by November 2012 and run for 2+1+1 years until the end of October 2016 maximum.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012

4.0 CONTRACTING STRATEGY

4.1 It is proposed to establish a framework agreement of (subject to a sufficient number of compliant tenders being received) between 3 and 5 members who are capable of providing the Service across Northern Ireland.

4.2 It is proposed that there will be three Lots awarded under this framework agreement based on the new Housing Executive Regions:

- o Belfast Region (1 Lot)
- o North Region (1 Lot)
- o South Region (1 Lot)

4.3 The framework agreement will be for a period of 24 months from date of commencement with the possibility to extend for a further 2 years until October 2016.

4.4 The procurement will be carried out in accordance with Regulation 15 (the Open procedure) as set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (the Regulations). The framework agreement will be established in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Regulations.

4.5 All those who express an interest in tendering for the provision of the Service will be provided with the tender documentation and will be invited to tender. The tender submission will consist of four parts, an Invitation to Tender, a Pre-qualification Questionnaire, a Quality Submission, a Provincial Pricing Document and one, or more, Regional Pricing Documents, as appropriate according to the specific Lot in which the tenderer has expressed an interest (please see section 4.13 below).

Pre-Qualification Questionnaire

4.6 The template for the standard Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ), as agreed by the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland (CIFNI) and the CoPEs (as amended to meet Housing Executive requirements), will be used to assess the financial and technical capacity of Economic Operators (EO).

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012

- 4.7 This PQQ is divided into 4 parts:
1. PQQ1 - Economic Operator
 2. PQQ1A - Economic Operator Financial Addendum
 3. PQQ1B - Economic Operator Health and Safety Addendum
 4. PQQ1C - Consortium Member Addendum
- 4.8 The PQQ will comprise of PASS/FAIL questions in all sections excepting technical capability which will be scored and have a minimum threshold specified in the PQQ which must be met.
- 4.9 All EOs which receive a PASS in all sections and meet the minimum technical capability threshold will have their tender considered by the Evaluation Committee.
- Tender Evaluation**
- 4.10 Tenderers will be assessed on a "most economically advantageous" basis, according to quality and price. Quality will be scored out of 300 marks and price 700 marks.
- 4.11 Quality will be assessed by way of a Quality Submission submitted by each tenderer and will be scored by the Evaluation Committee with tenderers being required to meet a minimum threshold in each section. All tenderers meeting the minimum thresholds will have their Provincial Pricing Document opened and evaluated.
- 4.12 Tenderers will be asked to insert their rates and prices against the notional quantities in a Framework All-Province Price List (the Provincial Pricing Document). The Provincial Pricing Document will be opened and points allocated in respect of price in accordance with the tender price evaluation criteria specified in the Invitation to Tender. The Quality and Tender Price marks will be added together to give the total Tender Score. The 5 highest scoring tenders will be considered the Most Economically Advantageous Tenderers and will become Framework Members. In the event of one or more Tenderer achieving the same Tender Score, the Tenderer with the higher price score will be awarded the higher ranking.
- Evaluation of Regional Pricing Documents and award of Regional Work Packages**
- 4.13 Concurrent with the tender procedure for appointment to the framework agreement, tenderers will be asked to submit (as part of their tender response) prices for each Lot(s) in which they are interested. The tenderers will be invited to price

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012

(percentage adjustment against a pre-priced Provincial Price List) for each Lot. The Price submitted by Tenderers for each Lot will either be a confirmation of their Provincial Price (price for carrying out the work anywhere in the Northern Ireland) or a downward adjustment if they feel they can deliver the work packages within a specific Lot at a more competitive price.

4.14 The Prices for each Lot will be opened in descending Lot value order. The tenders for the highest value Lot will be opened first and the Framework Member who has submitted the lowest price for that Lot will (subject to section 4.16) be appointed to carry out the work packages within that Lot for the period of the framework agreement. The tenders for the next highest Lot will be then opened and the procedure repeated.

4.15 No Framework Member will be appointed to more than one of the three possible Lots (i.e. there will be a minimum of 3 Framework Members/Contractors appointed to the Lots under the framework agreement).

4.16 The framework agreement will (subject to Section 5 below) require the EO to undertake all work required in the relevant Lot during the framework agreement. Each work package will be awarded using the NEC3 Term Service Short Contract as amended by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and (subject to any earlier termination in accordance with their terms). The Housing Executive reserves the right to invite eligible framework members to compete for specific work packages as required.

4.17 The Lot prices will be fixed for 2 years with an appropriate inflationary uplift, based on the Consumer Prices Index, applied to the tendered rates for the third and fourth years of the contract. How this is to be applied will be agreed with the Head of Procurement and the Project Board and will be set out in detail in the contract documents.

5.0 TERMINATION AND ALTERNATIVE CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 A Work Package Contract (the "Contract") may be terminated by either party in accordance with the relevant contractual provisions. Upon termination of a contract the following provisions shall apply:

(a) Should a framework agreement member have his contract terminated due to unacceptable performance (or any other reason), they will not be permitted to carry out further work packages within that Lot until they are able to demonstrate that mitigating actions have been carried out to prevent any future poor performance issues from occurring. For the avoidance of doubt, any other contracts to which that framework agreement member is a party will be unaffected by the termination and will continue in accordance with the particular contractual provisions governing same.

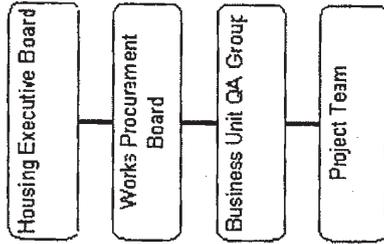
NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012

- (b) The Housing Executive reserves the right to award any incomplete work packages by running a mini-competition open to all the remaining eligible framework members on the basis of lowest price. In the event that a mini-competition is held, eligible framework agreement members cannot submit rates and prices which exceed the rates and prices submitted for appointment to the framework agreement.
- (c) A Framework Member will be deemed to be capable of providing the works required under the new contract when all of the following conditions are satisfied:
- a. Their performance on existing contract(s) awarded within the Framework meet the required contractual standard. That assessment will be conducted by reference to the scoring of the Key Performance Indicators, in accordance with the relevant contractual provisions.
 - b. the aggregated value of existing work packages, when added to the estimated value of the works required under the new contract, does not exceed four thirds of the EO's highest turnover in any of the past 3 financial years
- 6.0 Senior Responsible Officer**
- 6.1 The Senior Responsible Officer/Contract Owner for the Double Glazing Procurement has been identified as the Director of Housing and Regeneration.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012

7.0 Procurement Delivery

7.1 The procurement project will be delivered through the following governance structure:



- a. The project will be delivered by the Project Team
- b. Quality Assurance will be provided by the Business Quality Assurance Group
- c. The Works Procurement Board will be responsible for approving and signing off the project at appropriate stages
- d. Approval of the Housing Executive Board will be sought at appropriate stages in compliance with Standing Orders

7.2 The Governance Structure post contract is outlined in further detail in Appendix B.

8.0 Contract Review/Key Performance Indicators

8.1 Performance will be measured by way of Key Performance Indicators using KPIs. These will be challenging, objective, clearly measurable and will strive to attain the highest standards of service.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2012
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- 8.2 KPIs will include:
1. Client satisfaction
 2. Quality of Service
 3. Cost Predictability
 4. Time Predictability
 5. Tenant Satisfaction
- 8.3 KPIs will be applied in two ways:
- a. Failure will be identified as a cost to the NIHE and pre-determined low performance damages will be applied.
 - b. Failure will be identified as a breach of contract
- In both instances these measures will be used to monitor and manage performance on the contract and drive behavioural change.
- 8.4 Post Project Evaluation at the end of each work package will include an assessment of the framework member's performance and this will be considered in awarding further work packages.
- 9.0 **Key Dates**
- 9.1 In order to meet the framework commencement date of 1st November 2012 the following key dates need to be achieved: (all dates are detailed in the procurement project plan Appendix "A")
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Publish Contract Notice in OJEU: | 29 th June 2012 |
| Tenders invited by: | 29 th June 2012 |
| Tenders returned: | 10 th August 2012 |
| Board approval | 26 th September 2012 |
| Commencement Date: | 1 st November 2012 |

**NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011
Appendix "A" – Project Plan**

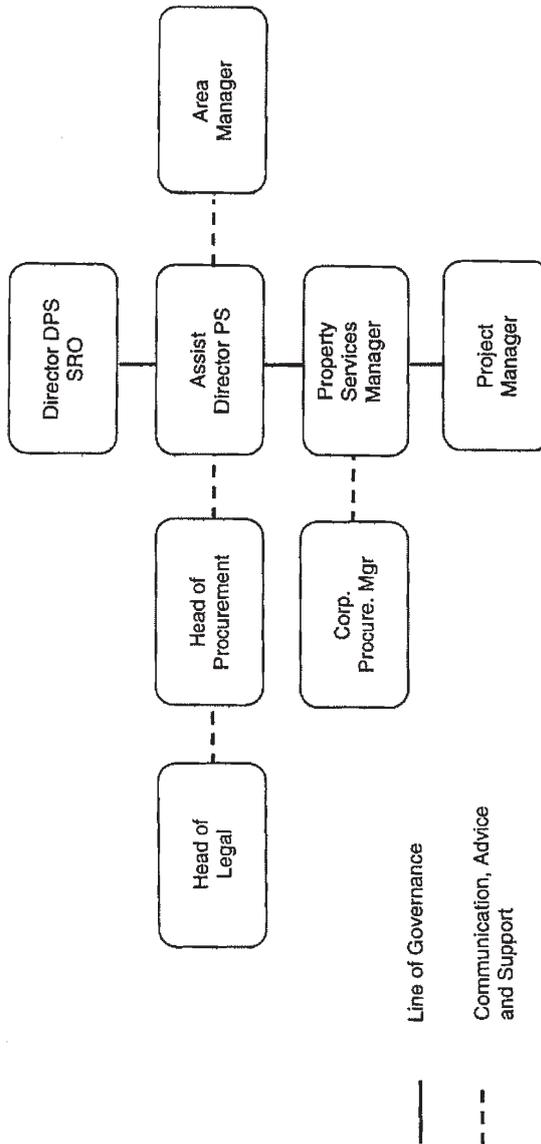
Double Glazing Procurement – Project Plan

Consultant Procurement		
Works Procurement Board	14/05/12	14/05/12
NIHE Board Approval - Strategy	30/05/12	30/05/12
Tender Stage		
Publish Contract Notice in OJEU	29/06/12	29/06/12
Issue Tenders	29/06/12	29/06/12
Tender Return	29/06/12	10/08/12
Evaluate Tenders	13/08/12	17/08/12
Analyse Tender Prices	20/08/12	24/08/12
Prepare Board Report	28/08/12	28/08/12
NIHE Board Approval	26/09/12	26/09/12
Alcatel	27/09/12	08/10/12
Award Contracts	09/10/12	09/10/12
Contract DOP	01/11/12	01/11/12

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011
Appendix "B" – Governance Structure

APPENDIX B

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE – POST CONTRACT



NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011 Appendix "C" – KPIs and Escalation Procedure

1.0 KPI Scoring

1.1 KPI scoring must be carried out on a monthly basis by the Property Services Manager (PSM)

- KPI's will be scored by the Project Manager (PM)
- Details of the scores awarded will be provided to the contractor for comment.
- The contractor must respond to the PM within 7 working days presenting his challenge to the scores.

If the contractor has submitted a challenge to the scores, the scores will be discussed between both parties and the Project Manager will make the final decision.

1.2 The scores are entered into the KPI Matrix and reported on a green, amber and red colour rating. These coloured score bandings will have been predetermined with each colour indicating the following:

- Green - Level of service/product satisfactory and is being delivered in line with the contract
- Amber - Contract Failure - level of service/product not meeting the requirements of the contract - corrective action required by the contractor to meet the standards
- Red - Contract Failure - level of service/product is unacceptable – decision required by Employer on course of action to be taken (corrective action or termination)

1.2 Three AMBER scores as equal to one RED even if they are across a number of KPIs. All AMBER or RED scores require a signed action plan submitted by the contractor showing how he/she proposes to improve the service on the current or future commissions. This action plan must be agreed by the Property Services Manager (PSM).

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011 Appendix "C" – KPIs and Escalation Procedure

2.0 Follow up action on failures

2.1 Follow up action required on Contract Failure as follows

2.2 Failings up to two AMBERS

2.3 The PSM must send the appropriate warning letter to the Consultant within 7 working days following the final scoring of the KPIs. The letter must be copied to the Assistant Director of Property Services (Operations) (ADoPS)

2.4 The Contractor supplies a signed action plan to the PSM within 5 working days of receipt of the warning letter, indicating the corrective action he is taking to address the failure. This is to be reviewed on this and future commissions.

2.5 Action Plan

The Action Plan must indicate:

1. Where the failure / failures occurred
2. Why the failure / failures occurred
3. What the plan is to turn the failure or failures around, including any staffing issues
4. The proposed time scale for correcting the failure / failures.

NOTE:

1. All points of the failure / failures across all KPIs that did not score GREEN must be covered in the Action Plan.
2. One Action Plan will be acceptable to cover a number of failings but they must all be listed and properly covered in the plan.
3. An Action Plan is required every time there is an Amber or Red score.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011 Appendix "C" – KPIs and Escalation Procedure

- 2.6 **Failings above one Red or equivalent**
- 2.7 The PSM must send the appropriate warning letter to the Contractor within 7 working days following the final scoring of the KPIs. The letter must be copied to the ADoPS.
- 2.8 The Contractor supplies a signed action plan to the ADoPS within 5 working days of receipt of the warning letter, indicating the corrective action he is taking to address the failure. This is to be reviewed on this and future commissions.
- 2.9 If improvement is not achieved or the matter is considered serious, the ADoPS must review all the data collected by the PSM, interview the contractor and consider referring to the Director of Design and Property Services (Senior Responsible Officer) for a full contract review.
- 3.0 Contract Review**
- 3.1 The performance of the Framework Members will be reviewed at the end of the first year and every twelve months thereafter. If the ADoPS feels that a further review of any member is necessary he/she will refer to the Senior Responsible Officer for a decision and if deemed necessary the SRO will convene the review.
- 3.2 The Review Team will consist of:
- Director of Design & Property Services
 - Assistant Director Property Services (Operations)
 - Property Services Manager
 - Head of Procurement
 - Head of Legal (if deemed necessary)
- 3.3 In attendance to present to the Review Team:
- Project Manager
 - Contractor
- 3.4 The Review Team will consider all evidence given by the Housing Executive staff and the Contractor including all the KPI data. They will then decide on the appropriate action.

NIHE Double Glazing Procurement Strategy 2011 Appendix "C" – KPIs and Escalation Procedure

- 3.5 If the SRO deems it necessary to terminate the contract, a paper recommending termination must be submitted to the Chief Executive's Business Committee/Chief Executive's Management Committee for their recommendation and then to the Board for approval.
- 4.0 Set aside of KPI scores.**
- 4.1 The Assistant Director of Property Services can, at their discretion, set aside a poor KPI score in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.2 The KPI will still be scored and reported in the normal way to reflect the score earned however no further action will be required if the Contractor's past record is good. If the Contractor had failed the same KPI before, then it may be necessary to treat the KPI as continuing to fail.
- 4.3 The Contractor should still provide an action plan showing how they plan to improve the KPI score but there should be no review at this stage.

- The Board Paper estimates potential savings on hinges for low rise housing stock of £500k but these hinges appear to be still above the industry standard. What is the justification for this?
- The NIHE Procurement Strategy is “to provide one double glazing framework across Northern Ireland. This is the subject of a separate paper for May 2012 Board”. Would you forward this paper explaining the rationale and operational nature of this procurement and how it will deliver best value for money.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Number 3
NIHE emails

McCarty, Susan

From: McPeake, John [John.McPeake@NIHE.GOV.UK]
Sent: 16 May 2012 09:27
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Best, Christine; Flynn, Gerry; Mccauley, Siobhan; Wilkinson, Jim; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan
Subject: RE: Double Glazing - Possible Impacts and Way Forward
Sensitivity: Private

Michael

Thank you for the update and the Minister's approval to proceed with the first two categories.

We will start work immediately on the actions needed to give effect to the approval.

I will keep you advised.

John

From: Sands, Michael [mailto:Michael.Sands@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 16 May 2012 08:04
To: McPeake, John
Cc: Best, Christine; Flynn, Gerry; Mccauley, Siobhan; Wilkinson, Jim; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan
Subject: RE: Double Glazing - Possible Impacts and Way Forward
Sensitivity: Private

John,

Your information below was seen by the Minister at the 4.45pm meeting I referred to yesterday. Minister has decided that :-

In accordance with the exception set out in his letter to you of 30 April the first two category groups set out below i.e. the 3,303 and the 3,761 dwellings may proceed and you should write to the contractors informing them of this. No further contracts or orders are to be placed until the new window installation specifications are agreed and the new procurement exercise is completed in January 2013.

Minister is, however, not content with your proposals to seek Board approval to vary the existing specifications to allow existing contractors to install at least one scheme each using the outside fitting method with minimal plasterwork and a PVC slip to cover the new internal plaster. Minister wants existing contractors to commence installing ALL schemes currently with them using the outside fitting method, except of course any high rise apartment blocks. Tenants will have to no option but accept this installation method, with the consequent saving on redecoration grants. It follows therefore that the category 1 or 2 schemes referred to in your letter and above will similarly be installed using the outside fitting method.

I am happy to discuss.

Michael

From: McPeake, John [mailto:John.McPeake@NIHE.GOV.UK]
Sent: 15 May 2012 14:43
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Best, Christine; Flynn, Gerry; Mccauley, Siobhan

Subject: Double Glazing - Possible Impacts and Way Forward
Sensitivity: Private

Michael

I have attached a list of the schemes in the gross programme.

This is divided into three groups:

- 3,303 dwellings where contractors have advised that they have placed orders with their supply chain; this includes 1 ECM scheme for 107 units, the remainder being double glazing schemes.
- 3,761 dwellings where we have ordered the work from the contractor; I am advised that we are contractually obligated to proceed with these. Of these, 483 are primarily ECM schemes which include an element of double glazing.
- 7,193 dwellings which have not been allocated to the contractors and no orders have been placed.

The funding target for the year is 8,600, although we had anticipated bidding in year which is why, by agreement with DSD, we have front loaded this year's work. The schemes marked as ECM are not funded from the double glazing budget. Netting out the ECM schemes leaves us with ordered work on 6,474 dwellings, which means there are 1,826 dwellings not yet allocated to contractors for which funds were earmarked.

Suppliers have indicated the following position:

F BESLAG (Manufacturer of Fully Reversible Hinges)

- 30,000 sets of Fully Reversible Hinges dedicated in terms of raw materials supply (aluminium) and production; such material has a 3 month supply "lead-in"
- Value of stock materials dedicated estimated @ £500k+

MILA (Supplier of Fully Reversible Hinges)

- 14,113 Hinges currently on the shelf (various module sizes)
- 7,100 Hinges in transit (various module sizes)
- Value of Stock estimated @ £700k

McILHATTON'S (Current Window Supplier – Fully Reversible)

- Estimated to have £150k of profile in stock for window manufacture – previously they sourced profile through National Profiles (Cork) and enjoyed credit terms; profile supplier is now in administration; this now means profile must be sourced directly from profile extrusion manufacturer (Spectus) with payment "up-front" for profile

SUPERSEAL (Current Window Supplier - Fully Reversible)

- Estimated to have £200k of profile in stock for window manufacture (approximate 8,000 windows)
- Again – same issue with supply of profile only in this case dealing directly with WHS Halo
- A further £150k of profile on order with payment "up-front" required now

can confirm that following the letter from the Minister and his announcement we have not issued any further orders to contractors.

In terms of the way forward, it is our view that we are legally committed to the first two categories – i.e. those schemes which meet the specific criteria set down by the Minister (the first category) and those schemes that we have ordered from the contractors but they have not placed specific orders with their suppliers (the second category).

The Minister has asked us to review our specification. As you know, when we met with the Minister in April we indicated to him that we had almost completed such a review, and the only outstanding issue was the fitting method to be used, which he raised specifically with me on the day. I indicated that we would look at this seriously. My technical specialists have been to see this method in operation and early indications are positive.

We are proposing to seek specific Board approval in May to vary the existing specification to allow our contractors to install at least one scheme each using the outside fitting method, with minimal plasterwork and a PVC slip to cover the new internal plaster. If this works, and is positively received by tenants, we may be able to avoid paying redecoration grant or at the very least payment would only be by exception. If this is positive, we would propose negotiating this into the current contract for all the schemes in category 1 or 2 which had yet to start.

Our analysis indicates that this way forward would address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles and ironmongery, and would generate a significant saving re decoration.

The new dedicated contract will have the benefit of this new way of working, together with the other changes in the specification that we advised the Minister we were intending to introduce.

It is our intention to write to the Minister formally on this proposal.

We will also need to write to the Minister once the review of the specification is complete. He has indicated a response is due before the end of June.

I am happy to meet should you feel this necessary.

John

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

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Lucas, Maureen

From: McPeake, John
Sent: 14 May 2012 08:54
To: Michael.Sands@dsdni.gov.uk
Cc: /O=NIHE/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Gerry.Flynn1
Subject: Re: Window Replacement/Double Glazing Specification

Will do We hope to have a more clear understanding by tomorrow afternoon.

John

----- Original Message -----

From: Sands, Michael [mailto:Michael.Sands@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2012 07:35 AM
To: McPeake, John
Cc: Lucas, Maureen
Subject: Window Replacement/Double Glazing Specification

Morning John,

You indicated that NIHE is working on a response to Minister's request re specifications and hope to respond this week.

As part of that response you indicated that you will provide Minister with an impact of the request to halt further work under a number of scenarios work commenced; Orders Placed; schemes scheduled; and tenant surveys / consultations complete so Minister will be aware of impacts of the various cut-off points in relation to taking schemes forward or halting schemes pending new specs/ contracts.

We are receiving numerous requests from MLAs about how Ministers decision will affect their constituents and we would hope that this info would illuminate some of the issues identified.

I would appreciate early sight of this information, if at all possible.
Regards

Michael

Number 4

A list of all the companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts.

Date of Request	Request from	On behalf of a Company	Additional Attendees at meeting/date
2/02/2012	Ian Young	Turkington Holdings Ltd	Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings Ltd Meeting took place on 16 April 2012
09/05/2012	Sean McCaughan	P K Murphy Construction Ltd	****
11/05/2012	Daithi McKay MLA	Paddy McIhatton	****
20/06/2012	Sandra Overend MLA	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	****
29/06/2012	William McCrea MP	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	Kenneth Taylor, Superseal Windows Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate Norman Morell, Director of PN Gearing Dr McCrea MP Cllr Ian McCrea MLA Cllr Paul McLean Meeting took place on 27 September 2012

**** Meeting declined

Number 7, 107



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9084

Dr John McPeake
Chief Executive
NI Housing Executive
2 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8PB

Our ref: SUB/465/2012

30 April 2012

Dear John

DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATION PROGRAMME

Officials have been looking at the Housing Executive's specification for window replacement across your stock and I am concerned that the current Housing Executive specification for window installations is not delivering best VFM.

In view of this I would ask you to rigorously review your entire glazing specification especially the requirement to remove and re-plaster around frames thus necessitating payment of redecoration grants and the standards set down for hinges and handles, would industry standard be sufficient to meet tenants' requirements?

Until the review is completed all further double glazing installations should be held until the new contract provisions, to include any revised specifications, can be put in place. The only exception to this would be where a current Egan Contractor has a contract placed with a supplier for delivery of frames and any cancellation would mean nugatory expenditure.

This holding of window installations should create funding issues and you should then give priority to advancing your Heating Replacement Programme to enable the delivery of replacement Room Heater and Economy 7 systems as part of the Fuel Poverty initiative.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Restricted

Meeting 16/04/2012 16:00:00 - Lotus Notes

File Edit View Create Actions Section Help

Address

Workspace DSD Minister's Diary 2011 - ... X DSD Registers 2011 - 05. Submi... X Meeting 16/04/2012 16:00:00 X

Save Close Print Reminder Show Reminders Mark Private

Status: Confirmed

Subject INV/96/2012 with Jim McKeag and Ian Young, Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation

Venue Min Off LB

With

Contact Name Lynda Woods

Contact Tel No 02838 332807

Start Date 16/04/2012 **Time** 16:00 - 16:45

Notes John McPeake to also attend.

Office Only Notes

Internal Participants

External Participants Requiring Access via Reception Jim McKeag, Ian Young

Country

Region

Constituency

Arrangements Outstanding

Facilities Required To Be Booked

Refreshments Required To Be Booked

Related Documents INV 96 2012 Final briefing.msg RE Meeting with Minister McCausland.msg

Transaction History

Document Author: Chris Barry (20/03/2012 11:04:54)

Revision History:

16/05/2012 12:32:25	Barbara McConaghie
16/04/2012 11:46:19	Chris Barry
20/03/2012 11:49:38	Chris Barry
20/03/2012 11:49:15	Chris Barry
20/03/2012 11:41:07	Chris Barry
20/03/2012 11:21:47	Chris Barry
20/03/2012 11:07:29	Chris Barry

Number 6

VERSIONS	THERE ARE SIX VERSIONS OF THE NOTE	DATE	AUTHOR
1	First working draft formed with two attendees listed	16 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
2	First draft created by Barbara McConaghie	17 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
3	Last line, page 1 amended to be in bold - change made by Barbara McConaghie	17 April 2012	Barbara McConaghie
4	Michael Sands name added to the list of attendees – change made by Michael Sands	17 April 2012	Michael Sands
5	Version 5 amended with tracked changes shown - changes made by Michael Sands	17 April 2012	Michael Sands
6	Finalised version - changes from version 5 made by Barbara McConaghie	16 May 2012	Barbara McConaghie

Version 1

Meeting with

Attendees:

Minister McCausland

Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Version 2

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 20,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 3

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

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This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 4

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland

Stephen Brimstone

Michael Sands

John McPeake, NIHE

Declan Allen, NIHE

Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)

Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings

Ian Young, Turkington Holdings

Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving s of £22m per 50,000 houses.

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Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

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This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 5

Meeting with Turkington Holdings – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
 Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
 John McPeake, NIHE
 Declan Allen, NIHE
 Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
 Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings
 Ian Young, Turkington Holdings
 Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised that Turkingtons have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised that they thought there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers.

The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing.

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

Turkingtons claim that if the Glass & Glazing Federation guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

~~Ian advised that current stipulations by the NIHE require them to remove window reveals which also means the client can avail of redecoration costs. Ian advised that they can save £180 per house by not removing the reveals which over 50,000 would result in significant savings and also save on the redecoration costs. Ian advised in total this could be a saving of £22m per 50,000 houses.~~

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 240,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however, indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Stephen advised Jim and Ian that now was their opportunity to raise any other technical issues that would be of value.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

Turkingtons offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

Version 6

Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
 Stephen Brimstone
 Michael Sands
 John McPeake, NIHE
 Declan Allen, NIHE
 Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
 Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation
 Ian Young, Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation
 Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers. The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing .

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

The representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation advised that if the guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications and supply.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however,

indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

The representatives offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.



2nd Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

17 February 2014

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry – Review of Evidence Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 23 January 2014 requesting further information from the Department and also the subsequent meeting held on 7 February where we discussed in detail the Committee's requests, including the process required in relation to the request for log reports and read receipts. The information requested is contained in this reply and the attached PDF documents.

You also then wrote a further letter on 13 February in relation to the pre-brief meeting on 16 April 2012 and the information requested is included in this reply.

The documents requested are:

1. A copy of the briefing pack prepared for the Minister for the meeting of 16 April 2012, confirmation as to who the briefing pack was sent to, when it was sent and confirmation from DSD's IT services Department (either in the form of a log or a read receipt email) as to when this briefing pack was opened by the individual recipients.

The briefing pack prepared for the Minister for the meeting of the 16 April 2012 was a hard copy which was destroyed after the meeting. This is normal procedure for hard copy briefing packs once a meeting has been held. The only electronic briefing paper record remaining is the briefing paper (INV 96/2012) which has already been issued to the Committee. However, for ease of reference a further copy is attached.

The document lists on the covering page who this was sent to and the "cc" list at the end lists who this was copied to. I have also enclosed a copy of the e-mail forwarding this document to the Private Office which shows who it was sent to and when.

In relation to confirmation from DSD's IT Services Department (either in the form of a log or a read receipt email) as to when this briefing pack was opened by the individual recipients, a log or read receipt e-mails are not retained. IT Assist has advised that it was not possible to retrieve e-mail content, including attachments, or read receipts, due to their retention policy.

2. In your letter dated 23 January you asked for – “A list of the attendees at the pre-brief meeting of 16 April 2012”. In your further letter dated 13 February you asked if Dr John McPeake and Mr Declan Allen could provide the Committee with the following information:
- confirmation of whether they attended a scheduled pre-brief meeting on 16 April 2012 in advance of the meeting with Turkington Holdings Ltd;
 - the names of the other attendees at the pre-brief meeting of 16 April 2012; and
 - any recollection of what was discussed at the pre-brief meeting of 16 April 2012.

While the diary has a slot at 15.45-16.00 for a pre-brief, there is no confirmation of any attendees or if the pre-brief actually took place. The briefing submission referred to at 1 above also refers to “There will be a pre-brief at 15.45” However, scheduled pre-briefs sometimes do not occur, for example, due to the time commitment of the Minister, when perhaps earlier meetings may overrun, or the Minister’s prior knowledge of the subject.

John McPeake has advised that NIHE did not attend a pre-meeting. Declan Allen’s diary indicates a pre-meeting at 15.45 but it is the recollection of the NIHE officers that NIHE and Turkington representatives entered the meeting together.

Stephen Brimstone in his evidence on 9 January 2014 advised “I do not believe that we had one in that instance. I had a personal appointment. It turned out that was unable to stay for the whole meeting that took place with Turkingtons. I had a personal appointment after that meeting — I had to leave the meeting early, actually. I cannot recall whether, in fact, we went straight into that meeting. I cannot recall whether the Minister felt that he knew the issues that were to be discussed and went straight into the meeting. I cannot recall. It is possible that we went straight into the meeting and that there was no pre-briefing before it. That would happen on occasion.”

3. A copy of **all** documentation related to the list of companies with an interest in specifications that had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts. This will include the initial request, all correspondence and briefing notes provided to the Minister in relation to the requests and the response from the Department/Minister in respect of these requests.

Documents attached. Note this also relates to Number 4.

4. **All** previous correspondence from McIlhatton windows, SuperSeal and PK Murphy to the Minister or the Department in respect of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

Documents attached. Note this also relates to Number 3.

5. A copy of **all** documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister’s response to Mr Daithi McKay’s AQW115/12/11-15 of 10 May 2012.

Documents attached.

6. The Committee notes that a number of changes to the aide memoire and the Minister’s diary were made on the 16 May 2012. The Committee would like an explanation as to why these changes were made and any accompanying correspondence requesting these changes (handwritten or electronic).

The Department notes the evidence provided by Barbara McConaghie under oath on 9 January 2014 to the Committee that she had no recollection as to why the aide memoire and diary were amended on 16 May 2012 and therefore cannot add anything further to this.

7. A copy of **all** documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister's response to the Chair's letter of 16 May 2012.

Documents attached.

8. Details and all documentation associated with the meeting between the NIHE and Turkingtons in March 2012 and November 2011 as referred to in Dr Mc Peake's and Turkington's evidence to the Committee on 14 November 2013.

The Housing Executive has advised:

At the SDC meeting on 14th November 2013 John McPeake referred to a meeting between NIHE and Turkingtons in March 2012. He did not refer to a meeting in November. He believes that a representative from Turkingtons claimed to have attended a meeting in November. John McPeake checked with David Adamson in NIHE's Policy and Standards group. David confirmed that he has no diary entry or any other material regarding a suggested meeting in November.

David Adamson has advised that he met with Cary Hyndman of Turkington Holdings on 13 March around 10.30am. He cannot be sure but believes that Ian Young also attended the meeting. David was the only person from NIHE who attended. There are no documents associated with the meeting but David's memory is that Turkington representatives raised a number of "innovative ideas" around the fitting of windows. David advised Turkington Holdings of the performance nature of the NIHE specification and that no one supplier or product is "approved for use" – the onus always on the supplier to demonstrate compliance with the standard specification.

In terms of the fitting method, David's recollection is that the Turkington representatives believed that they could save NIHE considerable sums of money if the windows were fitted in a different way from the approach used at that time by NIHE. He recalls listening to what they said, but would have reminded them, that given the scale of our stock, most would have the "reverse brick detail" and hence relied on a window being fitted from the inside as opposed to their claim that all windows should be fitted from outside.

He does not recall any exchange of any technical literature either from Turkington or indeed from NIHE other than a "business card" handed to him from Cary Hyndman, which is still in his possession.

At David Adamson's request, NIHE has initiated a procedure to recover deleted e-mails from his account for the period in question in order to check if there is any additional information that may be helpful to the Committee. Should anything of relevance be recovered this will be furnished separately.

9. List of attendees at the meeting of the 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme.

A copy of the Diary entry for the meeting with the Minister on 28 June 2013 is attached.

10. **All** documentation prepared for the meeting of 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme. This should include all correspondence, briefing papers, notes/minutes/aide memoire (either handwritten or electronically).

Internal meetings between officials and the Minister do not necessarily have any documentation prepared in advance and may take the form of a general discussion around an issue. Following these internal meetings notes/minutes/aide memoires are not usually prepared.

This meeting was held to discuss generally with Minister the letter he had received from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 requesting Minister to consider an on camera interview. The Minister's response to this letter was issued on 28 June 2013.

Both these letters were copied to the Committee on 10 December 2013. However, for ease of reference copies are enclosed.

There was no briefing prepared for this meeting. However, the submission with the draft letter to the Spotlight Programme which was discussed at the meeting is attached.

11. Confirmation of Mr Brimstone's paternity leave arrangements, including dates of when he went on paternity leave and when he returned.

Mr Brimstone was on paternity leave from Monday 27 February 2012 to Friday 9 March 2012.

12. Confirmation from DSD IT services – including log report and read receipt- as to when emails from Private Office to Mr Brimstone on 22 February 2012 were opened by Mr Brimstone.

Attached separately is an Excel database which provides details of e-mails sent to Mr Brimstone from Private Office staff on 22 February 2012. IT Assist has advised that it was not possible to retrieve e-mail content, including attachments, or read receipts, due to their retention policy.

For information, in relation to the e-mail listed as: "Re: Invitation: INV 96/2012: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes", a copy of this can be found in the documents provided for numbers 3 and 4.

13. An explanation as to why a letter from Turkington Holdings of 2 February 2012 was only dealt with by Departmental officials on 22 February 2012.

Private Office registers show that although this letter was dated 2 February, it was received by the Private Office on 22 February. Private Office is unable to explain why this is the case.

14. A copy of the submission to the Minister which accompanied the draft letter of acceptance in respect of the request from Turkington Holdings on 27 February 2012.

Document is attached.

Yours sincerely



Susan McCarty

1. A copy of the briefing pack prepared for the Minister for the meeting of 16 April 2012, confirmation as to who the briefing pack was sent to, when it was sent and confirmation from DSD's IT services Department (either in the form of a log or a read receipt email) as to when this briefing pack was opened by the individual recipients.

McCarty, Susan

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 11 April 2012 15:23
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; McKee, Helen; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.DOCX; INV 96 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/96/2012

Thanks Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret

1



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 11 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS: DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES

Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

Timing: 11 April 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You are invited to note this short briefing.

Detail

You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

2. Ian Young advised in his letter on 2 February that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the Programme for Government, it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

5. It is envisaged that this meeting will primarily be an informal listening exercise with Turkington Holdings who feel they have a lot to offer both the Department and the Housing Executive in relation to the installation of double glazing to NIHE properties.
6. Michael Sands will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is  *

Conclusion

7. You are invited to note this briefing. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire

Heather Cousins

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Norman Sleator

Michael Henderson

Grainne McConnell

Barbara McConaghie

Chris Barry

* personal mobile number

3. A copy of all documentation related to the list of companies with an interest in specifications that had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts. This will include the initial request, all correspondence and briefing notes provided to the Minister in relation to the requests and the response from the Department/Minister in respect of these requests.

4. All previous correspondence from McIlhatton windows, SuperSeal and PK Murphy to the Minister or the Department in respect of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

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A list of all the companies with an interest in specifications who had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts.

Date of Request	Request from	On behalf of a Company	Additional Attendees at meeting/date
2/02/2012	Ian Young	Turkington Holdings Ltd	Jim McKeag, Turkington Holdings Ltd Meeting took place on 16 April 2012
09/05/2012	Sean McCaughan	P K Murphy Construction Ltd	****
11/05/2012	Daithi McKay MLA	Paddy McIlhatton	****
20/06/2012	Sandra Overend MLA	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	****
29/06/2012	William McCrea MP	Super Seal Window Systems Ltd	Kenneth Taylor, Superseal Windows Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate Norman Morell, Director of PN Gearing Dr McCrea MP Cllr Ian McCrea MLA Cllr Paul McLean Meeting took place on 27 September 2012

**** Meeting declined

Turkington Holdings Ltd

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 22 February 2012 15:17
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: Turkington.pdf; INV 96 2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-2001

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:42
To: DSD Private Office; Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stephen Brimstone
Subject: RE: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
 Barbara

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012

Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

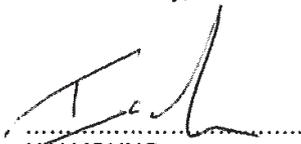
This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP

Mills, Karen

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 15:12
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Will do

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 27 February 2012 14:40
To: Bowsie, Margaret; Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Mills, Karen; Dodds, Clara
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Cleared for issue please

John - have alerted John McPeake - if not can we please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 27 February 2012 11:07
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Susan, please see draft reply attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 27 February 2012 09:50
To: Kennedy, Alan

Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Alan,
Draft submission accepting attached for clearance.

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

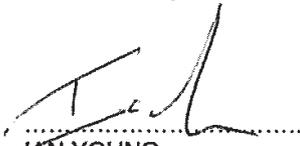
This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 27 February 2012

1. Permanent Secretary
2. Nelson McCausland

**REQUEST FROM TURKINGTON HOLDINGS LTD FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS
THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES**

Issue: Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd, wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary/Minister letter is attached for your approval.

Detail

Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

2. Ian Young advises in his letter that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the draft Programme for Government, by March 2012 it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

Conclusion

5. You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary letter is attached for your approval. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

SUSAN MCCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

February 2012

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary

Mills, Karen

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 27 February 2012 14:56
To: O'Connor, Sheila; Dodds, Ciara
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); DSD Private Office; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Brenda; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/2/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: Turkington.pdf; INV 96 2012 - Submission accepting invite.DOCX; INV 96 2012 - Submission accepting invite.tr5

Please see cleared response to INV/96/2012.

Ciara
Can you please update the database
Thanks
Margaret

James Park, Mahon Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, N. Ireland, BT62 3EH
Tel: 028 3833 2807 Fax: 028 3835 0276
e-mail: info@turkington-holdings.com
www.turkington-holdings.com



Our Ref IY/BS

2 February, 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

RE: KEY PRIORITY OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING IN ALL HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES BY 2015

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, which I feel will be of benefit to all concerned.

I am writing in connection with the above Programme for Government and how we feel the specialist glazing manufacturers and installers can assist the Department and the Housing Executive to undertake this major programme of work over the next four years. We believe that this programme by the Northern Ireland Executive shows a great deal of foresight and demonstrates that the Executive is serious about tackling the very real issue of fuel poverty.

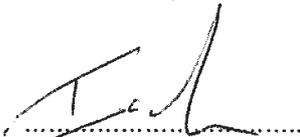
This particular scheme promises great potential if executed properly but we urge caution that if the scheme is not handled properly a great opportunity could be lost.

We have been actively involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. We are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). With our experience, expertise and active role within the National Standards Body (GGF) we feel we have a lot to offer the Department and to the Housing Executive and we would see value in having a meeting to discuss this in greater detail.



If you feel a meeting would be of benefit please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



IAN YOUNG

GENERAL MANAGER

c.c. Sammy Wilson MP



From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 27 February 2012

1. Permanent Secretary
2. Nelson McCausland

**REQUEST FROM TURKINGTON HOLDINGS LTD FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE
INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES**

Issue: Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd, wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

Timing: 28 February 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary/Minister letter is attached for your approval.

Detail

Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

2. Ian Young advises in his letter that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the draft Programme for Government, by March 2012 it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.

4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

Conclusion

5. You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary/Minister letter is attached for your approval. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



Reply from: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co. Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

February 2012

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on 028 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary

Mills, Karen

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 28 February 2012 11:40
To: 'Hughes, Lynda'
Cc: 'Pritchard, Gary'; 'Finnegan, Colette'; Kennedy, Alan; Barry, Chris
Subject: INV/96/2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Lynda,
Minister has agreed to meet Ian Young, Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all NIHE properties by 2015.
Minister's Special Advisor has suggested that your CX Dr McPeake should also be in attendance. Therefore I would be grateful if you could alert his Secretary about this. Minister's diary secretary will be in touch in due course.

Thanks

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

Stephen advised prior to receiving this letter that a meeting should be set up and John Mc Peake should be invited. Please draft a letter of acceptance on this one. Thanks.
Barbara

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 22 February 2012 11:28
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 22/02/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 28/02/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 29 February 2012 15:12
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: CLOSING INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 29/05/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 29 February 2012 15:05
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/96/2012
Raised By: Ian Young, Turkington

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

~~COR / INV / GNT / DOE~~ 96

SPECIAL ADVISER _____

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved ✓
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Signed: *W*

Dated: *29/4/12*



From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

29 February 2012

Dear Ian

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 20 March 2012 11:53
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - Ian Young - Turkington Holdings Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) Briefing request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-2001

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: chris.barry@dspd.gov.uk [<mailto:chris.barry@dspd.gov.uk>]

Sent: 20 March 2012 11:44

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheilla; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Stuart, Simon; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Kelly, Ashleigh; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight

Subject: Invitation INV/96/2012 : Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012

Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington

REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 20 March 2012

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

BRIEFING REQUIRED

The Minister has agreed to the above meeting to take place on Monday 16 April at 16.00 in the Minister's

office, Parliament Buildings, with a pre-brief at 15.45. Attending will be Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Holdings; and John McPeake from NIHE. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and mobile contact numbers of any officials attending with the Minister..

Please return to Private Office by Wednesday 11/04/2012

Chris Barry
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38033

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 11 April 2012 15:18
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - Draft briefing for meeting.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 11 April 2012 15:09
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Susan to consider

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 11 April 2012 14:08
To: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Roisin, please see draft sub attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 06 April 2012 13:38
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

Alan,
Draft sub attached for meeting.
Chris in PO confirmed that John McPeake has been advised of the meeting.

John Kerstens
Director's Office

Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/96/2012
Invitation From: Ian Young, Turkington
REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 20 March 2012

Subject: Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes

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Please return to Private Office by Wednesday 11/04/2012

Chris Barry
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38033

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 11 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS: DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES

Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

Timing: 11 April 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You are invited to note this short briefing.

Detail

You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

2. Ian Young advised in his letter on 2 February that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the Programme for Government, it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

5. It is envisaged that this meeting will primarily be an informal listening exercise with Turkington Holdings who feel they have a lot to offer both the Department and the Housing Executive in relation to the installation of double glazing to NIHE properties.
6. Michael Sands will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is  *

Conclusion

7. You are invited to note this briefing. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

* personal mobile number

Mills, Karen

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 11 April 2012 15:23
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; McKee, Helen; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/4/12 - INV/96/2012 - Ian Turkington - Turkington Holdings: Double Glazing in Housing Executive homes
Attachments: INV 96 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.DOCX; INV 96 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/96/2012

Thanks Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 11 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH TURKINGTON HOLDINGS: DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES

Issue: You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

Timing: 11 April 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: You are invited to note this short briefing.

Detail

You have accepted an invitation to meet with Jim McKeag and Ian Young of Turkington Homes to discuss double glazing in Housing Executive homes. John McPeake, Chief Executive, NIHE will also attend the meeting which will take place in your office in Parliament Buildings on Monday 16 April at 16.00. There will be a pre-brief at 15.45.

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6. Michael Sands will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is

*

Conclusion

7. You are invited to note this briefing. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire

Heather Cousins

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Norman Sleator

Michael Henderson

Grainne McConnell

Barbara McConaghie

Chris Barry

* personal mobile number 3

Meeting with Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) – 16 April 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Michael Sands
John McPeake, NIHE
Declan Allen, NIHE
Katrina ? (NIHE, Job Shadowing)
Jim McKeag, Representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Ian Young, Representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Ian advised his company Turkington Holdings that they have extensive double glazing experience and are installing windows for the NIHE to their requirement, however, advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customers.

The NIHE have recently confirmed numbers of stock requiring fitting of Double Glazing and have set out a potential programme for the three year period commencing 12/13. In total some 40,000 homes will benefit from Double Glazing .

Currently NIHE require a window installer to:-

Cut away the plaster reveals and then re plaster. This generates a requirement for the tenant to receive a redecoration grant of £70 per room. NIHE also require 'Hotel' type hinges which cost 5 times the industry standard. Installation takes two days.

The representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation advised that if the guidelines were followed:-

There would be no need to cut away the reveals doing away with the need to replaster and pay re-decoration grants. This would effect a saving of £180 for plaster work and average 7 window house x £70 redecoration grant, £490. Total saving per house of £670 (excluding savings on hinges).

Over 40,000 homes there is a possible saving of £26.8m!!!

Stephen enquired if there were any specific issues around current specifications and supply.

John advised that going forward he would be keen on supply and fit organisations and agreed that there was scope in the process to reduce costs. John advised that the final specification is due to be signed off at next month's Board meeting with tenders being placed before the end of June and contracts in place for the Autumn. John advised that new contracts would commence in Feb 2013. The Minister enquired about the number of units to be completed. John advised this would be 40,000 by end of 3 years (including this year) and confirmed that it would in large be by scheme based approach.

Michael enquired about the nature of the contractors to be employed if it would be a single contractor or consortium to cover NI. John advised that this information was confidential, however,

indicated that it would not be in same terms a response maintenance contracts which are issued at district level. John advised that he plans to refine specification considering energy efficiency.

Jim advised that he had issues with procurement of doors; lack of supply.

John advised that their big focus is on fire doors, however, when replacing double glazing also consider the need to replace front and back doors.

This led to a discussion on hinges for windows with John advising on the need to have a rated hinges to support weight especially in relation to high raised flats.

The Minister asked for details on redecoration costs – NIHE to provide.

The Minister also enquired about the quality of installation and enquired if there was a specification to measure skill of those installing. John advised that the company would be registered.

The representatives offered to meet with NIHE to discuss specification detail.

P K Murphy Construction Ltd

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 10 May 2012 08:18
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: FW .msg; INV 276 2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units.tr5

1. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-4948

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 09 May 2012 17:14
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight
Subject: Invitation INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/276/2012
 Invitation From: Sean

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 09/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 16/05/2012.

Re-issued with revised deadline. To be treated urgently.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 09 May 2012 14:19
To: O'Hare, Paul
Subject: FW:

From: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: 09 May 2012 12:38
To: DSD Private Office; Howland, Marie
Subject: Fw:

INV for housing. Please treat as urgent.

This message was sent from my Blackberry device.

From: Lydia Patterson <lydia@dup-belfast.co.uk>
To: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: Wed May 09 12:26:50 2012
Subject:

Hi Barbara, had a call from Sean from PK Murphy this morning, he would like to set up a meeting with Nelson regarding the suspension of double glazing units that were due to be installed. Sean can be contacted on 02887 758848 or 07739084381.

Good luck

Lydia

Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 16 May 2012 09:39
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: FW .msg; INV 276 2012 - Draft sub declining.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 14 May 2012 15:21
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Susan to consider please

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 14 May 2012 14:44
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Roisin, please see draft attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 14 May 2012 14:28
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Alan,
Draft sub attached declining invitation as discussed.

John Kerstens
Director's Office

*Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/276/2012

Invitation From: Sean

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 09/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 16/05/2012.

Re-issued with revised deadline. To be treated urgently.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 16 May 2012 09:43
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Deadline 16/5/12 - INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: FW .msg; INV 276 2012 - cleared sub declining.DOCX; INV 276 2012 - cleared sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/276/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/276/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 16 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Issue: Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

Timing: 16 May 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you decline the invitation to meet at this time and approve the attached draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Mr McCaughan.

Detail

Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

2. You have been concerned, for some time, that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. You have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The review is to be completed urgently and will not have an impact on the target date of 2015.
3. You also met with Ian McCrea MLA, Mervyn Storey MLA and Councillor Paul McClean on 15 May to discuss this.
4. The Housing Executive also provided the results of the review on 15 May and you agreed the category groups where the work can proceed and that NIHE should now write to contractors.

Conclusion

5. As the Housing Executive is to now write to Contractors, I would suggest that it would

not be beneficial to meet with Mr McCaughan at this time. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Sean McCaughan
PK Murphy Construction Ltd
91 Sluggan Road
POMEROY
BT70 2UP

Our ref: INV/276/2012

May 2012

Dear Mr McCaughan

I refer to your request to meet Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units to Housing Executive properties. The Minister has asked me to reply to your letter.

I know you are aware of the Minister's recent announcement on this issue where he expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and the Minister therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and this will be completed in the current CSR period, any delay is to be as short as possible.

The Minister has now considered the results of the Housing Executive's review and agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed. As he has asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position, it would not be beneficial for the Minister to meet with you at this time.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary

Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 17 May 2012 13:28
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: INV 276 - Revised sub declining.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 17 May 2012 11:39
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Susan to clear

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 17 May 2012 10:40
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Roisin, draft revised re D/Glzg wording.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 17 May 2012 09:16
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units

Alan,
Revised draft attached for clearance.

Note
first line last para reworded

John Kerstens
Director's Office

*Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/276/2012
Invitation From: Sean

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF
DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 09/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Private Secretary. To be with Private Office not later than 16/05/2012.

Re-issued with revised deadline. To be treated urgently.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

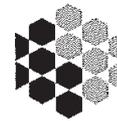
Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 17 May 2012 13:36
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: INV/276/2012 - Sean - request for a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units
Attachments: INV 276 - cleared Revised sub declining.DOCX; INV 276 - cleared Revised sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/276/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdrni.gov.uk

INV/276/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 17 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION
OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS**

Issue: Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

Timing: 17 May 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you decline the invitation to meet at this time and approve the attached draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Mr McCaughan.

Detail

Sean McCaughan of PK Murphy has requested a meeting to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing to Housing Executive properties.

2. You have been concerned, for some time, that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. You have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The review is to be completed urgently and will not have an impact on the target date of 2015.
3. You also met with Ian McCrea MLA, Mervyn Storey MLA and Councillor Paul McClean on 15 May to discuss this.
4. The Housing Executive also provided information on outstanding schemes on 15 May and you agreed the category groups where the work can proceed and that NIHE should now write to contractors.

Conclusion

5. As the Housing Executive is to now write to Contractors, I would suggest that it would

not be beneficial to meet with Mr McCaughan at this time. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Sean McCaughan
PK Murphy Construction Ltd
91 Sluggan Road
POMEROY
BT70 2UP

Our ref: INV/276/2012

May 2012

Dear Mr McCaughan

I refer to your request to meet Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units to Housing Executive properties. The Minister has asked me to reply to your letter.

I know you are aware of the Minister's recent announcement on this issue where he expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and the Minister therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and this will be completed in the current CSR period, any delay is to be as short as possible.

As part of the Housing Executive's review, the Minister has agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed. As he has asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position, it would not be beneficial for the Minister to meet with you at this time.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:43
To: Goodall, Roisin; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: CLOSING INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE
SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS
Attachments: INV 276.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 22/08/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/276/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE
SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/276/2012
Raised By: P.K. Murphy

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE SUSPENSION OF THE INSTALLATION OF
DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
General CC List; Briefing Request List

COR / INV / GM / TOF 276

SPECIAL ADVISER EUSS 22/05

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved ✓
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Signed: M Dated: 22/5/12



Department for
**Social
Development**
dsdni.gov.uk

From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Sean McCaughan
PK Murphy Construction Ltd
91 Sluggan Road
POMEROY
BT70 2UP

Our ref: INV/276/2012

22nd May 2012

Dear Mr McCaughan

I refer to your request to meet Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development to discuss the suspension of the installation of double glazing units to Housing Executive properties. The Minister has asked me to reply to your letter.

I know you are aware of the Minister's recent announcement on this issue where he expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and the Minister therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and this will be completed in the current CSR period, any delay is to be as short as possible.

As part of the Housing Executive's review, the Minister has agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed. As he has asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position, it would not be beneficial for the Minister to meet with you at this time.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Private Secretary



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

McIlhattons

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 14 May 2012 14:07
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: DMcKay.pdf; INV 289 2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme Issues relating to contractors sub-contractors.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5109

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Ciara Dodds, Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 14 May 2012 12:55
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight
Subject: Invitation INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/289/2012
Invitation From: Daithi McKay

Subject: Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 14/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 23/05/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List



Building an Ireland Of Equals

PRIVATE OFFICE
14 MAY 2012
SOCIAL DEV'MENT

*Oifigi pháirtí
12 Main Street
Dunloy
Co. Antrim
BT44 9AA*

Fon: (028) 276 57198
Facs: (028) 276 57822

Riomphoist: daithimckay@northantrim.sinnfein.ie

11th May 2012

A chara,

I am writing to request a meeting be arranged between the Minister for Social Development, myself and a constituent of mine, Paddy McIlhatton as soon as possible.

The context of the meeting is to discuss the suspension of the double glazing scheme and issues that have risen around it, in particular those pertaining to contractors/sub-contractors who potentially will be adversely affected.

I look forward to hearing from you so that we may reach a satisfactory conclusion for the McIlhatton's.

Is mise le meas

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Claire Higgins'.

Daithí McKay MLA
Cc Claire Higgins
clairhiggins@ireland.com

North Antrim Sinn Féin Constituency Office Opening hours: 10.0am to 4.30pm

www.daithimckay.blogspot.com

Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:32
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: DMcKay.pdf; INV 289 2012 - Draft sub declining.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 18 May 2012 12:11
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Susan, please see draft attached as below.
Happy to discuss.
Thanks
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 10:49
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Alan,
Draft sub declining meeting as discussed.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/289/2012

Invitation From: Daithi McKay

Subject: Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 14/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 23/05/2012.

Marie Howland (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38566

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:35
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; Henderson, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Barry, Chris; Crawford, James
Subject: FW: Deadline 23/5/12 - INV/289/2012 - Daithi McKay - Suspension of the double glazing scheme: Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: DMcKay.pdf; INV 289 2012 - cleared sub declining.DOCX; INV 289 2012 - cleared sub declining.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/289/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/289/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**SUSPENSION OF THE DOUBLE GLAZING SCHEME - ISSUES RELATING TO
CONTRACTORS / SUB-CONTRACTORS**

Issue: Daithí McKay MLA has written requesting a meeting is set up with Paddy McIlhatton regarding the suspension of the double glazing schemes, particularly to discuss the effect on Contractors and Sub-Contractors.

Timing: 23 May 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you decline the invitation to meet at this time and approve the attached draft reply for issue to Mr McKay MLA

Detail

Daithí McKay MLA has written requesting a meeting is set up with Paddy McIlhatton regarding the suspension of the double glazing schemes, particularly to discuss the effect on Contractors and Sub-Contractors.

2. You have been concerned, for some time, that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. You have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The review is to be completed urgently and will not have an impact on the target date of 2015.
3. The Housing Executive also provided information on outstanding schemes on 15 May and you agreed the category groups where the work can proceed and that the Housing Executive should now urgently write to contractors.

Conclusion

4. As the Housing Executive is now writing to Contractors, one of which is McIlhattons, I would suggest that it would not be beneficial to meet with Mr McKay or Mr McIlhatton at this time. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Daithí McKay MLA
Oifigí pháirtí
12 Main Street
Dunloy
Co. Antrim
BT44 9AA

Our ref: INV/289/2012

May 2012

Thank you for your recent letter requesting a meeting with yourself and Mr McIlhatton to discuss the situation regarding the Housing Executive's double glazing programme.

I know you are aware of my recent announcement on this issue where I expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and I therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and this will be completed in the

current CSR period, as set out in the Executive's Programme for Government, any delay is to be as short as possible.

As part of the Housing Executive's review I have agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed and I have asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position. Therefore until the Housing Executive's review is complete I feel it would not be beneficial to meet with you at this time.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful at this stage.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 22 May 2012 15:09
To: Goodall, Roisin; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors
Attachments: INV 289.pdf

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 22/08/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: marie.howland@dspd.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dspd.gov.uk>]
Sent: 22 May 2012 14:49
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/289/2012 : Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/289/2012
Raised By: Daithi McKay

Subject: Suspension of the double glazing scheme:Issues relating to contractors / sub-contractors

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
Briefing Request List



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsadni.gov.uk

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsadni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Oifigí pháirtí
12 Main Street
DUNLOY
Co Antrim
BT44 9AA

Our ref: INV/289/2012

22 May 2012

Dear Daithí

Thank you for your recent letter requesting a meeting with yourself and Mr McIlhatton to discuss the situation regarding the Housing Executive's double glazing programme.

I know you are aware of my recent announcement on this issue where I expressed concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing may not offer value for money and I therefore asked the Housing Executive to rigorously and urgently review the specification. While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme, and that this will be completed in the current CSR period, as set out in the Executive's Programme for Government, any delay is to be as short as possible.

As part of the Housing Executive's review I have agreed what category groups and schemes should now proceed and I have asked the Housing Executive to urgently write to all contractors to confirm the position. Therefore until the Housing Executive's review is complete I feel it would not be beneficial to meet with you at this time.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful at this stage.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Superseal Window System Ltd

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:33
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; Goodall, Roisin; Best, Christine
Subject: Deadline 30/5/12 - COR/405/2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme
Attachments: ekl18000.PDF; COR 405 2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorrI database.

2. Michael

i) One for you. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5375

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:19
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/405/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 21/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and a draft reply for signature by the Minister.

To be with Private Office not later than 30/05/2012 before Noon

For further information etc. contact :

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List

✉ Rm 308, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305



✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
1 High Street
Moneymore
Magherafelt BT45 7PB
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Sandra Overend MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

PRIVATE OFFICE

21 MAY 2012

SOCIAL DEV'MENT

Friday, 18 May 2012

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister of Social Development
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

I am writing with regards to your recent announcement concerning the review of the NI Housing Executive double glazing programme, with particular reference to company negatively affected by this decision namely Super Seal Window Systems Ltd.

While I recognise the need to ensure that all Housing Executive schemes are implemented in the most cost-effective means surely such considerations should be fully assessed prior to engaging in contract with any suppliers. I request that you detail why the double-glazing scheme has been suspended and what actions will be taken to compensate suppliers for any losses they will sustain.

My constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. were awarded 6 new contracts to fit 5285 windows. In order to fulfill their contractual obligations, Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. ordered the necessary materials which are now sitting in their factory store ready to go. These materials are estimated to cost £500,000 and should they no longer be required the company will experience a loss greater than they can bear.

Several businesses have been placed in vulnerable positions owing to the suspension of this scheme and the implications are far reaching, I therefore, urge you to seriously consider the future of the local economy during this review period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sandra', with a horizontal line underneath.

Sandra Overend MLA

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Best, Christine
Sent: 30 May 2012 13:30
To: stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara
Cc: DSD Private Office; Haire, Will; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; Barry, Chris; Mills, Karen; Kerstens, John; Carragher, Damien; Heaney, Donald; Johnston, Stephen; Malcolm, David; Martin, Stephen; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Subject: Submission to Minister re Review of NIHE Double Glazing - Super Seal Ltd
Attachments: Submission to Minister re Review of NIHE Double Glazing - Super Seal Ltd.docx



COR/405/2012

From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 30 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

Issue: Letter from Sandra Overend MLA re Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts they had been awarded.

Timing: 30 May 2012

Priority: Important

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Equality Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to Sandra Overend MLA along the lines of
the attached draft.

Detail

Super Seal Window Systems six contracts were confirmed by the Housing Executive as part of the contracts they had already awarded prior to your letter to the Chief Executive on 30 April 2012.

2. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

3. That you reply along the lines of the attached.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

Superseal Window System Ltd

DRAFT RESPONSE



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsadni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: COR/405/2012
Date:

Dear

Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations

I am replying to your letter of 18 May re your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 07 June 2012 14:28
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McCarty, Susan; Best, Christine
Subject: CLOSING COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME
Attachments: f6n22000.PDF

FYI
Margaret

Michael
Please complete 'Date to closed TRIM' on database = 07/09/2012
Thanks
Margaret

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 07 June 2012 14:23
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/405/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

Answer: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FINAL REPLY CLEARED BY NELSON McCAUSLAND

Copied To For Information:
General CC List

COR / INV / GM / TOF..... COR / 405 / 2012

SPECIAL ADVISER OKB 2/1/12

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved ✓
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Signed: M Dated: 1/6/12



From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: COR/405/2012

31 May 2012

Dear Sandra

REVIEW OF NIHE WINDOW REPLACEMENT INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 18 May regarding your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 20 June 2012 10:59
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 29/06/12 - INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: 120619 Ltr McCausland DSD SuperSeal.doc; INV 380 2012 - Submission Template.tr5

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCor database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is DS1-12-6635, submission template attached.

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens and Karen Mills to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

*John Kerstens
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Level 2
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
 email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]

Sent: 20 June 2012 10:11

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.qsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James

Subject: Invitation INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/380/2012

Invitation From: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 20/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 29/06/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

✉ Rm 308, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305

✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
20 High Street
Moneymore
Magherafelt BT45 7PD
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Sandra Overend MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

Monday, 03 February 2014 *

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

URGENT

Thank you for recent letter received last week regarding the Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations. Super Seal Window Systems Ltd remain concerned, however, I would like to meet with you to discuss the situation as a matter of urgency.

Super Seal Window Systems Ltd supply to EGAN Contracts who advised them some time ago that they needed additional windows, and that they should increase their stock levels in order to be able to meet the demand that NIHE were placing on them, in the short timeframe that was available, which I understand was eighteen months. Super Seal therefore increased their number of employees by 15 and worked to increase their stock levels to the specification that was called for by EGAN Contracts.

Super Seal are currently very much in limbo with regard to the future of their business, because so much time, effort, and expense has been put into preparing for such an huge order. The windows for this order had certain specification that was solely for NIHE order and is not therefore suitable for the ordinary commercial market.

They have been unable to get any answers from EGAN or the NIHE. Super Seal would appreciate if you would find the time to meet them as soon as possible, and I believe that you would find it useful to meet on site, at their business, where they could show you their product.

I look forward to a favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Overend MLA

* Please note this document
when printed changes the
date on the letter to
the date of printing

Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 29 June 2012 13:32
To: Mills, Karen
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Smith, Joy
Subject: FW: Deadline 29/06/12: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: 120619 Ltr McCausland DSD SuperSeal.doc; INV 380 2012 - Draft Submission declining.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 29 June 2012 13:18
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 29/06/12: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Susan, please see draft reply attached
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 29 June 2012 12:24
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Invitation INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Alan,
Draft sub declining invite attached for consideration.

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/380/2012

Invitation From: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 20/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 29/06/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

✉ Rm 308, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305

✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
20 High Street
Money more
Magherafelt BT45 7PD
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Sandra Overend MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

Friday, 14 February 2014

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

URGENT

Thank you for recent letter received last week regarding the Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations. Super Seal Window Systems Ltd remain concerned, however, I would like to meet with you to discuss the situation as a matter of urgency.

Super Seal Window Systems Ltd supply to EGAN Contracts who advised them some time ago that they needed additional windows, and that they should increase their stock levels in order to be able to meet the demand that NIHE were placing on them, in the short timeframe that was available, which I understand was eighteen months. Super Seal therefore increased their number of employees by 15 and worked to increase their stock levels to the specification that was called for by EGAN Contracts.

Super Seal are currently very much in limbo with regard to the future of their business, because so much time, effort, and expense has been put into preparing for such a huge order. The windows for this order had certain specification that was solely for NIHE order and is not therefore suitable for the ordinary commercial market.

They have been unable to get any answers from EGAN or the NIHE. Super Seal would appreciate if you would find the time to meet them as soon as possible, and I believe that you would find it useful to meet on site, at their business, where they could show you their product.

I look forward to a favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Overend MLA



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdni.gov.uk

INV/380/2012

X/ref: COR/405/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 29 June 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SUPER SEAL WINDOW SYSTEMS LTD

Issue: Sandra Overend MLA has written again on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: As you have already replied on 31 May to Ms Overend MLA on the same subject (COR/405/2012) I recommend that you decline this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA.

Detail

Sandra Overend MLA wrote to you on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

2. You recently replied to Ms Overend confirming that, as announced in your Press Statement of 9 May, you had already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal they would continue. (COR/405/2012 refers.)
3. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

4. That you decline the invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Room 308
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/380/2012

July 2012

Thank you for your letter on 20 June on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have asked professional staff in my Department to consider the revised specification to ensure that value for money is achieved without compromising tenant safety. When this is completed shortly, and any queries addressed, the Housing Executive will communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors and suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding.

Therefore, as I advised you in my letter of 31 May 2012 that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Windows could in fact proceed, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 29 June 2012 13:36
To: Brimstone, Stephen; O'Hare, Paul
Cc: Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Henderson, Michael; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; O'Reilly, Tommy; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Ward, Deirdre; Wilkinson, Jim
Subject: Deadline 29/06/12 - INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: 120619 Ltr McCausland DSD SuperSeal.doc; INV 380 2012 - Cleared Submission declining.DOCX; INV 380 2012 - Cleared Submission declining.tr5

Folks

Please see attached cleared response for your attention.

Regards

Karen Mills
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 BT7 2JB
 Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: paul.o'hare@dspdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dspdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 20 June 2012 10:11
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dspdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: Invitation INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/380/2012
 Invitation From: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 20/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than

29/06/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

✉ Rm 308, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX
☎ (028) 905 20305

✉ Mid-Ulster UUP Advice Office
20 High Street
Moneymore
Magherafelt BT45 7PD
☎ (028) 867 48090

✉ sandra.overend@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Sandra Overend MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

Friday, 14 February 2014

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, Cromac Estate
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road, Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT7 2JB

Dear Nelson,

URGENT

Thank you for recent letter received last week regarding the Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations. Super Seal Window Systems Ltd remain concerned, however, I would like to meet with you to discuss the situation as a matter of urgency.

Super Seal Window Systems Ltd supply to EGAN Contracts who advised them some time ago that they needed additional windows, and that they should increase their stock levels in order to be able to meet the demand that NIHE were placing on them, in the short timeframe that was available, which I understand was eighteen months. Super Seal therefore increased their number of employees by 15 and worked to increase their stock levels to the specification that was called for by EGAN Contracts.

Super Seal are currently very much in limbo with regard to the future of their business, because so much time, effort, and expense has been put into preparing for such a huge order. The windows for this order had certain specification that was solely for NIHE order and is not therefore suitable for the ordinary commercial market.

They have been unable to get any answers from EGAN or the NIHE. Super Seal would appreciate if you would find the time to meet them as soon as possible, and I believe that you would find it useful to meet on site, at their business, where they could show you their product.

I look forward to a favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Overend MLA



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdn.gov.uk

INV/380/2012

X/ref: COR/405/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 29 June 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SUPER SEAL WINDOW SYSTEMS LTD

Issue: Sandra Overend MLA has written again on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: As you have already replied on 31 May to Ms Overend MLA on the same subject (COR/405/2012) I recommend that you decline this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA.

Detail

Sandra Overend MLA wrote to you on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

2. You recently replied to Ms Overend confirming that, as announced in your Press Statement of 9 May, you had already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal they would continue. (COR/405/2012 refers.)
3. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

4. That you decline the invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and for issue to Ms Overend MLA. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Room 308
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/380/2012

July 2012

Thank you for your letter on 20 June on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have asked professional staff in my Department to consider the revised specification to ensure that value for money is achieved without compromising tenant safety. When this is completed shortly, and any queries addressed, the Housing Executive will communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors and suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding.

Therefore, as I advised you in my letter of 31 May 2012 that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Windows could in fact proceed, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 05 July 2012 09:50
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD
Attachments: INV 380.pdf

Susan

Closing for information.

Michael

Please update database "date to be closed on TRIM" = 05.10.12

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 05 July 2012 09:33
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/380/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/380/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON BEHALF OF SEAL WINDOWS SYSTEMS LTD

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
General CC List; Briefing Request List

COR / INV / GM / DCF...380.....

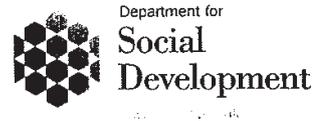
SPECIAL ADVISER CU M 14/17

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

-
- 1. Approved ✓
 - 2. Noted
 - 3. Meeting to be arranged
 - 4. Further information requested
-

Additional Comments

Signed: M Dated: 4/2/12



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Room 308
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: INV/380/2012

4 July 2012

Dear Sandra

Thank you for your letter on 20 June on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts.

The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have asked professional staff in my Department to consider the revised specification to ensure that value for money is achieved without compromising tenant safety. When this is completed shortly, and any queries addressed, the Housing Executive will communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors and suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding.

Therefore, as I advised you in my letter of 31 May 2012 that the six double glazing contracts with Super Seal Windows could in fact proceed, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Superseal Window Systems Ltd

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 02 July 2012 07:56
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: FW Meeting request.msg; INV 400 2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal.tr5
Importance: High

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCor database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached.

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Margaret Bowsie & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

Karen Mills
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 BT7 2JB
 Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 29 June 2012 17:17
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: Invitation INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/400/2012
Invitation From: William McCrea

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 29/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 10/07/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 29 June 2012 15:46
To: O'Hare, Paul
Subject: FW: Meeting request
Attachments: SUPERSEAL.docx

From: DSD Private Office
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:53
To: Crawford, James; Howland, Marie
Subject: FW: Meeting request

For your attention

Caroline McCavana
Correspondence Manager
DSD Private Office
02890 829037 (38037)

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

*DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE*

*Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707*

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Member of Parliament for South Antrim

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

DUP Constituency Office, 5-7 School Street, The Square, BALLYCLARE, BT39 9BE.

☎ TEL: (028) 93 342727 ☎ FAX: (028) 93 342707

✉ E-mail Address: william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk

DATE: 03 February 2014 *
REF: WM/K/SA-12/244

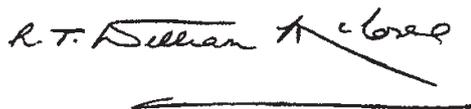
MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Nelson McCausland MLA
Department for Social Development
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister,

Sincere regards. I have been approached by the Managing Director of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd. based at Kilbegs Industrial Estate, Antrim, in relation to contractual work with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Given that Super Seal is one of the province's largest trade suppliers of uPVC windows and doors, I believe that it would be of benefit to you to hear from the company at this time. I would, therefore, request that you consider meeting with me and company director, Mr. Ken Taylor, at the earliest opportunity. Given the company's business interests in the Castledawson area, it would also be appropriate for Mid Ulster MLA Ian McCrea to attend any such meeting. I thank you for your earnest consideration of this request and look forward to receiving a positive response in short course.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,

R.T. William McCrea


* Please note the date on
the letter changes to the
date it is printed

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

IMPORTANT - Please quote our reference number on all correspondence

Shields, Rosemary

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 05 July 2012 10:51
To: Kerstens, John; Kennedy, Alan
Cc: Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Meeting request

I know we agreed this one went a step further than we wanted and resulted in the PO now contacting Rev Mc Crea's office to ask him what issues he wants to discuss, however we now have INV 380 closing and therefore we should refuse this one also.

John will you ring the PO and tell them in light of inv 380 we will be advising that INV 400 is refused.

Roisin

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 04 July 2012 11:44
To: Howland, Marie
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Marie,

Thanks for that. We might have to get an extension on this case depending on when Mr McCrea's office comes back to you and Minister decides

John

*John Kerstens
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Level 2
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
 email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 04 July 2012 11:40
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

The latest on this is that I have to contact Mr McCrea's office and get a list of the issues they wish to discuss. The Minister will look at the list and decide on the merits of a meeting. We will let you know once we have a decision.

Marie

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 04 July 2012 10:00
To: McShane, Rose
Cc: Kerstens, John; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Rose

Any update on this?

Marie

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 02 July 2012 09:53
To: McShane, Rose
Cc: Crawford, James
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Rose

Housing are processing this INV case. (INV 400/2012).
They have just responded to a similar one from Sandra Overend (currently with the Minister) and are recommending that a meeting does not take place.
However, Mr McCrea suggests that in his case Minister has made it known that he would be agreeable to such a meeting.
They are looking for a steer as to how to respond to this.
Would it be possible to run it past Minister/Stephen?

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

***DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE***

***Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707***

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Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 10 July 2012 14:02
To: Bowsie, Margaret; Kerstens, John; Kennedy, Alan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Mills, Karen; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: FW Meeting request.msg; INV 400 2012 - draft submission declining.tr5
Importance: High

Cleared for issue please

John/Alan

Please note this draft did not take account of the letter I copied to you on 5 July with the more up to date position - to note if any further correspondence

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 09 July 2012 11:42
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Importance: High

Susan- to consider

roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 09 July 2012 11:32
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Importance: High

Roisin, please see draft reply attached
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 09 July 2012 11:16
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Importance: High

Alan,
Draft sub declining invitation.

John

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION - URGENT

Reference: INV/400/2012
Invitation From: William McCrea

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 29/06/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and draft reply for signature by Minister. To be with Private Office not later than 10/07/2012.

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Briefing Request List

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 10 July 2012 14:08
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Barry, Chris; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Crawford, James; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline: 10.07.12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: FW Meeting request.msg; INV 400 2012 - Cleared submission declining.DOCX; INV 400 2012 - Cleared submission declining.tr5
Importance: High

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/400/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 10 July 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Issue: Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

Timing: 10 July 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: As you have already indicated that the Super Seal double glazing contracts can proceed I recommend that you decline this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP.

Detail

Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

2. The six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows have been the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA. (COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers.) You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.

Conclusion

3. In view of the current position and your previous refusal to meet Sandra Overend MLA, I recommend that you decline this invitation also. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire

Heather Cousins

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Deirdre Ward

Norman Sleator

Michael Henderson

Grainne McConnell

Barbara McConaghie

James Crawford

DRAFT RESPONSE



5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
Ballyclare
BT39 9BE

Our ref: INV/400/2012
Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

July 2012

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

You are aware that I was concerned for some time that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and I wrote to the Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review this specification. The Housing Executive has now advised me of the outcome of their review and I have

written to Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive, to seek further clarification on a number of issues.

However, in the case of the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has with Super Seal Windows, these are contracts that were in place prior to the review being requested and I agreed that they could proceed. The Housing Executive was to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal. Therefore, in the circumstances, I do not believe a meeting would be beneficial at this time.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:27
To: DSD Private Office
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Thanks Marie, our submission has been sent to the PO with a recommendation to decline the meeting.

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:59
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

This has just come into Private Office.
I will print it off and add it to INV 400 for the Minister.
I will circulate this email on KN for information.

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:33
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Good morning Marie,

My apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I have spoken this morning with Mr. Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd. Mr. Taylor has indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the NI Housing Executive. Obviously he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.

Mr. Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee. He wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with the Minister and has raised issues concerning the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and again would like to discuss such with the Minister.

I believe that the meeting would be purely for informative purposes and trust that the Minister will be agreeable to such.

I await receipt of your response with interest.

Kind regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: Howland, Marie [<mailto:Marie.Howland@dsdni.gov.uk>] **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 04 July 2012 15:10
To: MCCREA, William
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Dr McCrea

Just to confirm receipt of your email and let you know that officials are preparing a response.
The Minister has requested further information on specific issues you would like to raise to enable him to make a decision as to whether a meeting would be useful at this point.

Regards

Marie Howland
DSD Private Office

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

*DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE*

*Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707*

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Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:30
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Susan,
To see below from Dr McCrea.
Our sub has already gone to PO declining meeting.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:59
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

This has just come into Private Office.
I will print it off and add it to INV 400 for the Minister.
I will circulate this email on KN for information.

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:33
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Good morning Marie,

My apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I have spoken this morning with Mr. Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd. Mr. Taylor has indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the NI Housing Executive. Obviously he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.

Mr. Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee. He wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with the Minister and has raised issues concerning the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and again would like to discuss such with the Minister.

I believe that the meeting would be purely for informative purposes and trust that the Minister will be agreeable to such.

I await receipt of your response with interest.

Kind regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: Howland, Marie [<mailto:Marie.Howland@dndni.gov.uk>] **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 04 July 2012 15:10
To: MCCREA, William
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Dr McCrea

Just to confirm receipt of your email and let you know that officials are preparing a response. The Minister has requested further information on specific issues you would like to raise to enable him to make a decision as to whether a meeting would be useful at this point.

Regards

Marie Howland
DSD Private Office

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

*DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE*

*Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707*

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Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 12:05
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Meeting request

Susan,
See further email from PO re this INV.
Please advise.

Thanks

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 11 July 2012 12:01
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: RE: Meeting request

John

Rose has just asked that an acceptance letter be drafted 'just in case'

Marie

From: DSD Private Office
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:32
To: Howland, Marie
Subject: FW: Meeting request

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 11 July 2012 11:27
To: DSD Private Office
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Thanks Marie, our submission has been sent to the PO with a recommendation to decline the meeting.

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park*

Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

From: Howland, Marie **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:59
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Meeting request

John

This has just come into Private Office.
I will print it off and add it to INV 400 for the Minister.
I will circulate this email on KN for information.

Marie

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 11 July 2012 10:33
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Good morning Marie,

My apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I have spoken this morning with Mr. Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd. Mr. Taylor has indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the NI Housing Executive. Obviously he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.

Mr. Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee. He wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with the Minister and has raised issues concerning the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and again would like to discuss such with the Minister.

I believe that the meeting would be purely for informative purposes and trust that the Minister will be agreeable to such.

I await receipt of your response with interest.

Kind regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: Howland, Marie [<mailto:Marie.Howland@dsdni.gov.uk>] **On Behalf Of** DSD Private Office
Sent: 04 July 2012 15:10
To: MCCREA, William
Subject: RE: Meeting request

Dr McCrea

Just to confirm receipt of your email and let you know that officials are preparing a response.
The Minister has requested further information on specific issues you would like to raise to enable him to make a decision as to whether a meeting would be useful at this point.

Regards

Marie Howland
DSD Private Office

From: MCCREA, William [mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk]
Sent: 29 June 2012 11:50
To: DSD Private Office
Subject: Meeting request

FAO – Private Office

Further to my recent conversation with the Minister, I attach a formal request for a meeting with Super Seal Window Systems Ltd, Antrim/Castledawson.

I understand that the Minister is agreeable to such and I trust that arrangements can be put in place shortly.

Regards,

Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE

Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707

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Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:50
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP
Attachments: RE: Meeting request; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:18
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP

Susan,
Please see revised response (accepting invitation) attached.
Alan

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 16 July 2012 13:39
To: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP

FYI
Margaret

From: Howland, Marie
Sent: 16 July 2012 12:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: INV 400 - Response to William McCrea MP

The Special Adviser has decreed that the meeting with William McCrea goes ahead.
I would be grateful if we could have a draft letter to this effect. There is no need to change the submission.
For information, this is the further information that Mr McCrea supplied.

Regards

Marie

Marie Howland

Private Office
5th Floor, Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
028 90 829566 38566

Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 16 July 2012 14:57
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McCourt, John; Crawford, James
Subject: FW: INV/400/2012 - Response to William McCrea MP
Attachments: RE: Meeting request; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).DOCX; INV 400 2012 - Revised Submission (accepting).tr5

Please see revised response for your approval.

Thanks

Margaret



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdoi.gov.uk

INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 16 July 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Issue: Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: **Not applicable.**

Executive Referral: **Not required.**

Recommendation: **You have indicated you wish to accept this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP.**

Detail

Dr William McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

2. The six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows have been the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA. (COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers.) You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.

3. Dr McCrea has advised that he has spoken with Mr Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd, who indicated that he has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour, in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the Housing Executive but he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended.

4. Mr Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee, and he wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with you.

5. Dr McCrea has also relayed Mr Taylor's concerns regarding the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows which would not have the same

longevity as his own product. He is also concerned that a new specification may be under consideration, and he would also like to discuss this with you.

Conclusion

6. You have indicated you wish to accept this invitation. A draft reply is attached for approval and issue to Dr McCrea MP. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN MCCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire

Heather Cousins

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Deirdre Ward

Norman Sleator

Michael Henderson

Grainne McConnell

Barbara McConaghie

James Crawford

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE

Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

Our ref: INV/400/2012

July 2012

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

I would be delighted to accept your invitation and would ask that you contact my Diary Secretary, James Crawford on 9082 9033, in the first instance to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Shields, Rosemary

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 16 July 2012 17:07
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL
Attachments: INV 400.pdf

Susan

Minister's response. Not treated as closing because briefing request still to come.

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:marie.howland@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 16 July 2012 16:08
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING Invitation -- Ref. Number: INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CLOSING - Invitation

Reference: INV/400/2012
Raised By: William McCrea

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

Answer: Please see attached response which has been approved by Minister

Copied To For Information:
General CC List; Briefing Request List



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Dr R T William McCrea MP
DUP Constituency Office
5 – 7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE

Your ref: WM/K/SA-12/244

Our ref: INV/400/2012

16 July 2012

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 2 July on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd in which you request a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

I would be delighted to accept your invitation and would ask that you contact my Diary Secretary, James Crawford on 9082 9033, in the first instance to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 24 July 2012 11:02
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: INV 400 2012 - William McCrea request for a meeting to discuss Super Seal Window Systems Ltd.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) Briefing request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-7014

ii) When the reply is being sent back please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: james.crawford@dspd.gov.uk [mailto:james.crawford@dspd.gov.uk]

Sent: 24 July 2012 10:54

To: Housing, Director's Office

Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dspd.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James

Subject: Invitation INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/400/2012

Invitation From: William McCrea

REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 24 July 2012

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

BRIEFING REQUIRED

Minister has agreed to the above meeting with Mr W McCrea MP and senior management of Super Seal Windows Ltd. scheduled to take place in Minister's Office Parliament Buildings on Tuesday 18 September at 16:00hrs with a pre-brief at 15:45. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and contact numbers of any officials attending with Minister. Please also provide the names of any external attendees...

Please return to Private Office by noon Tuesday 11 September 2012

James Crawford
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38027

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Shields, Rosemary

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:52
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Smith, Joy
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

From: Crawford, James
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:42
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: McConaghie, Barbara; Barry, Chris
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Can you please pass on to the relevant Officials.

Many thanks,

Jim

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 14 August 2012 11:20
To: Crawford, James
Subject: RE: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Jim,

Just to update this.

Mr. Norman Morrell is the Director of PN Gearing
Mr. Brendan Mulgrew is the Managing Partner of MW Advocate

Kind regards,

Karan Spence
Parliamentary Assistant to Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

From: MCCREA, William [<mailto:william.mccrea.mp@parliament.uk>]
Sent: 10 August 2012 16:18
To: Crawford, James
Subject: Inv 400/2012 meeting with Minister McCausland re Super Seal Windows Ltd.

Good afternoon Jim,

Can I please confirm that those attending the meeting on Tuesday 18th September at 16:00hrs at the Minister's office, Parliament Buildings are as follows:

Dr. William McCrea, Member of Parliament for South Antrim
Cllr. Ian McCrea, Assembly member for Mid Ulster
Cllr. Paul McClean, Magherafelt District Council

Mr. Kenneth Taylor, Managing Director, Super Seal Windows
Mr. Brendan Mulgrew, Super Seal Windows
Mr. Norman Morrell, Super Seal Windows

Kind regards,

Karan Spence
Parliamentary Assistant to Dr. R.T. William McCrea MP

DUP Constituency Office
5-7 School Street
The Square
BALLYCLARE
BT39 9BE

Tel. 028 93 342727
Fax. 028 93 342707

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Shields, Rosemary

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 04 September 2012 15:55
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kerstens, John; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: INV 400 2012 - Draft briefing for meeting.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 30 August 2012 14:11
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal

Susan – to consider

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 30 August 2012 13:08
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Smith, Joy
Subject: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal

Roisin, please see draft reply attached.
Alan

From: james.crawford@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:james.crawford@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 24 July 2012 10:54
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Crawford, Billy; Cousins, Heather; Pyper, Jenny; Todd, Wendy; O'Connor, Sheila; DSD Private Office; Press Office; Lavery, Julie; Dolan, Ciara; Barry, Chris; Sisk, Margaret; Wall, Dave; Brimstone, Stephen; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Howland, Marie; Stakeholder & Customer Insight; Crawford, James
Subject: Invitation INV/400/2012 : REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION BRIEFING REQUEST - URGENT

Reference: INV/400/2012
Invitation From: William McCrea
REFERRED TO: Housing Directors Office

Date: 24 July 2012

Subject: REQUEST FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPERSEAL

BRIEFING REQUIRED

Minister has agreed to the above meeting with Mr W McCrea MP and senior management of Super Seal Windows Ltd. scheduled to take place in Minister's Office Parliament Buildings on Tuesday 18 September at 16:00hrs with a pre-brief at 15:45. Please provide appropriate briefing and the names and contact numbers of any officials attending with Minister. Please also provide the names of any external attendees...

Please return to Private Office by noon Tuesday 11 September 2012

James Crawford
Private Office

Lighthouse Building Tel:- 38027

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Shields, Rosemary

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 04 September 2012 15:59
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Barry, Chris; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Crawford, James; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline 11/9/12 - INV/400/2012 - William McCrea - request for a meeting to discuss Superseal
Attachments: INV 400 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.DOCX; INV 400 2012 - cleared briefing for meeting.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to INV/400/2012

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 4 September 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH DR MCCREA MP REGARDING SUPERSEAL WINDOWS LTD

Issue: You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review. The meeting has been arranged for 18 September at 16.00, with a pre-brief at 15.45, in your office in Parliament Buildings.

Timing: 11 September 2012

Priority: Routine

Communications: Housing

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None

Financial Implications: Not applicable

Legislation Implications: Not applicable

Equality Implications: Not applicable

Executive Referral: Not required

Recommendation: That you note the briefing at Annex A and B.

Detail

You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review. The meeting has been arranged for 18 September at 16.00, with a pre-brief at 15.45, in your office in Parliament Buildings.

2. Dr McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.
3. You will recall that the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows were the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA; COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers. You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.
4. Dr McCrea MP has advised that he has spoken with Mr Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd, who has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour, in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the Housing Executive, but he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been

suspended. Mr Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee and he therefore wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with you. Dr McCrea MP has relayed Mr Taylor's concerns that the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows would not have the same longevity as the Super Seal product.

5. Details of those attending this meeting along with Dr McCrea MP are set out at Annex A.
6. Jim Wilkinson will accompany you at the meeting. His contact number is *

Conclusion

7. That you note the briefing and lines to take at Annex B. If you require any further information please contact me.

Susan McCarty

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

* personal mobile number

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Annex A

List of Attendees

Dr William McCrea, Member of Parliament for South Antrim
Cllr Ian McCrea, MLA for Mid Ulster
Cllr Paul McLean, Magherafelt District Council
Mr Kenneth Taylor, Managing Director, Super Seal Windows
Mr Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate
Mr Norman Morrell, Director of PN Gearing

Annex B**DOUBLE GLAZING****Background**

1. You had concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and asked the Housing Executive's Chief Executive to review this specification. While this review was taking place, you agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue.
2. Following the Housing Executive's review of the specifications, you wrote to the Housing Executive on the 4 July 2012 seeking clarification on a number of issues. The Housing Executive subsequently replied on 20 July with further details on the specifications. However you wrote again to the Housing Executive on 16 August seeking further clarification on a number of issues.

Lines to take:

- I remain committed to the implementation of the double glazing programme being delivered to all NIHE homes by 2015.
- While this review was taking place I agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue and over 7,000

NIHE homes across the Province will have planned window replacements carried out this year.

- I understand that this includes the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has with Super Seal Windows.
- The review will not have an impact on the target date of 2015 to have all NIHE homes double glazed.
- Reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. The Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.
- I can assure you that the double glazing review will fully consider the guarantee of hinges and other alternative products that may be proposed, to ensure value for money both now and in the long term.

Shields, Rosemary

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 24 September 2012 11:18
To: Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

John- I text Susan and she will do this meeting

Roisin

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 20 September 2012 09:23
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

Roisin,
As discussed this meeting is now arranged for Thursday 27/09 @ 14.00pm with pre-brief @ 13.45 and both Jim and Deirdre have meetings then and Michael is still on A/L. We will need to arrange for a G7 to attend.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndi.gov.uk*

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 19 September 2012 13:19
To: Best, Christine
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

Christine,
Please see email below.
Can you put meeting into Michael's diary please.
Thanks

Margaret

From: Crawford, James
Sent: 19 September 2012 12:45
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John; Barry, Chris; McConaghie, Barbara; Howland, Marie
Subject: Inv 400/2012 Meeting with Dr McCrea re Super Seal Windows

John,

Please note that the above meeting has now been rescheduled for Thursday 27 September at 14:00hrs with the pre-brief at 13:45hrs in Minister's Office Lighthouse Building.

Regards,

Jim

James Crawford
Private Office
Lighthouse Building
Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2 Jb
Ext: 38033
02890 829033
<mailto:james.crawford@dndni.gov.uk>

Meeting with Dr McCrea – 27 September 2012

Attendees:

Minister McCausland
Stephen Brimstone
Dr McCrea MP
Cllr Ian McCrea MLA
Cllr Paul McLean
Mr Kenneth Taylor, Superseal Windows
Brendan Mulgrew, Managing Partner of MW Advocate
Norman Morell, Director of PN Gearing
Brian (surname unknown)
Susan McCarty, DSD
Barbara McConaghie, DSD

Dr McCrea advised that on behalf of Superseal and the manufacturers present that he wanted to raise the issue of changes to the double glazing specification.

Brendan Mulgrew highlighted potential implications if a cheaper hinge is agreed – job reductions in sector and negligible savings per unit.

Dr McCrea challenged the savings previously quoted by the Minister advising that the savings per house would be £5.86 plus it would only have a 10year guarantee and seems daft to change something that has already been proven in the sector.

Brian advised that they have carried an in-depth analysis of both types and met with NIHE who agreed that there is no savings to be made with the exception of the redecoration grants. Brendan advised that he would forward on information that had been provided to NIHE.

The Minister advised that when he became Minister he started to review everything, particularly in housing, to see where potential savings could be made.

Mr Taylor advised that it would cost more to make window to accommodate new proposed hinge. He advised that savings can be made at fabricate/fit stage.

Stephen advised that new contracts will be going out to tender shortly and this issue will be addressed in those.

Shields, Rosemary

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 28 September 2012 07:43
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: 20120927 infhea Supplementary to MB2823 NIHE Double Glazing Programme

Sensitivity: Confidential

Susan,
For info. These 2 emails came in yesterday afternoon after your meeting with Superseal!

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

From: McGrath, Bill [<mailto:Bill.McGrath@NIHE.GOV.UK>]
Sent: 27 September 2012 17:30
To: Kerstens, John
Cc: Murray, Jim; Mccauley, Siobhan
Subject: 20120927 infhea Supplementary to MB2823 NIHE Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Confidential

John
Just for information, our Design & Property Services Department have confirmed that Superseal are employed as subcontractors under the current arrangements.

I hope this is useful
Bill

From: McGrath, Bill
Sent: 27 September 2012 16:09
To: John.Kerstens@dndni.gov.uk
Cc: /o=NIHE/ou=First Administrative Group/cn=Recipients/cn=jim.murray1
Subject: 20120927 infhea MB2823 NIHE Double Glazing Programme
Sensitivity: Confidential

John
I referred your query to Siobhan McCauley our Director of Design and Preoperty Services and would advise als follows.

The thirteen schemes have been briefed as part of our existing procured contracts with Bann Ltd, Mascott Construction, Dixons Contractors, and P K Murphy Ltd. which will end in January 2013. We are not, through EU Procurement, in a position to appoint another tenderer - this could only be done as a single tender action at this point. The new contracts will be openly procured, for all contractors to apply.

I hope this is useful

Bill McGrath,
Central Information

✉ bill.mcgrath@nihe.gov.uk
☎ 02890 318719

From: Kerstens, John [<mailto:John.Kerstens@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 27 September 2012 12:04
To: Pritchard, Gary
Cc: McGrath, Bill; Hughes, Lynda
Subject: NIHE Double Glazing Programme
Importance: High

Gary,
As discussed can you tell me if Superseal are/will be the contractor for any of the 13 schemes listed in the attachment to your CX's letter to Minister of 18/09 (copy attached).
Susan needs an answer as soon as possible please for a meeting with Minister after lunch.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 31 October 2012 12:49
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Cc: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: DOUBLE GLAZING inv 400

Alan

Could you find out urgently for me the following

The minister meet superseal etc a few weeks ago. They advised they had written to NIHE about the fact that there was little or no saving (£5) in the change from reversible to casement hinges and in fact it was therefore better to have reversible with the 25 year guarantee and no maintenance. Can you find out if NIHE responded to their correspondence and if we can have a copy - or can they comment on this assumption

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325



INV 400 2012 -
cleared briefin...



INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 4 September 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MEETING WITH DR MCCREA MP REGARDING SUPERSEAL WINDOWS LTD

Issue: You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review.

Timing: Thursday 27 September at 14.00, with a pre-brief at 13.45, in your office in Lighthouse Building.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: **Not applicable.**

Executive Referral: **Not required.**

Recommendation: **That you note the briefing at Annex A and B.**

Detail

You have agreed to meet with Dr McCrea MP regarding issues raised by Super Seal Windows Ltd about the Housing Executive's double glazing review. The meeting has been arranged for 27 September at 14.00, with a pre-brief at 13.45, in your office in Lighthouse Building.

2. Dr McCrea MP wrote to you on 2 July 2012 on behalf of Super Seal Window Systems Ltd requesting a meeting to discuss the situation regarding their double glazing contracts with the Housing Executive.

3. You will recall that the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has in place with Super Seal Windows were the subject of previous correspondence from Sandra Overend MLA; COR/405/202 & INV/380/2012 refers. You replied in each case to Sandra Overend MLA confirming that the six contracts could continue and you declined her invitation to meet.

4. Dr McCrea MP has advised that he has spoken with Mr Kenneth Taylor, the Managing Director of Super Seal Windows Ltd, who has outlaid a significant amount of money on IT systems, new machinery and additional labour, in order to be in a position to meet demand for double glazing windows for the Housing Executive, but he has seen no return on his investment as the scheme has been suspended. Mr Taylor is concerned that alternative products may have short-time savings but would prove more expensive in the long-term as they would not carry his company's 25 year guarantee and he therefore wishes to relay his concerns over this matter with you. Dr McCrea MP has relayed Mr Taylor's

concerns that the type of hinges and cheaper to manufacture casement windows would not have the same longevity as the Super Seal product.

5. Details of those attending this meeting along with Dr McCrea MP are set out at **Annex A**.
6. I will accompany you at the meeting.

Conclusion

7. That you note the briefing and lines to take at **Annex B**. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN MCCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
James Crawford

ANNEX A

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Dr William McCrea	Member of Parliament for South Antrim
Cllr Ian McCrea	MLA for Mid Ulster
Cllr Paul McLean	Magherafelt District Council
Mr Kenneth Taylor	Managing Director, Super Seal Windows
Mr Brendan Mulgrew	Managing Partner of MW Advocate
Mr Norman Morrell	Director of PN Gearing

SCHEDULE FOR BRIEFING

LINES TO TAKE	Page
Double Glazing – Background	6-7

ANNEX B

DOUBLE GLAZING

Background

1. You had concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and asked the Housing Executive's Chief Executive to review this specification. While this review was taking place, you agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue.
2. Following the Housing Executive's review of the specifications, you wrote to the Housing Executive on the 4 July 2012 seeking clarification on a number of issues. The Housing Executive subsequently replied on 20 July with further details on the specifications. However you wrote again to the Housing Executive on 16 August seeking further clarification on a number of issues.

Lines to take:

- I remain committed to the implementation of the double glazing programme being delivered to all NIHE homes by 2015.
- While this review was taking place I agreed that any contracts already placed with manufacturers and installers should continue and over 7,000 NIHE homes across the Province will have planned window replacements carried out this year.
- I understand that this includes the six double glazing contracts that the Housing Executive has with Super Seal Windows.
- The review will not have an impact on the target date of 2015 to have all NIHE homes double glazed.
- Reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. The Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.
- I can assure you that the double glazing review will fully consider the guarantee of hinges and other alternative products that may be proposed, to ensure value for money both now and in the long term.

Mills, Karen

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 13:06
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'McGrath, Bill'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
Subject: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

Tracking:	Recipient	Delivery	Read
	'Pritchard, Gary'		
	'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'		
	'McGrath, Bill'		
	'Hughes, Lynda'		
	Kerstens, John	Delivered: 31/10/2012 13:06	Read: 31/10/2012 13:07

Gary

Minister meet Superseal etc a few weeks ago re Double Glazing issues and they advised they had written to the NIHE about the fact that there was little or no saving (£5) in the change from reversible to casement hinges and in fact it was therefore better to have reversible with the 25 year guarantee and no maintenance.

Can you please let me know urgently if NIHE has responded to their correspondence and if so, can we can have a copy please (or can you please comment on this assumption?)

Grateful if you can let me know this afternoon.

Thanks

Alan

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 31 October 2012 14:04
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Cc: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: FW: [FWD: Follow up to Ministerial meeting, 27th September]
Attachments: Letter to Minister.pdf

My previous email refers - could you seek advice from NIHE on this please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: brendan.mulgrew@mwadvocate.com [mailto:brendan.mulgrew@mwadvocate.com]
Sent: 31 October 2012 13:41
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: [FWD: Follow up to Ministerial meeting, 27th September]

This is the letter.

Brendan

Brendan Mulgrew
Managing Partner
MW Advocate
Tel: 02890 267072 / 07767 393252
www.mwadvocate.com



MW Advocate

3 October 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister

RE Window hinges in use in double glazing programme

Thank you for your time last week in meeting the representatives of the window manufacturers throughout Northern Ireland. Their concern is sincerely held and is genuine and I welcome the opportunity to set out the position on their behalf.

Firstly on the issue of cost, you had previously indicated to the Assembly that the alternative hinge under consideration was five times less expensive. We have had a cost comparison of the reversible and the casement hinges – per average NIHE home - carried out by an established window manufacturer, Western Building Systems. They state:

“We have carried out a cost comparison. Our findings are that there is a base cost saving of £5.86 per house, going for the casement option. However it is important when evaluating to note that the if you compare warranties and take in to account the maintenance call out charges, the difference would sway toward fully reversible.”

It has been confirmed that in the 5 year period that reversible hinges have been used, more than 100,000 have been installed and not a single complaint has been received about their use and not one maintenance call made to carry out a repair. The reversible hinge has a 25 year guarantee compared to a conditional 10 year guarantee which applies to the Casement hinge.

It was also raised during our meeting that there was a decision taken some 7 years ago by the NIHE to switch to a reversible window hinge. We have unsuccessfully requested a copy of the advice which led to that decision but to date that has not been furnished. However I understand that the decision was based on cost as well as Health and Safety grounds.

There are other safety issues around maintenance and window cleaning which we have raised and recorded with the NIHE's David Adamson.

Another focus of this discussion has been on the requirement to provide re-decoration grants following the replacement of the windows. We want to point out that windows with a reversible hinge can be installed from the 'outside in', just as the Casement window hinge can be.

We acknowledge the points made during our meeting by yourself and colleagues that there is a requirement on the NIHE and indeed the Department to seek out efficiencies where they can be found. However we do not believe that any apparent saving made through the changing of the hinge specification is significant or sustainable.

One very important element is the potential impact on employment locally. To give an example one company, SuperSeal NI which employs 82 people from its base in Castledawson, currently has n hold the installation of new windows in 1,636 homes. They estimate that 49% of their workforce is dependent on the double glazing scheme. That figure illustrates on the one hand the value to the manufacturing industry of your decision to move ahead with the replacement scheme but at the same time shows the vulnerability of being exposed to one particular contract. Should the specification ultimately be changed job losses on a similar scale can be anticipated in McIlhattons and PK Murphy.

This issue is vital to our industry. We ask that you take these points on board urgently and confirm that the existing specification will remain.

Attached as an accompaniment to this email are a few photographs which go some way towards displaying the difference in the two hinges. I also asked a locally based photographer to record two very short videos of both the reversible hinge (currently in use) and the proposed replacement hinge (under consideration) which goes some way to demonstrate the variance in quality and durability.

The video illustrating the features of the reversible hinge can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDxJnMhUiBg&feature=youtu.be>

The video of the Casement non reversible hinge is can be viewed by accessing <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztpgS9AyXzY&feature=youtu.be>

If you or any officials require any further information give me a call and on behalf of the manufacturers I look forward to your response.

Sincerely

Brendan Mulgrew

MWAdvocate

MW Advocate, 4th Floor, The Potthouse, 1 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LB

Mills, Karen

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 14:43
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kerstens, John
Subject: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

Susan

Lynda Hughes phoned to advise that it will be Tues before they can respond to this as thir D/Glzg 'expert' is off until then.

Alan

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 14:13
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
Subject: TRIM: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

Gary

Further to my email below, we have just got copied into this letter.

Could you please let me have NIHE's comments – by COP on Fri 2 Nov if possible.

Thanks

Alan



Letter to
Minister.pdf.pdf

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 13:06
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'McGrath, Bill'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
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MW Advocate

3 October 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister

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Sincerely

Brendan Mulgrew

MWAdvocate

MW Advocate, 4th Floor, The Potthouse, 1 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LB

Mills, Karen

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 06 November 2012 14:44
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: MB2914: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)
Attachments: Letter to Minister.pdf.pdf

Tracking:	Recipient	Delivery	Read
	McCarty, Susan	Delivered: 06/11/2012 14:44	
	Goodall, Roisin	Delivered: 06/11/2012 14:44	Read: 06/11/2012 14:44

Susan, see NIHE email reply below re this query.
 Does this need pulled into a SUB with a draft letter?
 Alan

From: Hughes, Lynda [<mailto:Lynda.Hughes@NIHE.GOV.UK>]
Sent: 06 November 2012 14:39
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Cc: Murray, Jim; Pritchard, Gary; McGrath, Bill
Subject: MB2914: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

Alan

Superseal did not make the Housing Executive aware directly that they were meeting with the Minister – one member of staff was aware indirectly they were meeting the Minister with the hinge suppliers, namely PN & Mila.

Superseal did not write to the Housing Executive as to a £5.00 saving. Mila asked Western (another window supplier) to mock up 2 windows, one casement and the other fully reversible – both were costed by Western and it was they who determined the £5.00 saving and communicated that in writing to the Housing Executive about 4 – 6 weeks ago. This was subsequently forwarded to the Chief Executive's office and the Director of Housing & Regeneration for comment. Again that was purely noted, but not with the intention of further varying the standard specification.

See comments below on letter from MW Advocate provided by David Adamson:

1. I was aware that Mila organised the Western windows "mock-up" and the cost exercise – not MW Advocate;
2. I am not aware that MW Advocate ever requested a copy of any advice as to what formed the basis of the earlier decision 7 years ago – that precedes my time in Centre. Contact was made with me through several phone conversations.
3. Safety and maintenance issues around maintenance and window cleaning were not previously raised with me by MW Advocate. Safety is still a paramount issue and dealt with through "child restriction" even in the casement windows (as applicable) to the low rise stock. Maintenance issues may be an issue in the future with the casement windows, but that remains to be seen and analysed at a later stage; the specification is written in a way that we could easily revert back in full to fully reversible.

4. The fitting of windows has been a significant issue – our new fitting protocol is abundantly clear as to what's required. Some windows may be fitted from the "outside in" but in the main most windows will be fitted from the inside given the need to maintain the check reveal detail and weather-tightness, etc. The point that MW Advocate make on this issue is out of context.
5. We set out as an organisation to make a saving – casement windows and the associated hinges do reflect a saving, albeit small. What MW Advocate seem to miss is that "fully reversible" hinges are unique to NIHE in Northern Ireland – all other window installations in the private market are reflecting standard casement hinges and those referred to initially by the Minister.
6. The Housing Executive has varied the specification to include both casement and fully reversible windows.

I hope these comments are useful. Let me know if you need anything further.
Regards,

Lynda Hughes
Central Information
028 9031 8718
Ext: 2718

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 14:13
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
Subject: TRIM: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

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3 October 2012

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Sincerely

Brendan Mulgrew

MWAdvocate

MW Advocate, 4th Floor, The Potthouse, 1 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LB

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 09 November 2012 15:08
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)
Attachments: Letter to Minister.pdf.pdf.pdf; SUB XXX 2012 - Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 09 November 2012 11:57
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

Susan
Please see draft SUB attached.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 09 November 2012 11:51
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

Alan,
Draft sub attached as discussed.

John

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 06 November 2012 15:54
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

John
See Susan's email below re a SUB needed (this is linked to INV 400).
Thanks

Alan

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 06 November 2012 15:37
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Cc: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: MB2914: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

yes please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
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Alan

Superseal did not make the Housing Executive aware directly that they were meeting with the Minister – one member of staff was aware indirectly they were meeting the Minister with the hinge suppliers, namely PN & Mila.

Superseal did not write to the Housing Executive as to a £5.00 saving. Mila asked Western (another window supplier) to mock up 2 windows, one casement and the other fully reversible – both were costed by Western and it was they who determined the £5.00 saving and communicated that in writing to the Housing Executive about 4 – 6 weeks ago. This was subsequently forwarded to the Chief Executive's office and the Director of Housing & Regeneration for comment. Again that was purely noted, but not with the intention of further varying the standard specification.

See comments below on letter from MW Advocate provided by David Adamson:

1. I was aware that Mila organised the Western windows “mock-up” and the cost exercise – not MW Advocate;
2. I am not aware that MW Advocate ever requested a copy of any advice as to what formed the basis of the earlier decision 7 years ago – that precedes my time in Centre. Contact was made with me through several phone conversations.
3. Safety and maintenance issues around maintenance and window cleaning were not previously raised with me by MW Advocate. Safety is still a paramount issue and dealt with through “child restriction” even in the casement windows (as applicable) to the low rise stock. Maintenance issues may be an issue in the future with the casement windows, but that remains to be seen and analysed at a later stage; the specification is written in a way that we could easily revert back in full to fully reversible.
4. The fitting of windows has been a significant issue – our new fitting protocol is abundantly clear as to what’s required. Some windows may be fitted from the “outside in” but in the main most windows will be fitted from the inside given the need to maintain the check reveal detail and weather-tightness, etc. The point that MW Advocate make on this issue is out of context.
5. We set out as an organisation to make a saving – casement windows and the associated hinges do reflect a saving, albeit small. What MW Advocate seem to miss is that “fully reversible” hinges are unique to NIHE in Northern Ireland – all other window installations in the private market are reflecting standard casement hinges and those referred to initially by the Minister.
6. The Housing Executive has varied the specification to include both casement and fully reversible windows.

I hope these comments are useful. Let me know if you need anything further.
Regards,

Lynda Hughes
Central Information
028 9031 8718
Ext: 2718

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 14:13
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
Subject: TRIM: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

Gary
Further to my email below, we have just got copied into this letter.
Could you please let me have NIHE’s comments – by COP on Fri 2 Nov if possible.
Thanks
Alan

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 31 October 2012 13:06
To: 'Pritchard, Gary'
Cc: 'jim.murray@nihe.gov.uk'; 'McGrath, Bill'; 'Hughes, Lynda'; Kerstens, John
Subject: TRIM: DOUBLE GLAZING (INV/400/2012)

Gary

Minister meet Superseal etc a few weeks ago re Double Glazing issues and they advised they had written to the NIHE about the fact that there was little or no saving (£5) in the change from reversible to casement hinges and in fact it was therefore better to have reversible with the 25 year guarantee and no maintenance.

Can you please let me know urgently if NIHE has responded to their correspondence and if so, can we have a copy please (or can you please comment on this assumption?)

Grateful if you can let me know this afternoon.

Thanks

Alan



MW Advocate

3 October 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister

RE Window hinges in use in double glazing programme

Thank you for your time last week in meeting the representatives of the window manufacturers throughout Northern Ireland. Their concern is sincerely held and is genuine and I welcome the opportunity to set out the position on their behalf.

Firstly on the issue of cost, you had previously indicated to the Assembly that the alternative hinge under consideration was five times less expensive. We have had a cost comparison of the reversible and the casement hinges – per average NIHE home - carried out by an established window manufacturer, Western Building Systems. They state:

"We have carried out a cost comparison. Our findings are that there is a base cost saving of £5.86 per house, going for the casement option. However it is important when evaluating to note that the if you compare warranties and take in to account the maintenance call out charges, the difference would sway toward fully reversible."

It has been confirmed that in the 5 year period that reversible hinges have been used, more than 100,000 have been installed and not a single complaint has been received about their use and not one maintenance call made to carry out a repair. The reversible hinge has a 25 year guarantee compared to a conditional 10 year guarantee which applies to the Casement hinge.

It was also raised during our meeting that there was a decision taken some 7 years ago by the NIHE to switch to a reversible window hinge. We have unsuccessfully requested a copy of the advice which led to that decision but to date that has not been furnished. However I understand that the decision was based on cost as well as Health and Safety grounds.

There are other safety issues around maintenance and window cleaning which we have raised and recorded with the NIHE's David Adamson.

Another focus of this discussion has been on the requirement to provide re-decoration grants following the replacement of the windows. We want to point out that windows with a reversible hinge can be installed from the 'outside in', just as the Casement window hinge can be.

We acknowledge the points made during our meeting by yourself and colleagues that there is a requirement on the NIHE and indeed the Department to seek out efficiencies where they can be found. However we do not believe that any apparent saving made through the changing of the hinge specification is significant or sustainable.

One very important element is the potential impact on employment locally. To give an example one company, SuperSeal NI which employs 82 people from its base in Castledawson, currently has to hold the installation of new windows in 1,636 homes. They estimate that 49% of their workforce is dependent on the double glazing scheme. That figure illustrates on the one hand the value to the manufacturing industry of your decision to move ahead with the replacement scheme but at the same time shows the vulnerability of being exposed to one particular contract. Should the specification ultimately be changed job losses on a similar scale can be anticipated in McIlhattons and PK Murphy.

This issue is vital to our industry. We ask that you take these points on board urgently and confirm that the existing specification will remain.

Attached as an accompaniment to this email are a few photographs which go some way towards displaying the difference in the two hinges. I also asked a locally based photographer to record two very short videos of both the reversible hinge (currently in use) and the proposed replacement hinge (under consideration) which goes some way to demonstrate the variance in quality and durability.

The video illustrating the features of the reversible hinge can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDxJnMhUiBg&feature=youtu.be>

The video of the Casement non reversible hinge is can be viewed by accessing <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztqgS9AyXzY&feature=youtu.be>

If you or any officials require any further information give me a call and on behalf of the manufacturers I look forward to your response.

Sincerely

Brendan Mulgrew

MWAdvocate

MW Advocate, 4th Floor, The Potthouse, 1 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LB



SUB/1170/2012
X/ref: INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 9 November 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MW ADVOCATE LETTER – WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

Issue: Brendan Mulgrew, MW Advocate, has written following your meeting on 27 September 2012 with Super Seal Windows Ltd and others regarding double glazing issues.

Timing: 9 November 2012.

Priority: Routine.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: None.

Legislation Implications: None.

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To note the position and approve the draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Brendan Mulgrew.

Detail

Brendan Mulgrew, MW Advocate, has written following your meeting on 27 September 2012 with Super Seal Windows Ltd and others regarding double glazing issues.

2. The suggested Private Secretary response is attached.

Recommendation

3. To note the position and approve the draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Brendan Mulgrew.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
John McCourt

From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Brendan Mulgrew
MW Advocate
4th Floor
The Potthouse
1 Hill Street
BELFAST
BT1 2LB

Our ref: SUB/1170/2012

November 2012

I refer to the meeting with Minister McCausland on 27 September in relation to the Housing Executive's double glazing specifications and your follow up letter on 3 October which the Minister has asked me to reply to.

Following on from the meeting, the Housing Executive confirmed to the Minister their views on some of the issues that were raised at the meeting. They have confirmed that, in relation to the number of maintenance visits which have been required on the standard reversible hinges installed to date, since 2006 reversible hinges employed have potentially a "zero record" in terms of maintenance. They have also advised that reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. However, the Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.

In relation to health and safety requirements, whilst the reversible hinge as installed has three key features – integral child restriction, fire egress and easy clean, a casement hinge is available reflecting all three key features.

The Housing Executive has also confirmed their Board has approved the new specification and that fully reversible hinges are still an integral part of the specification and relate in every case to high rise stock. The preferred option now is casement style windows to all low and medium rise stock.

The Minister has always intended that the Programme for Government target, in relation to double glazing of all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards. The new specification for replacement double glazing windows is in line with the Glass and Glazing Federation recommendations. The Housing Executive review has resulted in estimated savings in the region of £15.1m. This is a considerable amount of savings and means that money can be used in other priority areas, such as new kitchens and heating schemes.

The remainder of the Double Glazing programme will be delivered in 2013/14 and 2014/15 through a new separate contract which will be in place by the end of this financial year.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful in this instance

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Private Secretary

Mills, Karen

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 09 November 2012 15:14
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McCourt, John; McConaghie, Barbara
Subject: FW: DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)
Attachments: Letter to Minister.pdf.pdf.pdf; SUB XXX 2012 - Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister.DOCX; SUB XXX 2012 - Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister.tr5

Please find attached cleared response in relation to SUB/XXX/2012 - DOUBLE GLAZING QUERY (INV/400/2012)

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret



MW Advocate

3 October 2012

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister
Department of Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Dear Minister

RE Window hinges in use in double glazing programme

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Firstly on the issue of cost, you had previously indicated to the Assembly that the alternative hinge under consideration was five times less expensive. We have had a cost comparison of the reversible and the casement hinges – per average NIHE home - carried out by an established window manufacturer, Western Building Systems. They state:

“We have carried out a cost comparison. Our findings are that there is a base cost saving of £5.86 per house, going for the casement option. However it is important when evaluating to note that the if you compare warranties and take in to account the maintenance call out charges, the difference would sway toward fully reversible.”

It has been confirmed that in the 5 year period that reversible hinges have been used, more than 100,000 have been installed and not a single complaint has been received about their use and not one maintenance call made to carry out a repair. The reversible hinge has a 25 year guarantee compared to a conditional 10 year guarantee which applies to the Casement hinge.

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Another focus of this discussion has been on the requirement to provide re-decoration grants following the replacement of the windows. We want to point out that windows with a reversible hinge can be installed from the 'outside in', just as the Casement window hinge can be.

We acknowledge the points made during our meeting by yourself and colleagues that there is a requirement on the NIHE and indeed the Department to seek out efficiencies where they can be found. However we do not believe that any apparent saving made through the changing of the hinge specification is significant or sustainable.

One very important element is the potential impact on employment locally. To give an example one company, SuperSeal NI which employs 82 people from its base in Castledawson, currently has in hold the installation of new windows in 1,636 homes. They estimate that 49% of their workforce is dependent on the double glazing scheme. That figure illustrates on the one hand the value to the manufacturing industry of your decision to move ahead with the replacement scheme but at the same time shows the vulnerability of being exposed to one particular contract. Should the specification ultimately be changed job losses on a similar scale can be anticipated in McIlhattons and PK Murphy.

This issue is vital to our industry. We ask that you take these points on board urgently and confirm that the existing specification will remain.

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If you or any officials require any further information give me a call and on behalf of the manufacturers I look forward to your response.

Sincerely

Brendan Mulgrew

MWAdvocate

MW Advocate, 4th Floor, The Potthouse, 1 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LB



From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

SUB/XXX/2012
(xRef INV/400/2012)

Date: 9 November 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MW ADVOCATE LETTER – WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

Issue: Brendan Mulgrew, MW Advocate, has written following your meeting on 27 September 2012 with Super Seal Windows Ltd and others regarding double glazing issues.

Timing: 9 November 2012

Priority: Routine

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: None.

Legislation Implications: None.

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To note the position and approve the draft letter for issue to Brendan Mulgrew.

Detail

Brendan Mulgrew, MW Advocate, has written following your meeting on 27 September 2012 with Super Seal Windows Ltd and others regarding double glazing issues.

2. The suggested response is attached.

Recommendation

3. To note the position and approve the draft letter for issue to Brendan Mulgrew.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
John McCourt

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business
Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Brendan Mulgrew
MW Advocate
4th Floor
The Potthouse
1 Hill Street
Belfast
BT1 2 LB

Our Ref: SUB/XXX/2012
(X-Ref: INV/400/2012)

November 2012

I refer to the meeting on 27 September 2012 and your follow up letter on 3 October.

Following on from our meeting, I sought the Housing Executive's views on some of the issues that were raised at the meeting. They have confirmed to me that, in relation to the number of maintenance visits which have been required on the standard reversible hinges installed to date, since 2006 reversible hinges employed have potentially a "zero record" in terms of maintenance. I have also been advised that reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. However, the Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.

In relation to health and safety requirements, whilst the reversible hinge as installed has three key features – integral child restriction, fire egress and easy clean, a casement hinge is available reflecting all three key features.

However, the Housing Executive has also confirmed their Board has approved the new specification and I have also been advised that fully reversible hinges are still an integral part of the specification and relate in every case to high rise stock. The preferred option now is casement style windows to all low and medium rise stock.

I always intended to ensure that we meet the Programme for Government target whilst ensuring best value for money, meeting industry standards. The new specification for replacement double glazing windows is in line with the Glass and Glazing Federation recommendations. The Housing Executive review has resulted in estimated savings in the region of £15.1m. This is a considerable amount of savings and means that money can be used in other priority areas, such as new kitchens and heating schemes.

The remainder of the Double Glazing programme will be delivered in 2013/14 and 2014/15 through a new separate contract which will be in place by the end of this financial year.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful in this instance

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 12 November 2012 15:07
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

Importance: High

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the Mail database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached.

The Special Adviser has requested that the draft letter included with your submission of 09/11/2012 be redrafted to a Private Secretary response.

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Margaret Bowsie & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 12 November 2012 14:57
To: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: FW: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

To take forward please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast

BT7 2JB

Phone x 38325/90829325

From: chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk>]

Sent: 12 November 2012 14:50

To: McCarty, Susan

Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McCourt, John

Subject: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Chris Barry

Private Office

To: McCarty Susan (Mrs)

Date: 12/11/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)

Cousins Heather (Ms)

Wilkinson Jim

Sands Michael (Mr)

Ward Deirdre

Sleator Norman (Mr)

Henderson Michael (Mr)

McConnell Grainne

McConaghie Barbara

McCourt John (Mr)

SUB/1170/2012:MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

The Special Adviser has requested that the draft letter included with your submission of 09/11/2012 be redrafted to a Private Secretary response.

I would be grateful if you could provide a re-drafted letter to be with the Private Office by noon on 16/11/2012.

Many thanks.

Chris Barry (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38033

OffName

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 13 November 2012 08:46
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Owens, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Attachments: SUB 1170 2012 - Revised Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister for PS Reply.tr5
Importance: High

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 13 November 2012 08:36
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Importance: High

Susan to clear please

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 12 November 2012 16:21
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Importance: High

Roisin, draft revised as requested by SPAD.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 12 November 2012 15:31
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Importance: High

Alan,
Letter re-drafted as Private Secretary response.
Have made the necessary changes, some tracked in.

John

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

From: Mills, Karen **On Behalf Of** Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 12 November 2012 15:07
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Importance: High

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Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 12 November 2012 14:57
To: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: FW: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

To take forward please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2

Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk>]

Sent: 12 November 2012 14:50

To: McCarty, Susan

Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McCourt, John

Subject: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Chris Barry
Private Office
To: McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Date: 12/11/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
Sands Michael (Mr)
Ward Deirdre
Sleator Norman (Mr)
Henderson Michael (Mr)
McConnell Grainne
McConaghie Barbara
Mccourt John (Mr)

SUB/1170/2012:MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

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Many thanks.

Chris Barry (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38033

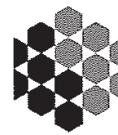
OffName

Mills, Karen

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 13 November 2012 08:52
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dscni.gsi.gov.uk'; Howland, Marie; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConaghie, Barbara; Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McCourt, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline: 16.11.12 - SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Attachments: SUB 1170 2012 - Revised Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister for PS Reply.DOCX; SUB 1170 2012 - Revised Briefing re MW Advocate letter to Minister for PS Reply.tr5
Importance: High

Please find attached revised briefing in relation to SUB/1170/2012
Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database. (DS1-12-7014)
Thanks
Margaret



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk

SUB/1170/2012

X/ref: INV/400/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 9 November 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

MW ADVOCATE LETTER – WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

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Priority: Routine.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: None.

Legislation Implications: None.

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To note the position and approve the draft Private Secretary reply for issue to Brendan Mulgrew.

Detail

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SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
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John McCourt

From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
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Ormeau Road
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BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dspdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Brendan Mulgrew
MW Advocate
4th Floor
The Potthouse
1 Hill Street
BELFAST
BT1 2LB

Our ref: SUB/1170/2012

November 2012

I refer to the meeting with Minister McCausland on 27 September in relation to the Housing Executive's double glazing specifications and your follow up letter on 3 October which the Minister has asked me to reply to.

Following on from the meeting, the Housing Executive confirmed to the Minister their views on some of the issues that were raised at the meeting. They have confirmed that, in relation to the number of maintenance visits which have been required on the standard reversible hinges installed to date, since 2006 reversible hinges employed have potentially a "zero record" in terms of maintenance. They have also advised that reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. However, the Housing Executive will require in the new/revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.

In relation to health and safety requirements, whilst the reversible hinge as installed has three key features – integral child restriction, fire egress and easy clean, a casement hinge is available reflecting all three key features.

The Housing Executive has also confirmed their Board has approved the new specification and that fully reversible hinges are still an integral part of the specification and relate in every case to high rise stock. The preferred option now is casement style windows to all low and medium rise stock.

The Minister has always intended that the Programme for Government target, in relation to double glazing of all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards. The new specification for replacement double glazing windows is in line with the Glass and Glazing Federation recommendations. The Housing Executive review has resulted in estimated savings in the region of £15.1m. This is a considerable amount of savings and means that money can be used in other priority areas, such as new kitchens and heating schemes.

The remainder of the Double Glazing programme will be delivered in 2013/14 and 2014/15 through a new separate contract which will be in place by the end of this financial year.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful in this instance

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 16 November 2012 13:54
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING
Attachments: kfn26100.PDF

O see

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk [<mailto:chris.barry@dsdni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 16 November 2012 13:30
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; McCourt, John
Subject: Submission: SUB/1170/2012 MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Chris Barry
Private Office
To: McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Date: 16/11/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
Sands Michael (Mr)
Ward Deirdre
Sleator Norman (Mr)
Henderson Michael (Mr)
McConnell Grainne
McConaghie Barbara
Mccourt John (Mr)

SUB/1170/2012:MW ADVOCATE LETTER - WINDOW HINGES IN DOUBLE GLAZING

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 09/11/2012 and approved the letter for issue - attached for your information.

Many thanks.

Chris Barry (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38033

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Private Secretary

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dadni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Brendan Mulgrew
MW Advocate
4th Floor
The Potthouse
1 Hill Street
BELFAST
BT1 2LB

Our ref: SUB/1170/2012

16 November 2012

Dear Mr Mulgrew,

I refer to the meeting with Minister McCausland on 27 September in relation to the Housing Executive's double glazing specifications and your follow up letter on 3 October which the Minister has asked me to reply to.

Following on from the meeting, the Housing Executive confirmed to the Minister their views on some of the issues that were raised at the meeting. They have confirmed that, in relation to the number of maintenance visits which have been required on the standard reversible hinges installed to date, since 2006 reversible hinges employed have potentially a "zero record" in terms of maintenance. They have also advised that reversible Hinges have a guarantee of 25 years while Standard casement hinges generally range from 1 – 10 years in terms of a mechanical guarantee. However, the Housing Executive will require in the new/ revised specification a casement friction stay hinge that provides a 10 year mechanical guarantee. The suppliers of same will be required to demonstrate compliance with this performance standard.

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I am sorry I cannot be more helpful in this instance.

Yours sincerely



BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Private Secretary

5. A copy of all documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister's response to Mr Daithi McKay's AQW115/12/11-15 of 10 May 2012.

3

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 11 May 2012 11:05
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 18/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15 - Daithi McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the AQ database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5004

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: mary.doran@dsdni.gov.uk [mailto:mary.doran@dsdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 11 May 2012 09:53
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Maguire, Sheila; Crawford, James
Subject: URGENT AQ No. AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012

Tabled By: Daithi McKay

Constituency: North Antrim

Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last

year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE on 11/05/2012

Please provide draft reply and background note to private.office@dndni.gov.uk by 14:00 on 18/05/2012.

For further information etc. contact :

Ellen Corry
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38060

Copied To For Information:
AQ cc list

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:12
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Deadline 18/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15 - Daithi McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.tr5
Importance: High

Susan

Extension to deadline until 21.05.12.

Michael

Please update database with extension.

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 11 May 2012 11:05
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 18/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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Sent: 11 May 2012 09:53

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Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Maguire, Sheila; Crawford, James

Subject: URGENT AQ No. AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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For further information etc. contact :

Ellen Corry

Lighthouse Building Tel : 38060

Copied To For Information:

AQ cc list

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

To All,
Please see AQW below. Can you let me know if you have had any meetings with Minister as per the question please.

I have also asked Minister's Diary Sec to check this out but I have been advised to check with you also. This excludes the meeting Minister had recently with Turkingtons as this is covered in another AQW. *
Grateful if you can respond by Monday 21/05 please including nil returns.

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

*
Note
'this excludes' is advising the recipients that we already have the information on the meeting with Turkingtons.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:54
To: Barry, Chris
Cc: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Chris,
Can you help me with this one please.
Would you know from the diary if Minister had any meetings as per the question with officials or John McPeake etc?

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
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QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Martin, Stephen
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

nil

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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John

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DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: O'Neill, Eilish
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:57
To: Kerstens, John; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

John,
 Nil from me.
 Eilish.

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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 Grateful if you can respond by Monday 21/05 please including nil returns.

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
 Director's Office
 Housing Division
 Level 2
 Lighthouse Building
 Gasworks Business Park
 Belfast
 Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
 email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
 ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
 Tabled By: Daithi McKay
 Constituency: North Antrim
 Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Johnston, Stephen
Sent: 18 May 2012 15:12
To: Kerstens, John; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

NIL RETURN from me.

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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Grateful if you can respond by Monday 21/05 please including nil returns.

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Carragher, Damien
Sent: 18 May 2012 15:07
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Nil

Damien
Extn 38266
DD 028 9082 9266

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

To All,
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Thanks

John

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Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
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DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
Political Party: SINN FEIN

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Heaney, Donald
Sent: 18 May 2012 17:18
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

nil from me john

Don

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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Thanks

John

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Gasworks Business Park
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Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk*

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012
Tabled By: Daithi McKay
Constituency: North Antrim
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QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Malcolm, David
Sent: 18 May 2012 15:45
To: Kerstens, John; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: RE: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Min recently met FUSION 21 to discuss about collaborative procurement and the double glazing was touched on as part of the discussion. But it was a minor part of the meeting and not what the meeting was about, don't know if you want to include it or not. I suspect Min may have had many similar meetings when NIHE double glazing was mentioned in the margins.

**Housing Division
Level 2 Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB**

**Tel: 02890829268
Mobile: 07748644090**

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 18 May 2012 14:49
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Carragher, Damien; Malcolm, David; Heaney, Donald; Martin, Stephen; Johnston, Stephen; O'Neill, Eilish
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

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John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
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QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 21 May 2012 13:52
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Deadline 21/05/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Margaret please issue to PO

Roisin

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 21 May 2012 13:50
To: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: Deadline 21/05/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin,
Content
M

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 21 May 2012 13:42
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 21/05/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Michael to clear please

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 21 May 2012 11:31
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 21/05/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin, please see draft reply attached. (see John's note below).
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 21 May 2012 11:26
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Alan,
Draft reply attached as discussed. Michael Sands confirmed that the only meeting that Minister specifically had about double glazing was the meeting with Turkingtons.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division*

/el 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION - NUMBER: AQW AQW 11512/11-15

For Written Answer on 25/05/2012

Tabled By: Daithi McKay

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Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE on 11/05/2012

Please provide draft reply and background note to private.office@dsdni.gov.uk by 14:00 on 18/05/2012.

For further information etc. contact :

Ellen Corry
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38060

Copied To For Information:
AQ cc list

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 21 May 2012 13:55
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Doran, Mary; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara
Subject: FW: Deadline 21/05/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared response.DOCX; AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared response.tr5

Please see cleared response in relation to AQW 11512/11-15

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: 11512/11-15

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 22 May 2012 12:08
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Deadline 22/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - all meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Margaret please issue to PO

Roisin

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 22 May 2012 12:01
To: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: Deadline 22/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - all meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin,
Content
M

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 22 May 2012 11:52
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 22/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - all meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Michael to consider please

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 22 May 2012 09:43
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 22/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - all meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin, revised draft – emails below refer.
Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 22 May 2012 09:30
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Window replacement meetings

Alan,
Revised draft for clearance in light of Michael's comments below.

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2*

*Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 21 May 2012 16:00
To: Kerstens, John
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: Window replacement meetings

John, Yes we probably should include the 3 DUP reps although they were coming at this from the manufacturers point of view.

M

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 21 May 2012 15:01
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Goodall, Roisin
Subject: FW: Window replacement meetings

Michael,

Please see email below from James Crawford, diary sec.

Should we include Minister's meeting with the 3 DUP reps in our answer to AQW 11512 which asked to detail all meetings Minister has had in the last year in relation to the HE's double glazing scheme and who he met?

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

From: Crawford, James
Sent: 21 May 2012 14:49
To: Kerstens, John
Cc: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: Window replacement meetings

John,

We've looked at the diary and come up with the following:

Tuesday 15 May – meeting with Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean

Monday 16 April – meeting with Jim McKeag and Ian Young, reps from Glass and Glazing Federation.

Regards,

Jim.

James Crawford
Private Office

Lighthouse Building
Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2 Jb
Ext: 38033
02890 829033

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 22 May 2012 12:17
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk'; Doran, Mary; Owens, Michael
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Henderson, Michael; McConnell, Grainne; McConaghie, Barbara; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Deadline 22/5/12 - AQW 11512/11-15 - Daithi McKay - all meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15 - Revised draft.DOCX; AQW 11512 11-15 - Revised draft.tr5

Please see cleared revised response in relation to AQW 11512/11-15

Thanks
Margaret

Michael
Please update database.
Thanks
Margaret

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: 11512/11-15

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:44
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: 11512-11-15-amend draft sent back to officials 25-05.pdf; AQW 11512 11-15 - Daithi McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.tr5

Roisin

i) Amendment request for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5004

ii) When the reply is being sent back to the Private Office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Margaret Bowsie & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

*Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060*

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay, to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

*Representative of
the Glass Federation*

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with ~~Parkington Holdings Ltd~~ on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: (AQW 11512/11-15)

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

*As before
8/8/2015*

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:52
To: Mills, Karen
Cc: Kerstens, John; Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Karen please issue to PO

Roisin

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:51
To: Goodall, Roisin
Subject: RE: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin,
Content, we will not refer to Turkingtons in any other answers unless specifically requested to name attendees at meetings.

M

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:49
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Michael – to clear SPAD wanted ref to Turkington’s taken out

Roisin

From: Kennedy, Alan
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:41
To: Goodall, Roisin
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Roisin, draft revised per SPAD.

Alan

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 25 May 2012 14:49
To: Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Alan,
Draft reply attached amended in relation to SpAds request for the change.

John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dndni.gov.uk

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 25 May 2012 15:54
To: Brimstone, Stephen; Corry, Ellen
Cc: Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Henderson, Michael; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; O'Reilly, Tommy; Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Ward, Deirdre; Wilkinson, Jim
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - AQW 11512-11-15 Daithi McKay - to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: 11512-11-15-amend draft sent back to officials 25-05.pdf; AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared 2nd revised response.DOCX; AQW 11512 11-15 - cleared 2nd revised response.tr5

Folks

Attached cleared revised response for your attention.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Corry, Ellen
Sent: 25 May 2012 09:36
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Kerstens, John
Subject: AQW 11512-11-15 returned for amending

Please see attached request from SPAD to amend AQW 11512-11-15.

Many thanks

Ellen Corry
Corporate Services Unit
Extension: 38060
Telephone: 02890 829060

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay, to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

*Representation of
Mr McKay taken
by [signature]*

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with ~~Turkington Holdings Ltd~~ on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: (AQW 11512/11-15)

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

*AS before
SP 24/05.*

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

May 2012

BACKGROUND NOTE TO ASSEMBLY QUESTION NO: 11512/11-15

1. Daithi McKay is a Sinn Fein MLA for the North Antrim constituency.

Reply prepared by: Michael Sands Grade 6

Tel No: 9082 9346

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 28 May 2012 16:05
To: McCarty, Susan; Goodman, Ciara
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: CLOSING AQ -- Ref. Number: AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: 11512 11-15.pdf

Susan

Closing response for information.

Ciara

Please update database "date to be closed on TRIM" = 28.08.12

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Ellen.Corry@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:Ellen.Corry@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 28 May 2012 16:03
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Maguire, Sheila; Crawford, James
Subject: CLOSING AQ -- Ref. Number: AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

CLOSING - AQ

Reference: AQW AQW 11512/11-15
Raised By: Daithi McKay

Subject: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties

relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Copied To For Information:
AQ cc list

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

24 May 2012

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Kerstens, John
Sent: 09 July 2013 11:53
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: SUB/XXX/2013 (x ref INV/345/2013 & AQW 11512/11-15) - submission to Minister correcting response to Daithi McKay Assembly Question
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.tr5

Alan,
Draft sub correcting AQW 11512/11-15. I have checked over it and it looks ok.
Trimmed all in AQW 11512/11-15 container.

Thanks

John

*John Kerstens
Director's Office
Housing Division
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
Tel. no. 028 9082 9280
email john.kerstens@dsdni.gov.uk*

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 09 July 2013 10:45
To: Kerstens, John
Subject: SUB/XXX/2013 (x ref INV/345/2013 & AQW 11512/11-15) - submission to Minister correcting response to Daithi McKay Assembly Question

John

As discussed, draft for your consideration and approval.

Happy to discuss. I have passed hard copy of Hansard with the relevant section highlighted to you.

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 09 July 2013 13:50
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: aqw 11512
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15 - Daithi McKay - meetings in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion (cc Turkingtons, Glass Glazing Federation, Fusion 21) occasion.tr5

Susan to clear please

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 09 July 2013 14:47
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.DOCX; SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.tr5

Michael

Grateful if you could have a read of this one to see if ok

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325



SUB/XXX/2013

x ref AQW 11512/11-15

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 9 July 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21

Issue: On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a minor error in the response to AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

Timing: Immediate.

Priority: Urgent.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Likely to cause media interest

Recommendation: That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letter to Daithi McKay and issue the revised response to AQW 11512/11-15.

Detail

On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a response to a written AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

2. During the debate yesterday you stated: "*I just want to finally, in the last few seconds, say this: with regards to the issue of Fusion 21, the details of the initial meeting were set out in an Assembly Question for written answer in September 2012. After the meeting, which looked at the issue of procurement – there is a minor error, which I will in due course correct, with regards to the grammar and detail of that response – the fact is this: Fusion 21 then contacted my officials about the double-glazing programme....They were rightly told that an NIHE contract would be put out to procurement and to contact the Housing Executive. That is what they did, because it is the Housing Executive that deals in operational matters with all those contracts.*" [Extract from Official Report (Hansard) Monday 8 July 2013]

Recommendation

3. That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letter to Daithí McKay and issue the revised response to Assembly Question 11512/11-15. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Tommy O'Reilly
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Grainne McConnell
Emma Murray
Mary Doran

DRAFT RESPONSE

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dssni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Daithí McKay MLA

daithimckay@btinternet.com

Our ref: SUB/XXX/2013
x ref: AQW 11512/11-15

July 2013

Dear Daithí

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 11512/11-15 answered on 28 May 2012 regarding meetings I had in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and with whom.

During the Private Members' debate on the 8 July I advised of a minor error with regards to the grammar and detail of the response in my initial answer to AQW 11512/11-15 and undertook to correct this oversight.

I have attached the revised answer and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then discussed the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was a matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 09 July 2013 14:58
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.DOCX; SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.tr5

Susan,
I have suggested a couple of minor changes, tracked.
M

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 09 July 2013 14:47
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15

Michael

Grateful if you could have a read of this one to see if ok

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325



SUB/XXX/2013
x ref AQW 11512/11-15

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 9 July 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21

Issue: On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a minor error in the response to AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

Timing: Immediate.

Priority: Urgent.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Likely to cause media interest

Recommendation: **That you note the content of this submission and
approve the attached draft letter to Daithi McKay and
issue the revised response to AQW 11512/11-15.**

Detail

On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a response to a written AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

2. During the debate yesterday you stated: "*I just want to finally, in the last few seconds, say this: with regards to the issue of Fusion 21, the details of the initial meeting were set out in an Assembly Question for written answer in September 2012. After the meeting, which looked at the issue of procurement – there is a minor error, which I will in due course correct, with regards to the grammar and detail of that response – the fact is this: Fusion 21 then contacted my officials about the double-glazing programme....They were rightly told that an NIHE contract would be put out to procurement and to contact the Housing Executive. That is what they did, because it is the Housing Executive that deals in operational matters with all those contracts.*" [Extract from Official Report (Hansard) Monday 8 July 2013]

Recommendation

3. That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letter to Daithi McKay and issue the revised response to Assembly Question 11512/11-15. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Tommy O'Reilly
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Grainne McConnell
Emma Murray
Mary Doran

DRAFT RESPONSE

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Daithí McKay MLA

daithimckay@btinternet.com

Our ref: SUB/XXX/2013
x ref: AQW 11512/11-15

July 2013

Dear Daithí

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 11512/11-15 answered on 28 May 2012 regarding meetings I had in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and with whom.

During the Private Members' debate on the 8 July I advised of a minor error with regards to the grammar and detail of the response in my initial answer to AQW 11512/11-15 and undertook to correct this oversight.

I have attached the revised answer and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

Deleted: discussed

Deleted:

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 09 July 2013 15:07
To: Bowsie, Margaret
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.tr5

Cleared for issue please

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 09 July 2013 14:58
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15

Susan,
I have suggested a couple of minor changes, tracked.
M

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 09 July 2013 14:47
To: Sands, Michael
Subject: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15

Michael

Grateful if you could have a read of this one to see if ok

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Bowsie, Margaret
Sent: 09 July 2013 15:13
To: 'stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk'; Doran, Mary
Cc: DSD Private Office; Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Sleator, Norman (DSD); McConnell, Grainne; McCourt, John
Subject: FW: REVISED AQW 11512/11-15
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.DOCX; SUB XXX 2013 - (x ref INV 345 2013 & AQW 11512 11-15) - submission to Minister further to Hansard and revising AQW response.tr5

Please find attached cleared revised response in relation to AQW 24783/11-15
Thanks
Margaret



SUB/XXX/2013

x ref AQW 11512/11-15

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 9 July 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21

Issue: On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a minor error in the response to AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

Timing: Immediate.

Priority: Urgent.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Likely to cause media interest

Recommendation: **That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letter to Daithi McKay and issue the revised response to AQW 11512/11-15.**

Detail

On 8 July, during the debate on Private Members' Business on the "Inquiry into Allegations of Wrongful Political Interference into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Potential Breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and Misleading the Assembly and the Committee for Social Development" in the Assembly, you undertook to correct a response to a written AQW 11512/11-15 regarding your meeting with Fusion 21.

2. During the debate yesterday you stated: *"I just want to finally, in the last few seconds, say this: with regards to the issue of Fusion 21, the details of the initial meeting were set out in an Assembly Question for written answer in September 2012. After the meeting, which looked at the issue of procurement – there is a minor error, which I will in due course correct, with regards to the grammar and detail of that response – the fact is this: Fusion 21 then contacted my officials about the double-glazing programme....They were rightly told that an NIHE contract would be put out to procurement and to contact the Housing Executive. That is what they did, because it is the Housing Executive that deals in operational matters with all those contracts."* [Extract from Official Report (Hansard) Monday 8 July 2013]

Recommendation

3. That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letter to Daithí McKay and issue the revised response to Assembly Question 11512/11-15. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Tommy O'Reilly
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Grainne McConnell
Emma Murray
Mary Doran

DRAFT RESPONSE

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Daithí McKay MLA

daithimckay@btinternet.com

Our ref: SUB/XXX/2013
x ref: AQW 11512/11-15

July 2013

Dear Daithí

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 11512/11-15 answered on 28 May 2012 regarding meetings I had in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and with whom.

During the Private Members' debate on the 8 July I advised of a minor error with regards to the grammar and detail of the response in my initial answer to AQW 11512/11-15 and undertook to correct this oversight.

I have attached the revised answer and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 06 August 2013 14:02
To: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Submission: SUB/711/2013 REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21
Attachments: h5m57200.PDF

To see

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 06 August 2013 14:01
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila (DSD); Cousins, Heather; O'Reilly, Tommy (DSD); Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; McConnell, Grainne; Murray, Emma (DSD); Doran, Mary; Barry, Chris (DSD)
Subject: Submission: SUB/711/2013 REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Chris Barry
Private Office
To: McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Date: 06/08/2013

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
O'Reilly Tommy (Mr)
Wilkinson Jim
Sands Michael (Mr)
Ward Deirdre
McConnell Grainne
Murray Emma
Doran Mary
Barry Chris (Mr)

SUB/711/2013:REVISION TO WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION, AQW 11512/11-15, REGARDING MEETING WITH FUSION 21

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 09/07/2013 and has approved the attached response to Daithi McKay MLA and the revised answer to AQW/11512/2011-15. Both issued by Private Office today.

Many thanks.

Chris Barry (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38033

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

From: The Minister

Mr Daithí McKay MLA

daithimckay@btinternet.com

Our ref: SUB/711/2013
X/ref: AQW 11512/11-15

6 August 2013

Dear Daithí

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 11512/11-15 answered on 28 May 2012 regarding meetings I had in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and with whom.

During the Private Members' debate on 8 July I advised of a minor error with regards to the grammar and detail of the response in my initial answer to AQW 11512/11-15 and undertook to correct this oversight.

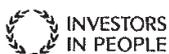
I have attached the revised answer and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

Nelson M'Cauleand

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Nelson McCausland

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____
6 August 2013

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Mills, Karen on behalf of Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 06 August 2013 15:02
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan (DSD); Kerstens, John
Subject: CLOSING AQ -- Ref. Number: AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.
Attachments: AQW 11512 11-15.msg; Sub.msg; 11512 11-15.pdf

Susan

Attached closing response for information.

Michael

Please update database "date to be closed on TRIM" = 06.11.13

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: mary.doran@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:mary.doran@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 06 August 2013 14:19
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Press Office (DSD); McConnell, Grainne; Loudon, Caroline; McCourt, John
Subject: CLOSING AQ -- Ref. Number: AQW AQW 11512/11-15 : To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

CLOSING - AQ

Reference: AQW AQW 11512/11-15
Raised By: Daithi McKay

Subject: To ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

BE ATTACHED FOR REVISED DOCUMENTS

Copied To For Information:
AQ cc list

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Doran, Mary
Sent: 06 August 2013 14:13
To: '+Business Office Public Email'
Subject: AQW 11512 11-15
Attachments: img-806130512-0001.pdf; AQW 11512 11-15(rev).docx

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Nelson McCausland

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____
6 August 2013

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass & Glazing Federation on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass & Glazing Federation's guidelines '*The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors*'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21 then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

2011-15

Written Answer to Question No: 11512

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr McKay to ask the Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

(AQW 11512/11-15)

Nelson McCausland: I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McClean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

28 May 2012

Kennedy, Alan (DSD)

From: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Sent: 06 January 2014 15:14
To: Mills, Karen
Subject: FW: Revisions to Assembly Questions Regarding Meeting With Turkingtons
Attachments: SUB XXX 2013 (X-ref AQW 29440 11-15) - cleared revised answers to AQWs.tr5; SUB XXX 2013 (X-ref AQW 29440 11-15) - cleared revised answers to AQWs.DOCX

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Karen
I am emailing this to you solely to get it trimmed into AQW 11512/11-15 Container (DS1-12-5004)
(I have saved this into all the other Containers and suitably amended the title (in this case it would be:
"SUB/XXX/2014 - Revised answer to PO which includes AQW 11512/11-15")
Thanks
Alan

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 03 January 2014 10:13
To: DSD Private Office; Doran, Mary
Cc: DSD Private Office; Haire, Will; Hamilton, Andrew (DSD); Kerstens, John; Martin, Stephen (DSD); McConnell, Grainne; McCourt, John; Murray, Emma (DSD); Sands, Michael; Sleator, Norman (DSD); Ward, Deirdre; Wilkinson, Jim
Subject: Revisions to Assembly Questions Regarding Meeting With Turkingtons

Folks

Attached cleared submission iro revisions to Assembly Question regarding meeting with Turkingtons, for your attention.

Michael

Please clear off database.

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 03 January 2014 09:47
To: Mills, Karen
Cc: Kennedy, Alan (DSD)
Subject: FW: Revisions to Assembly Questions Regarding Meeting With Turkingtons

Karen

Cleared for issue

Grateful if you would issue this please

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSEMBLY QUESTION: AQW 29440/11-15

For Written Answer on 02/01/2014

Tabled By: Jim Allister

Constituency: North Antrim

Political Party: TUV

QUESTION IN FULL: To ask the Minister for Social Development, in light of his acknowledgement that he was erroneous in thinking that he had met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation rather than Turkingtons, whether he will revise his answers to Assembly Questions that he has answered on this matter.



SUB/XXX/2014
(X-ref: AQW 29440/11-15)

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 3 January 2014

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**REVISIONS TO ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS REGARDING MEETING WITH
TURKINGTON'S ON 16 APRIL 2012**

Issue: In response to AQW 29440/11-15, tabled by Jim Allister MLA, you advised you would revise your previous answers to any Assembly Questions relating to your meeting with Turkington's on 16 April 2012.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: May prompt media interest

Recommendation: That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letters for issue to Ross Hussey MLA, Daithi McKay MLA, Michaela Boyle MLA and Jim Allister MLA and issue the revised responses to the Assembly Questions.

Detail

In response to AQW 29440/11-15, tabled by Jim Allister MLA, you said that you would revise your previous answers to any Assembly Questions relating to your meeting with Turkington's in April 2012.

2. The following Assembly Questions have been identified for revision:-

AQO 5 (5239/11-15)

AQW 11510/11-15

AQW 11511/11-15

AQW 11512/11-15

AQW 13779/11-15

AQW 13906/11-15

AQW 17151/11-15

AQW 23023/11-15

AQW 25032/11-15

AQW 25062/11-15

AQW 26867/11-15

Recommendation

3. That you note the content of this submission and approve the attached draft letters for issue to Ross Hussey MLA, Daithi McKay MLA, Michaela Boyle MLA and Jim Allister MLA and issue the revised responses to the Assembly Questions listed above. If you require any further information please contact me.

SUSAN McCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc: Will Haire

Andrew Hamilton

Jim Wilkinson

Michael Sands

Deirdre Ward
Stephen Martin
Norman Sleator
Grainne McConnell
John McCourt
Emma Murray
Mary Doran

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ross Hussey MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

January 2014

Dear Ross

I refer to your recent oral Assembly Question AQO 5 (5239/11-15) which was answered as a written question.

On the 12 December 2013 I advised the Committee for Social Development that I inadvertently and unintentionally misinformed the Committee about the attendees of a meeting that was held on 16 April 2012 and I am therefore revising my previous answers to Assembly Questions on this matter. I have revised AQW 13779/11-15 and, as a consequence of this, I have also revised the answer to the question you asked which referred to AQW 13779/11-15.

I have attached the revised answer to your question and also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Ross Hussey MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQ05 (5239 /11-15)

Mr Hussey has asked:

The Minister for Social Development when he has had meetings with Fusion 21 since taking office.

Answer

I met with the Managing Director, Chief Executive and Independent Chair of Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Daithí McKay MLA

daithimckay@btinternet.com

January 2014

Dear Daithi

I refer to your Assembly Questions: AQW 11510/11-15; AQW 11511/11-15; AQW 11512/11-15; AQW 13779/11-15; AQW 13906/11-15; AQW 17151/11-15; AQW 23023/11-15 and AQW 25032/11-15.

On the 12 December 2013 I advised the Committee for Social Development that I inadvertently and unintentionally misinformed the Committee about the attendees of a meeting that was held on 16 April 2012 and I am therefore revising my previous answers to Assembly Questions in relation to this matter.

I have attached the revised answers to the questions you asked and I have also brought these to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11510/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to whom he spoke to in the glass and glazing industry that led to his concerns about the value for money of the Housing Executive's current specification to contractors for double-glazing installation.

Answer

I and my officials, along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive, had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry. I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive then met with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11511/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all meetings he has had with groups from the glass and glazing industry in the last year.

Answer

I and my officials, along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive, had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry. I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive then met with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors.' I also met with Superseal on 27 September 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 11512/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to detail all the meetings he has had in the last year in relation to the Housing Executive double-glazing scheme; and who he met on each occasion.

Answer

I and the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive met with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation's guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21, in early May 2012, then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

I also met with DUP colleagues Ian McCrea, Mervyn Storey and Paul McLean on 15 May 2012 to discuss issues they had about the manufacture of double glazing units.

I also met with Superseal on 27 September 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 13779/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development with which representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 did he meet recently.

Answer

I met with the Managing Director and the General Manager of Turkington Holdings Ltd, who are members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'. I also met with the Managing Director, Chief Executive and Independent Chair of Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 13906/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development what issues were raised by the Turkington Holding's representative at the meeting attended by the Minister on 16 April 2012.

Answer

During the meeting I had with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012, I was advised that the company had extensive double glazing experience and were installing windows for the Housing Executive to their requirement. They further advised that there were better ways of installing replacement double glazed windows resulting in efficiencies and a better and quicker service for customers. Current and proposed window specifications were discussed and the representatives advised that there was potential to make considerable savings on installations if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed in relation to installing windows from the outside as opposed to from the inside, which was Housing Executive required practice, as there would be no need to cut away reveals and no need for redecoration grants.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 17151/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development how many times he has met with the Glass and Glazing Federation regarding the Housing Executive double glazing programme.

Answer

I have not met with the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF). I did, however, meet with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd, who are members of the GGF, on 16 April 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 23023/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development whether any of the companies he met in 2012, prior to his decision to review the specifications for installation of double glazing windows in social housing, have a direct interest in changing these specifications; and to list these companies.

Answer

I received a number of requests for meetings to discuss the double glazing contracts from companies with an interest in the specifications. However, I met with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federations guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors.'

I also met with Fusion 21 on 23 April 2012 to discuss generally their procurement model. Fusion 21, in early May 2012, then raised the issue of the Housing Executive's double glazing programme with my officials who advised that, as this was an operational matter for the Housing Executive, they should contact the Housing Executive's Head of Procurement to discuss this.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Daithi McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 25032/11-15

Mr McKay has asked:

The Minister for Social Development whether his meeting with Turkington representatives in May 2012 included representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation

Answer

I did not meet with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd in May 2012. I did, however, meet with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd, who are members of the Glass and Glazing Federation, on 16 April 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Ms Michaela Boyle MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

Our ref: SUB/XXX/2013

January 2014

Dear Michaela,

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 25062/11-15.

On the 12 December 2013 I advised the Committee for Social Development that I inadvertently and unintentionally misinformed the Committee about the attendees of a meeting that was held on 16 April 2012 and I am therefore revising my previous answers to Assembly Questions on this matter. As a consequence of revising AQW 13779/11-15 I have revised the answer given to you in AQW 25062/11-15 which refers to AQW 13779/11-15.

I have attached the revised answer to the question you asked and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Michaela Boyle MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 25062/11-15

Ms Boyle has asked:

The Minister for Social Development whether he was aware that the owner of Turkington Holdings had nominated a Member of the DUP for election to the Assembly, when he met with the company's representatives in May 2012, to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties.

Answer

I did not meet with Turkington Holdings Ltd representatives in May 2012 to discuss double glazing specifications in Housing Executive properties. I did, however, meet with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012 but I was not aware at that time that the owner of Turkington Holdings Ltd had nominated a member of the DUP for election to the Assembly.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

From: The Minister

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

e-mail: private.office@dlsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Jim Allister MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

Our ref: SUB/XXX/2013

January 2014

Dear Jim,

I refer to your Assembly Question: AQW 26867/11-15.

On the 12 December 2013 I advised the Committee for Social Development that I inadvertently and unintentionally misinformed the Committee about the attendees of a meeting that was held on 16 April 2012 and I am therefore revising my previous answers to Assembly Questions on this matter.

I have attached the revised answer to the question you asked and I have also brought this to the attention of the Assembly Business Office.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours sincerely

**NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**

Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place
Belfast BT7 2JB

Jim Allister MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 26867/11-15

Mr Allister has asked:

The Minister for Social Development to list the occasions on which he has met with representatives of Turkington Holdings Limited or any of its subsidiaries?

Answer

I held a meeting with representatives of Turkington Holdings Ltd on 16 April 2012.

Signed: _____
Nelson McCausland MLA

Date: _____

7. A copy of all documentation including correspondence, emails, draft responses, submissions etc, prepared for the Minister's response to the Chair's letter of 16 May 2012.

7.
/**Mills, Karen**

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 17 May 2012 11:54
To: McCarty, Susan; Owens, Michael
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Shields, Rosemary; McGrugan, Samuel; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - COR/397/2012 - Alex Maskey - Review of NIHE double glazing installations
Attachments: egk33000.PDF; COR 397 2012 - Alex Maskey - Review of NIHE double glazing installations.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Susan

i) One for our section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5286

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 17 May 2012 11:35
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/397/2012 : REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/397/2012

Raised By: Alex Maskey

Subject: REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 17/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and a draft reply for signature by the Minister.

To be with Private Office not later than 28/05/2012 before Noon

For further information etc. contact :

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List



PRIVATE OFFICE
17 MAY 2012
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX
Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

16 May 2012

Our Ref: CSD/011/2011/SK

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

Dear *Nelson*

Review of NIHE double glazing installations

As Chair of the Committee I have been asked by a number of members of the Committee to write to you about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

Members have raised concerns with me that they only heard about this via Questions to the Minister in the Assembly on Tuesday 8 May, and feel that you could have indicated your intention of a review at the Committee meeting of 3 May when you were dealing with this issue in response to a question from a member of the Committee.

The Committee would like to make clear that it firmly agrees with you that any public expenditure should deliver value for money for the taxpayer and savings should be made where possible. It is also the case that achieving value for money and cost savings need to be balanced with carrying out all works to a high standard. The Committee would therefore like to see the terms of reference and timetable for the review, details on the methodology to be employed and information on who will carry out the review and how they were appointed.



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

Members are also concerned that you may have pre-empted the findings of this review given that at the meeting on 3 May you stated that the 'method' for installing double glazing *"is certainly not the most efficient and does not provide the best value for money; there is no doubt about that"*.

You also stated at the meeting *"Some indications are that it is possible to save tens of millions of pounds in the installation process if it were done by people with more experience in that field"* and in your press release you stated that *"I am advised that there is potential for significant savings to be made"*.

Members have noted that on 8 May you stated in the Assembly that you met with representatives of the glazing industry and they therefore presume this is the source of the above advice, but I would appreciate if you would confirm this i.e. who specifically who has provided this advice to you and on what basis these "significant savings" have been estimated.

Furthermore, the Committee would like information on your thinking about the implications for any future procurement exercise arising from the review, implications for existing supply and installation contracts and the implications for the established target of all NIHE homes to be double glazed by 2015.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



**Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson**

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 17 May 2012 13:06
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan; Smith, Joy; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 28/5/12 - COR/397/2012 - Alex Maskey - Review of NIHE double glazing installations
Attachments: egk33000.PDF; COR 397 2012 - Alex Maskey - Review of NIHE double glazing installations.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database that this has been re-commissioned to Michael Sands from Housing Director's Office.

2. Michael

i) One for you. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5286

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 17 May 2012 11:35
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/397/2012 : REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/397/2012
Raised By: Alex Maskey

Subject: REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 17/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and a draft reply for signature by the Minister.

To be with Private Office not later than 28/05/2012 before Noon

For further information etc. contact :

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List



Northern Ireland
Assembly

PRIVATE OFFICE
17 MAY 2012
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX
Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

16 May 2012

Our Ref: CSD/011/2011/SK

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

Dear *Nelson*

Review of NIHE double glazing installations

As Chair of the Committee I have been asked by a number of members of the Committee to write to you about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

Members have raised concerns with me that they only heard about this via Questions to the Minister in the Assembly on Tuesday 8 May, and feel that you could have indicated your intention of a review at the Committee meeting of 3 May when you were dealing with this issue in response to a question from a member of the Committee.

The Committee would like to make clear that it firmly agrees with you that any public expenditure should deliver value for money for the taxpayer and savings should be made where possible. It is also the case that achieving value for money and cost savings need to be balanced with carrying out all works to a high standard. The Committee would therefore like to see the terms of reference and timetable for the review, details on the methodology to be employed and information on who will carry out the review and how they were appointed.



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

Members are also concerned that you may have pre-empted the findings of this review given that at the meeting on 3 May you stated that the 'method' for installing double glazing *"is certainly not the most efficient and does not provide the best value for money; there is no doubt about that"*.

You also stated at the meeting *"Some indications are that it is possible to save tens of millions of pounds in the installation process if it were done by people with more experience in that field"* and in your press release you stated that *"I am advised that there is potential for significant savings to be made"*.

Members have noted that on 8 May you stated in the Assembly that you met with representatives of the glazing industry and they therefore presume this is the source of the above advice, but I would appreciate if you would confirm this i.e. who specifically who has provided this advice to you and on what basis these "significant savings" have been estimated.

Furthermore, the Committee would like information on your thinking about the implications for any future procurement exercise arising from the review, implications for existing supply and installation contracts and the implications for the established target of all NIHE homes to be double glazed by 2015.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex".

**Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson**

McCarty, Susan

Subject: FW: Submission to Minister re SDC request for info on review of NIHE Double Glazing installations
Attachments: Submission to Minister re SDC request for info on review of NIHE Double Glazing installations.docx

From: Best, Christine

Sent: 18 May 2012 09:41

To: stephen.brimstone@dsdni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara

Cc: DSD Private Office; Haire, Will; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Ward, Deirdre; 'McKernan, Michael'; McConnell, Grainne; Carragher, Damien; Heaney, Donald; Johnston, Stephen; Malcolm, David; Martin, Stephen; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; Sleator, Norman (DSD)

Subject: Submission to Minister re SDC request for info on review of NIHE Double Glazing installations



From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**Social Development Committee's Request for Information on Review of
NIHE Double Glazing Installations**

Issue: Letter dated 16 May from Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson of the SDC requesting information on
the above review.

Timing: 18 May 2012

Priority: Important

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to the Chair of the Social development Committee along the lines of the attached draft.

Detail

The Chair of the Committee has been asked by a number of members to write about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

2. The attached draft letter to the Chair addresses the various issues raised.

RECOMMENDATION

3. That you write to the Chair along the lines of the attached draft.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael McKernan
Grainne McConnell

Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Dear

Review of NIHE Double Glazing Installations

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass

and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore

carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 18 May 2012 10:52
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Kennedy, Alan
Subject: FW: SUB/551/2012
Attachments: SUB 551 2012.docx

Importance: High

FYI
Margaret

From: English, Marilyn
Sent: 18 May 2012 10:08
To: O'Hare, Paul
Cc: Housing, Director's Office
Subject: SUB/551/2012
Importance: High

Marilyn English

DSD Private Office
Lighthouse Building

Tel: 9082 9035
DD: 38035

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Private Secretary or member of the Private Office, to an official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister or FMdFM, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the main recipient. The Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk

SUB/551/2012

From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON
REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS**

Issue: Letter dated 16 May from Alex Maskey MLA Chairperson
of the SDC requesting information on the above review.

Timing: 18 May 2012.

Priority: Important.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to the Chair of the Social development
Committee along the lines of the attached draft.

Detail

The Chair of the Committee has been asked by a number of members to write about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

2. The attached draft letter to the Chair addresses the various issues raised.

Recommendation

3. That you write to the Chair along the lines of the attached draft.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael McKernan
Grainne McConnell

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with Turkington Holdings Ltd to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: Fiona.Lundie@dndni.gov.uk
Sent: 22 May 2012 16:00
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; henry.johnston@dndni.gov.uk; psdirectorurisd; Heaney, Donald; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan; Martin, Stephen; McIntyre, Patricia; Malcolm, David; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose
Subject: Submission: SUB/551/2012 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS
Attachments: elo58300.PDF

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Fiona Lundie
Private Office
To: Sands Michael (Mr)
Date: 22/05/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
O'Neill Eilish
Johnston Henry (Mr)
Heaney Donald
Carragher Damien
McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Martin Stephen (Mr)
McIntyre Patricia (Ms)
Malcolm David (Mr)
McConaghie Barbara
McShane Rose (Mrs)

SUB/551/2012: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 18/05/2012 and has requested that the letter to Alex Maskey be amended. See attached letter with amendments. Para 3 - remove Turkington Holdings Ltd and replace with "Representatives of Glass and Glazing Federation". Also, Fusion 21?

I would be grateful if you could provide further advice on this point to be with the Private Office by noon on 24/05/2012.

Many thanks.

Fiona Lundie (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38037

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**

028 9082 9034
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dssdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

From: The Minister

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

My attendance at the Committee on 3 May was a high level presentation on the Department's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and I was not prepared to introduce the question of the Housing Executive's double glazing at that time.

In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with ~~Tyrkington Holdings Ltd~~ to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

Helps of Glass & Glazing Federation

Insulation?

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frames requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by the removal of plaster and re-plastering requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants;
- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: Goodall, Roisin
Sent: 23 May 2012 14:08
To: Best, Christine
Cc: Sands, Michael
Subject: sub 551

Christine will you issue amended sub prepared by Michael as requested by SPAD in usual way

Roisin



sub 551-
ended as requeste



sub 551-
ended as requeste



SUB/551/2012

From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON
REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS**

Issue: Letter dated 16 May from Alex Maskey MLA Chairperson
of the SDC requesting information on the above review.

Timing: 18 May 2012.

Priority: Important.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to the Chair of the Social development
Committee along the lines of the attached draft.

Detail

The Chair of the Committee has been asked by a number of members to write about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

2. The attached draft letter to the Chair addresses the various issues raised.

Recommendation

3. That you write to the Chair along the lines of the attached draft.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael McKernan
Grainne McConnell

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

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In response to numerous constituents complaining to me about their single glazed draughty windows I asked the Housing Executive about their plans for double glazing their stock and was shocked to be told that their programme to install double glazing stretched out to 2021. I asked for details of numbers of houses requiring installation and was astounded to be informed initially that an estimated 48,000 homes required double glazing at a cost of £120m. This represents a cost of £2,500 per dwelling and I became concerned that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money. My officials and I have had informal approaches and letters from a number of firms in the double glazing industry and along with the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive I met with representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation and Fusion 21 to discuss double glazing specifications in NIHE properties in relation to the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors'.

As a result of this meeting I asked my officials to research the specification used by the Housing Executive as I was particularly concerned about the requirement to install window frames from inside the dwelling requiring the removal and re-plastering around

frames which disturbs a tenant's decoration necessitating the payment of redecoration grants. I was also concerned about the specification for hinges and handles as these are much higher than industry standards for domestic properties.

The Housing Executive subsequently revised their figures for dwellings requiring double glazing to closer to 30,000 at an estimated cost of £69m, however this is still a high cost and the advice from my officials was that if the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines were followed there should be minimal disruption to plaster around frames in houses. My officials raised particular concern around the Housing Executive's requirements for:-

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- (c) NIHE: requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed costing considerably more than industry standard domestic hinges to allow the window to reverse to enable tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

The estimated savings of not having to pay for re-plaster and redecoration grants is around £600 per house.

I subsequently wrote to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously review the specification for double glazing. The NIHE will therefore carry out the review of their own specification for replacement window installation. This work will be completed before a procurement strategy is approved by the Housing Executive Board at the end of June.

As part of the Housing Executive review I have agreed that where a contract has been given to a contractor for window replacement then that should proceed and over 7,000 dwellings will have double glazing installed this year. I am advised by the Chief Executive of the Housing Executive that his analysis is that this way forward will address the concerns of the supply chain re stocks of profiles, handles and hinges and will generate a significant saving re decoration. I have asked the Chief Executive to write to contractors confirming this position.

While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: Best, Christine
Sent: 23 May 2012 14:16
To: Johnston, Stephen; McConaghie, Barbara
Cc: DSD Private Office; Haire, Will; Cousins, Heather; Ward, Deirdre; 'McKernan, Michael';
McConnell, Grainne; Carragher, Damien; Heaney, Donald; Malcolm, David; Martin,
Stephen; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; Sleator, Norman (DSD)
Subject: sub 551- amended as requested by SPAD
Attachments: sub 551- amended as requested by SPAD.docx

Please find attached amended SUB/551/2012 as requested.

Christine Best
Personal Secretary to Jim Wilkinson,
Michael Sands and Deirdre Ward

Tel No: 90 829292



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdni.gov.uk

SUB/551/2012

From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 18 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON
REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS**

Issue: Letter dated 16 May from Alex Maskey MLA Chairperson of the SDC requesting information on the above review.

Timing: 18 May 2012.

Priority: Important.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to the Chair of the Social development Committee along the lines of the attached draft.

Detail

The Chair of the Committee has been asked by a number of members to write about your recent announcement regarding a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

2. The attached draft letter to the Chair addresses the various issues raised.

Recommendation

3. That you write to the Chair along the lines of the attached draft.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael McKernan
Grainne McConnell

From: The Minister

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

May 2012

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While it is estimated that around 30,000 homes will be included in the double glazing programme and this will be completed in the current CSR, any delay will be as short as possible while the Housing Executive carries out the review requested by me.

I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Mills, Karen

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 28 May 2012 08:16
To: Kerstens, John; Smith, Joy
Cc: Goodall, Roisin; Kerstens, John
Subject: FW: Submission: SUB/551/2012 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS
Attachments: SUB 551 2012 - Alex Maskey letter.pdf

To see

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Rose.McShane@dndni.gov.uk [<mailto:Rose.McShane@dndni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 25 May 2012 10:59
To: Sands, Michael
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila; Cousins, Heather; Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan; O'Neill, Eilish; henry.johnston@dndni.gov.uk; psdirectorursd; Heaney, Donald; Carragher, Damien; McCarty, Susan; Martin, Stephen; McIntyre, Patricia; Malcolm, David; McConaghie, Barbara; McShane, Rose; Crawford, Billy; Sisk, Margaret; Maguire, Sheila
Subject: Submission: SUB/551/2012 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Unclassified

From: Rose McShane
Private Office
To: Sands Michael (Mr)
Date: 25/05/2012

Action Copy: Haire Will (Mr)
Cousins Heather (Ms)
Wilkinson Jim
O'Neill Eilish
Johnston Henry (Mr)
Heaney Donald
Carragher Damien
McCarty Susan (Mrs)
Martin Stephen (Mr)
McIntyre Patricia (Ms)
Malcolm David (Mr)

McConaghie Barbara
McShane Rose (Mrs)
Crawford Billy
Sisk Margaret
Maguire Sheila

SUB/551/2012: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON
REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 18/05/2012 and has approved your recommendations.

Please find attached letter that issued to Alex Maskey MLA in the post today.

Many thanks.

Rose McShane (Private Office)

Lighthouse Building Tel: 38036

OffName



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk
5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
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Ormeau Road
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Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dsdni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

From: The Minister

Mr Alex Maskey MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Our ref: SUB/551/2012

24 May 2012

Dear Alex

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 16 May re my announcement of a review of the NIHE double glazing programme.

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Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

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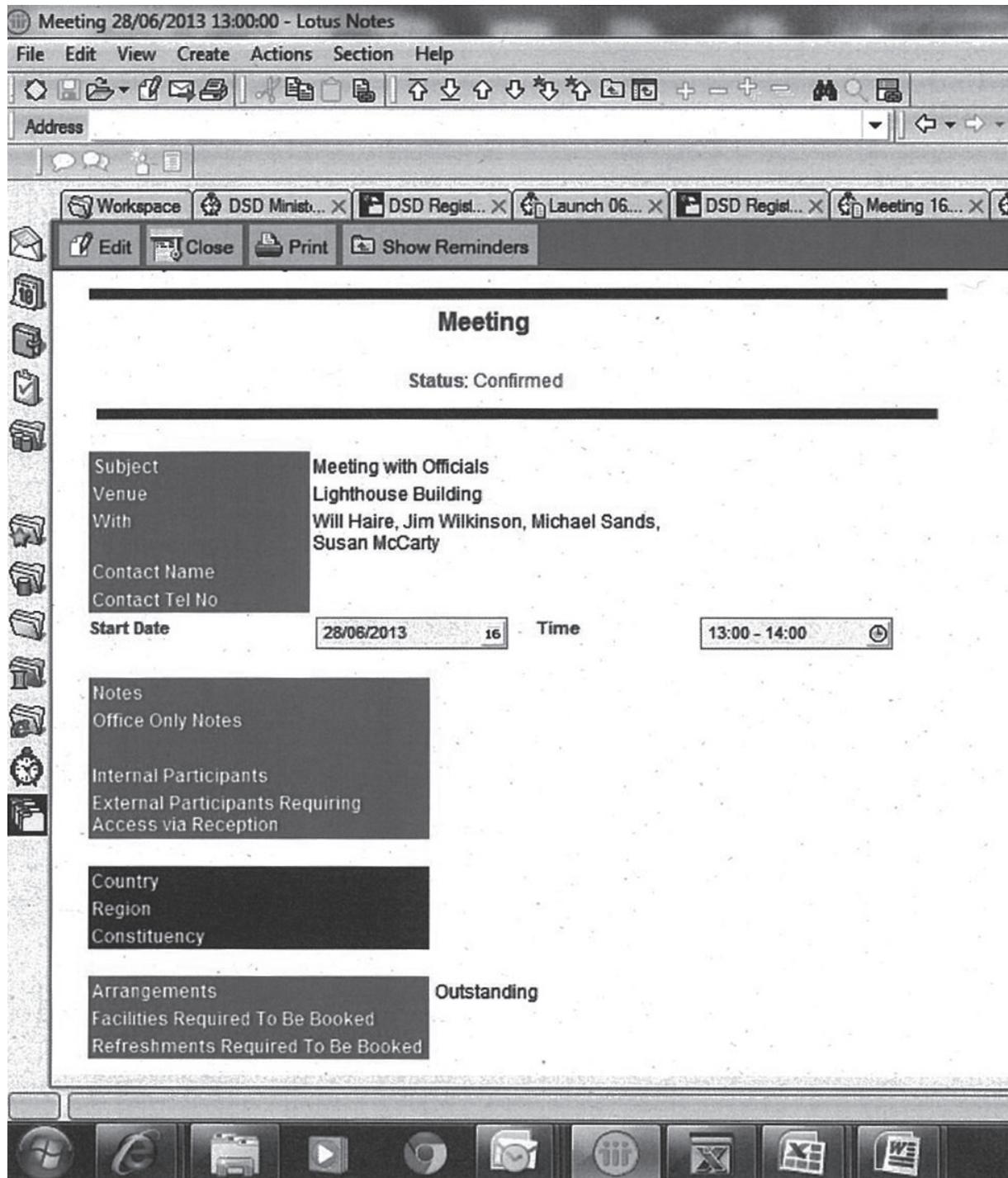
I trust this addresses the Committee's concern but if there are any further queries I would be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development

9. List of attendees at the meeting of the 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme.



10. All documentation prepared for the meeting of 28 June 2013 with the Minister to discuss the letters from the BBC in relation to the Spotlight programme. This should include all correspondence, briefing papers, notes/minutes/aide memoire (either handwritten or electronically).

10

British Broadcasting Corporation BBC NORTHERN IRELAND, BROADCASTING HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, BELFAST BT2 8HQ
Telephone +44 (0)2890 338 973 Fax +44 (0)2890 338 591



TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS
bbc.co.uk

Thursday, 27 June 2013

FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF

NELSON MCCAUSLAND
MINISTER'S OFFICE
DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
GASWORKS BUSINESS PARK
ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST, BT7 2JB

STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Minister,

I acknowledge receipt of your two letters of yesterday's date, the first of which was received by email at 14.36, just after our letter was emailed to you. Your second letter, in response to ours, was received by email at 17.16.

We will of course ensure that the relevant parts of your stated position are reflected in the programme but it seems to us that the best way for you to respond would be to take part in an on-camera interview. This is something we first proposed in our letter dated 16th November 2012, and repeated in our letter dated 7th June. We are happy to repeat that offer again now.

If you do wish to take up this offer, for production reasons, the interview would need to be recorded before the end of Friday, 28th June. May we please hear from you by no later than 5pm today?

If you require any further information, you can contact me by phoning 07767 463369, by writing to the address above, or by emailing me at chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Thornton
Producer, Spotlight

PP



From: Jim Wilkinson
Director of Housing

SUB/xxx/2013

Date: 28 June 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

SPOTLIGHT LETTER

Issue: You wish to respond to a further letter from Spotlight.

Timing: Immediate

Priority: Very Urgent

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Significant media interest

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To consider the suggested draft letter to Spotlight attached.

Detail

You received a further letter from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 which asks you to consider an on camera interview.

2. Spotlight has not responded to your letter on 26 June where you advised that you took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that you have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and you demanded that these are withdrawn.
3. The draft letter refers to copying this to the BBC NI Director. The details are

Mr Peter Johnston
Director BBC NI
BBC Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

Recommendation

4. To consider the suggested draft letter attached for issue.

JIM WILKINSON

Ext 38285

Cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Emma Murray
Chris Barry
Grainne McConnell

DRAFT RESPONSE

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

June 2013

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues, as my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. This is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, then I will not be deterred from doing so. My aim, in relation to the double glazing programme, has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards.

In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understanding of the issues to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and your focus appears to be on this one meeting (which only lasted around 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

The official record of the meeting notes at the outset that one of the attendees "advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customer" and also records that the representatives of the GGF advised that if the GGF Guidelines were followed, this could potentially result in savings estimated at the meeting as £26.8m. Indeed the Housing Executive Chief Executive also referred to their proposed review of the specification and that they hoped following Board approval to have new tenders placed and contracts in place in the Autumn. As I said above, in relation to my duty as Minister, if Turkington Holdings Ltd or any other company had asked me for a meeting I would have done so.

My focus, however, on learning of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines was to seek advice on the guidelines from my technical officials. My technical officials advised that the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its glazing specification and should benchmark its approach against that advocated by GGF. I therefore sought to progress this issue with the Housing Executive who were already reviewing their specification. The outcome of my focus in this area has culminated in the identification of estimated savings of £15.1m to the public purse. I also believe this has led to a better standard of work which minimises the disruption to tenants. Throughout this process my position and role in this has always been a matter of public record.

The current position is that, in relation to the Programme for Government target for 2012/13, 8,856 homes have been double glazed against a target of 8,600. This year's target is to complete a further 9,000. I can also confirm that the Housing Executive has taken the procurement process forward for the dedicated double glazing contract under Regulation 19 – the Restricted Procedure - of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which involved the issue of an advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. This is entirely a matter for the Housing Executive in which I have absolutely no role to play and I understand the process is still currently underway.

In my letter to you on 26 June I advised you that I took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that I have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and I demanded that these are withdrawn. To date you have failed to do this and if I do not receive a letter from you to this effect by 5pm on 1 July 2013, I will then instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this position I am also copying this letter to the Mr Peter Johnston, Director BBC NI.

Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

From: the Minister



Department for
**Social
Development**

~~5th Floor~~
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dssni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

28 June 2013

Dear Mr Thornton

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues, as my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. This is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, then I will not be deterred from doing so. My aim, in relation to the double glazing programme, has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards.



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understanding of the issues to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and your focus appears to be on this one meeting (which only lasted around 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

The official record of the meeting notes at the outset that one of the attendees "advised as representatives of the GGF there were better ways resulting in efficiencies and a better service for customer" and also records that the representatives of the GGF advised that if the GGF Guidelines were followed, this could potentially result in savings estimated at the meeting as £26.8m. Indeed the Housing Executive Chief Executive also referred to their proposed review of the specification and that they hoped following Board approval to have new tenders placed and contracts in place in the Autumn. As I said above, in relation to my duty as Minister, if Turkington Holdings Ltd or any other company had asked me for a meeting I would have done so.

My focus, however, on learning of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines was to seek advice on the guidelines from my technical officials. My technical officials advised that the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its glazing specification and should benchmark its approach against that advocated by GGF. I therefore sought to progress this issue with the Housing Executive who were already reviewing their specification. The outcome of my focus in this area has culminated in the identification of estimated savings of £15.1m to the public purse. I also believe this has led to a better standard of work which minimises the disruption to tenants. Throughout this process my position and role in this has always been a matter of public record.

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to this effect by 5pm on 1 July 2013, I will then instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this position I am also copying this letter to the Mr Peter Johnston, Director BBC NI.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

Date & Time	Server Host Name	Source	Event ID	Internal Message ID	Message ID	Recipient Address	Total Bytes	Return Path
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Message Subject								
Meeting with Minister								
General Mail Correspondence. Reference Number: GM/59/2012 : Complaint about Benefit Fraud								
Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/142/2012 : CRAIGAVON BOROUGH CONSIDERED AS A PORTAS TOWN								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/93/2012 : ANGELA CARDWELL - ESA CLAIM								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/120/2012 : REVIEW OF GAMBLING POLICY, PRACTICE AND LAW								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/97/2012 : MARY PORTAS - BANGOR CONFERENCE								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/95/2012 : ISSUE AROUND GRANTING A 5 YEAR LEASE TO COMMUNITY GROUPS LIKE CULLYBACKY								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/128/2012 : Heritage Dereliction								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/104/2012 : HOUSING BENEFIT DECISION NOTICE								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/76/2012 : CONCERNS REGARDING FUNDING FOR NEW COMMUNITY BUILDING IN BROOK STREET, COLERAINE (X-REF. COR/1355/2012)								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/88/2012 : INSPECTION OF HELM HOUSING ASSOCIATION								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/84/2012 : KILCOOLEY ALLOTMENTS, BANGOR								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/85/2012 : NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUNDING QUERY								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/89/2012 : QUERY REGARDING FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/90/2012 : NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUNDING QUERY								
CLOSING Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/144/2012 : REQUEST TO WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR 2012 QUARRY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY JOURNAL								
Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/145/2012 : JOHN LOUNN - APPLICATION FOR PARTIAL RETIREMENT								
Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/146/2012 : NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL								
Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/147/2012 : WINDOW REPLACEMENT SCHEME QUERY								
General Mail Correspondence. Reference Number: GM/59/2012 : Complaint about Benefit Fraud								

14. A copy of the submission to the Minister which accompanied the draft letter of acceptance in respect of the request from Turkington Holdings on 27 February 2012.

14.



Department for
**Social
Development**

www.dsdni.gov.uk

INV/96/2012

From: Susan McCarty
Housing, Director's Office

Date: 27 February 2012

1. Permanent Secretary
2. Nelson McCausland

**REQUEST FROM TURKINGTON HOLDINGS LTD FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS
THE INSTALLATION OF DOUBLE GLAZING IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE HOMES**

Issue: Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd, wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

Timing: Routine.

Priority: Routine.

Communications: Housing.

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: None.

Financial Implications: Not applicable.

Legislation Implications: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: Not applicable.

Executive Referral: Not required.

Recommendation: You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary/Minister letter is attached for your approval.

Detail

Ian Young, General Manager, Turkington Holdings Ltd wrote to you on 2 February 2012 regarding the draft Programme for Government target of installing double glazing in all Housing Executive properties by 2015. He would like to meet with you to discuss how his company could help with this.

2. Ian Young advises in his letter that Turkington Holdings Ltd has been involved in the glazing sector for over 30 years as manufacturers and installers in large replacement contracts. They are also active members of the Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF).
3. As you are aware the Housing Executive is working to identify any properties which still require double glazing and once this information is available, as required in the draft Programme for Government, by March 2012 it will prepare a programme for the installation of glazing to all Housing Executive homes by the end of 2015.
4. The Housing Executive advises that discussions with contractors, manufacturers and suppliers with respect to the proposed double glazing programme have been positive and they do not anticipate that capacity and provision will be problematic.

Conclusion

5. You have already agreed to meet Mr Young and a draft Private Secretary letter is attached for your approval. If you require any further information please contact me on ext 38325.

SUSAN MCCARTY

Ext: 38325

cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Norman Sleator
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

From: The Private Secretary

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Ian Young
Turkington Holdings Ltd
James Park
Mahon Road
PORTADOWN
Co Armagh
BT62 3EH

Our ref: INV/96/2012

February 2012

Thank for your letter to Minister McCausland MLA requesting a meeting with him to discuss the installation of double glazing in all Housing Executive homes by 2015.

The Minister would be pleased to meet with you and he also believes that it would be beneficial for Dr John McPeake, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive to attend also. Therefore, I would suggest that in the first instance you contact the Minister's Diary Secretary, Chris Barry, on (028) 9082 9033 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

BARBARA McCONAGHIE
Departmental Private Secretary



2nd Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Ms Claire McCanny
Assistant Assembly Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

26 February 2014

Dear Claire

SDC Inquiry Phase 1

I refer to your e-mail on 19 February 2014 in relation to the meeting on 28 June 2013.

It is difficult with the passage of time to have a clear recollection of the events on a particular day. However, it appears that the following sequence of events occurred:

- 27 June 2013 - 13.40 - Letter received from Spotlight
- 28 June 2013 - 11.55 - second draft letter forwarded to Jim Wilkinson and Michael Sands
- 28 June 2013 - 12.20 – reply from Jim Wilkinson
- 28 June 2013 - 13.00 – Meeting with Minister
- 28 June 2013 - 15.33 – Departmental Solicitor’s advice
- 28 June 2013 - 16.04 – Submission and draft letter sent to Minister
- 28 June 2013 - 16.16 – Letter issued by Private Office
- 28 June 2013 - 16.24 – Private Office copies final version to officials

In relation to the information you requested please see additional comments below.

I would be grateful if you could ask Private Office to send the diary entry for the meeting of the 28 June in a similar format to the entry for the Turkington’s meeting. That is a diary entry which includes the box for Related Documents and also shows the transaction history.

The reason for the different format is that one was a screen shot and the other was a print of the entry. I have attached the diary entry of the 28 June 2013 in a similar format as the diary entry of 16 April 2012. I have also attached the transaction history. Please note this is the only format that allows the transaction history to be printed.

I understand that you mentioned that this meeting was organised by telephone and not by email but I would be grateful if you could ask Private Office to check again to ascertain if there are any further documents.

I was in fact advising generally that meetings between Minister and officials may at times be arranged via a phone call. The Private Office does not have any further documents.

The diary entry shows that four senior officials attended this meeting. Were these the officials that were invited or were these the officials who attended. Can we have confirmation of who did actually attend this meeting? In addition to the four senior officials, were there any other representatives from Private Office and was the Minister's Special Adviser in attendance?

It is difficult with the passage of time to have a clear recollection to add anything further than what the diary entry states.

You have told me that Private Office would not have commissioned a request for a briefing/draft response to the BBC from Jim Wilkinson, but can we have an explanation as to how Jim was requested to write this letter. Are there any emails between members of the Housing Director's Office and/or Private Office/Permanent Secretary regarding this matter?

It is difficult with the passage of time to recollect the events in detail. However, the Minister had replied to a number of letters from Spotlight and the assumption is that we were advised that the Minister wished to reply to the Spotlight letter of 27 June and to discuss this on 28 June.

Please see documents attached.

I was also wondering about the briefing note prepared by Jim Wilkinson. Was this letter/submission prepared by Jim Wilkinson or some other official in the Housing Director's Office and submitted on behalf of Jim Wilkinson as was the case with other submissions? If so, can we see the original draft and corresponding emails showing that it was cleared for issue.

It is normal civil service practice that a number of officials may be involved in the drafting of letters/submission which are then cleared/approved and submitted by the lead official.

Please see documents attached. Please note the reference in the email from Jim Wilkinson to "Philip" relates to the Departmental Solicitor's Office

Was this letter/submission sent to the Minister and his Special Adviser and all the parties copied into this briefing paper- as listed at the bottom of the briefing paper. Is it possible to get copies of these emails?

The submission forwarded to you on the 17 February 2014 details on the front page that this was sent to:

1. *Stephen Brimstone*
2. *Nelson McCausland.*

The cc list is at the end of the submission.

The relevant e-mail at 16.04 is attached.

From the other submissions that were prepared for Minister there was a formal approval process before the document was issued, can I ask if there are any documents – including emails- regarding the approval process for this letter? For example, was the letter seen by Heather Cousins or Will Haire prior to being sent to Minister? Did the Minister or Stephen Brimstone approve this letter- if so were emails not circulated from Private Office to the Housing Director's office to notify them of the same?

Please see documents attached including emails at 16.04, 16.16 and 16.24

We see from previous information sent under Phase One of the Inquiry that information was collated for the Minister for the meeting of the 28 June 2013. I refer to emails sent by Karen Mills, copied to yourself, in which Karen was looking for documents including an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons and everything released to Spotlight under the FoI which the Minister wanted sight of. However, we do not have a list of the documents that were presented to the Minister at the meeting of 28 June 2013. I would be grateful if Housing Director's Office and Private Office could check again to confirm which documents

the Minister did have sight of at the meeting of 28 June 2013. I would be grateful if we could have sight of all emails regarding the collation of material for this meeting.

As I previously advised on 6 January this meeting was not about the information released under FOI requests for the Spotlight programme. The Spotlight information from NIHE was not received until 2/3 July 2013.

All information available is attached.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan McCarty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Susan McCarty

Created by Emma Murray/DSDNI on 27/06/2013 at 18:37:51

Meeting

Status: Confirmed

Subject	Meeting with Officials		
Venue	Lighthouse Building		
With	Will Haire, Jim Wilkinson, Michael Sands, Susan McCarty		
Contact Name			
Contact Tel No			
Start Date	<input type="text" value="28/06/2013"/>	Time	<input type="text" value="13:00 - 14:00"/>

Notes	
Office Only Notes	
Internal Participants	
External Participants Requiring Access via Reception	

Country	
Region	
Constituency	

Arrangements	Outstanding
Facilities Required To Be Booked	
Refreshments Required To Be Booked	

Related Documents	
--------------------------	--

Transaction History

The screenshot displays the Lotus Notes application window titled "Meeting 28/06/2013 13:00:00 - Lotus Notes". The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Create, Actions, Section, Help), a toolbar with icons for Save, Close, Print, Reminder, Show Reminders, and Mark Private, and a taskbar with several open windows including "DSD Minister's Diary 2011" and "DSD Registers 2011".

The main content area shows a meeting entry with the following details:

- Subject:** Meeting with Officials
- Venue:** Lighthouse Building
- With:** Will Haire, Jim Wilkinson, Michael Sands, Susan McCarty
- Contact Name:**
- Contact Tel No:**
- Start Date:** 28/06/2013
- Time:** 13:00 - 14:00

Additional fields include:

- Notes:** Office Only Notes
- Internal Participants:**
- External Participants Requiring Access via Reception:**
- Country:**
- Region:**
- Constituency:**
- Arrangements:** Outstanding
- Facilities Required To Be Booked:**
- Refreshments Required To Be Booked:**
- Related Documents:**

At the bottom, the **Transaction History** section is expanded, showing:

- Document Author:** Emma Murray (27/06/2013 18:37:51)
- Revision History:**

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows icons for Internet Explorer, File Explorer, Windows Media Center, Google Chrome, Mail, and the Lotus Notes icon.

DRAFT RESPONSE

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

June 2013

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to terminate its response maintenance contracts with the Red Sky Group Ltd in July 2011.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government Target in relation to the double glazing programme. I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June.

I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues, as my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. This is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, then I will not be deterred from doing so. In relation to the double glazing programme, my aim has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target, in relation to double glazing of all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards.

In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understating of the issues appears to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify my position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in NIHE properties since June 2011 and this was one meeting out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive as far back as October 2011 were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

The official record of the meeting advises that the representatives of the Glass and Glazing Federation advised me that if the GGF Guidelines were followed this would could potentially result in savings estimated at the meeting as £26.8m Indeed the Housing Executive Chief Executive also refers to their proposed review of the specification and the new tendering process.

Therefore, when I was made aware of the Glass and Glazing Federation guidelines, and on the back of my technical officials advice, I sought to progress this issue in the same way as when I became aware that the Housing Executive originally planned to

have the double glazing programme completed by 2021 and I ensured that in the programme would be completed by 2014/15.

My focus on this area has in fact culminated in the identification of estimated savings of £15.1m to the public purse. I also believe this has led to a better standard of work which minimises the disruption to tenants.

Throughout this process my position and role in this has always been a matter of public record.

The Programme for Government target committed to completed XXXX by 2014/15 and I understand the figures to date

I can also confirm that the Housing Executive has taken the procurement process forward for the dedicated double glazing contract under Regulation 19 – the Restricted Procedure - of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which involved the issue of an advert in the Official Journal of the European Union. This is a matter for the Housing Executive in which I have no role to play and I understand the process is still underway.

In my letter to you on 26 June I advised that you I take great exception to and totally reject and refute the scurrilous accusations that I have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and I demanded that these are withdrawn. To date you have failed to do this and if I do not receive a letter from you to this effect by 5pm X July 2013 I will instigate legal action in this regard. In view of this I am also copying this letter to the BBC Controller.

Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

McCarty, Susan

From: Wilkinson, Jim
Sent: 28 June 2013 12:20
To: McCarty, Susan
Cc: Sands, Michael
Subject: FW: LETTER TO SPOTLIGHT
Attachments: Further draft letter to spotlight re 27 June.DOCX; Further draft letter to spotlight re 27 June.tr5

Importance: High

Minor tweaked. This covers the course really well – has Philip seen last paragraph?

Jim

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 28 June 2013 11:55
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael
Subject: LETTER TO SPOTLIGHT
Importance: High

Second draft to consider

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

DRAFT RESPONSE

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Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

June 2013

I refer to your further letter on 27 June 2013 in connection with a proposed Spotlight programme concerning the decision of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to terminate its response maintenance contracts with the Red Sky Group Ltd in July 2011.

I believe I have already made my position very clear in relation to the various matters you have raised in your previous letters to me, along with my views in relation to the Spotlight Programme you advise is to be aired.

You do not appear to understand my role as Minister, particularly with regard to the stewardship of public funds. Nor do you recognise the work I have personally carried out to ensure the implementation of the Programme for Government target in relation to the double glazing programme, bearing in mind I took up office in May 2011 and immediately raised this issue with my officials in June 2011 and have been working on this ever since.

I meet many companies and individuals in relation to many issues, as my role as Minister is to make myself available to serve all the people of Northern Ireland. This is a key part of my role and responsibilities as Minister in order to discharge the duties of my office. If any individual or organisation raises an issue with me that I believe should be investigated, particularly where it relates to my duty in relation to the stewardship of public funds, then I will not be deterred from doing so. My aim, in relation to the double glazing programme, has always been to ensure that the Programme for Government target to double glaze all Housing Executive homes by 2015, is met whilst ensuring best value for money and meeting industry standards.

In relation to your questions and views on my meeting in April 2012 with representative of the Glass and Glazing Federation, NIHE and DSD officials, I do have strong concerns about the reliability of your information and sources and believe your analysis and understating of the issues appears to be deeply flawed.

Let me clarify the position further. I have been looking at the issue of double glazing in Housing Executive properties since June 2011 and this was one meeting (which only lasted 45 minutes) out of many meetings, discussions and correspondence in relation to this issue. Long before this meeting ever took place the Housing Executive, as far back as October 2011, were already reviewing their double glazing programme specifications and had advised that they needed to develop a revised specification and to review a new procurement approach to provide double glazing as an individual work stream.

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Deleted: I was then

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Deleted: a

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Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

DRAFT RESPONSE

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
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BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

June 2013

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Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

McCarty, Susan

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 28 June 2013 16:04
To: Brimstone, Stephen; DSD Private Office
Cc: Haire, Will; O'Connor, Sheila (DSD); Cousins, Heather; Todd, Wendy; Wilkinson, Jim; Sands, Michael; Ward, Deirdre; Murray, Emma (DSD); McConnell, Grainne; Barry, Chris (DSD)
Subject: URGENT LETTER TO BBC SPOTLIGHT
Attachments: Submission to Minister - further spotlight letter.DOCX; Submission to Minister - further spotlight letter.tr5

Importance: High

Please see attached for Minsiter

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325



From: Jim Wilkinson
Director of Housing

SUB/xxx/2013

Date: 28 June 2013

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

SPOTLIGHT LETTER

Issue: You wish to respond to a further letter from Spotlight.

Timing: Immediate

Priority: Very Urgent

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: Significant media interest

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: Not applicable.

Equality Implications: None.

Recommendation: To consider the suggested draft letter to Spotlight attached.

Detail

You received a further letter from Spotlight on 27 June 2013 which asks you to consider an on camera interview.

2. Spotlight has not responded to your letter on 26 June where you advised that you took great exception to and totally rejected and refuted the scurrilous accusations that you have repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the meeting on 16 April 2012 and you demanded that these are withdrawn.
3. The draft letter refers to copying this to the BBC NI Director. The details are

Mr Peter Johnston
Director BBC NI
BBC Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

Recommendation

4. To consider the suggested draft letter attached for issue.

JIM WILKINSON

Ext 38285

Cc Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Emma Murray
Chris Barry
Grainne McConnell

DRAFT RESPONSE

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Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
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June 2013

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Yours sincerely

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development

McCarty, Susan

From: Barry, Chris (DSD)
Sent: 28 June 2013 16:24
To: Sands, Michael; Wilkinson, Jim; McCarty, Susan; Haire, Will
Cc: Murray, Emma (DSD)
Subject: Spotlight letter
Attachments: frp10100.PDF

Folks,

Final version of letter has been issued via email and I have confirmed via telephone with Peter Johnston and Chris Thornton that they have received it. We are hand delivering a copy to the BBC now.

Regards,

Chris.

From: Barry, Chris (DSD)
Sent: 28 June 2013 16:16
To: 'chris.thornton@bbc.co.uk'
Cc: 'peter.johnston@bbc.co.uk'
Subject: Private and Confidential

Mr Thornton,

Please find attached correspondence from Minister McCausland for your attention.

Regards,

Chris.

Chris Barry | DSD Private Office | Department for Social Development
5th Floor | Lighthouse Building | Gasworks Business Park | Belfast | BT7 2JB
Contact: ✉ chris.barry@dndni.gov.uk | ☎ Tel: (028) 9082 9033 | 📠 DD: 38033

From: the Minister



Department for
**Social
Development**

5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB

Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail:
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Tel: (028) 9082 9034

Mr Chris Thornton
Producer
Spotlight
British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
Ormeau Avenue
Belfast
BT2 8HQ

28 June 2013

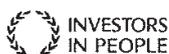
Dear Mr Thornton

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Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

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Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development



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Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
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Telephone: 028 9082 9325
Facsimile: 028 9082 9324
EMail:susan.mccarty@dsdni.gov.uk

Ms Claire McCanny
Assistant Assembly Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

26 February 2014

Dear Claire

SDC Inquiry Phase 1

Further to our meeting today and your subsequent email, I hope the following information will assist to clarify the query in relation to the meeting on 28 June 2013.

In your email you advise of the possible contradiction in evidence in respect of the purpose of the meeting on 28 June 2013 and attach a copy of the emails referred to. You advise that this appears to contradict the evidence I sent the Committee on 6 January 2014 in which I stated that the meeting was not about the Spotlight Fols but about the letter the Minister received from the BBC requesting the Minister to consider an on camera interview.

I previously advised that the emails were part of an exchange of emails between the Department and the Housing Executive following receipt of letters from Spotlight and in particular a letter from Spotlight on 26 June 2013. This letter advised that *"We also have evidence that it was the understanding of Declan Allen, who attended the meeting on behalf of the NIHE, that Messrs Young and McKeag were representing Turkingtons"*.

I verbally spoke to a junior member of my team and advised that a letter had been received from Spotlight with this reference to Declan Allen and it was not clear what this related to. I also said that I understood John McPeake had advised that he believed this reference related to information released by the Housing Executive under Freedom of Information.

I therefore asked her to email a contact in the Housing Executive, in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, about this reference and also to ask for copies of what had been released by the Housing Executive under FOI to Spotlight in order to understand the reference in the Spotlight letter.

The two references in the email on 28 June at 8.32 stating "the Minister would like sight of this" are incorrect. I can only advise that the junior member of my team misunderstood what was happening at this time. The meeting on 28 June was to discuss the letter from Spotlight on 27 June requesting an on camera interview.

The FOI information was delivered to the Department in hard copy from the Housing Executive the following week and was therefore not available for discussion on 28 June 2013. I have attached an email dated 2 July 2013 in which we were still asking the Housing Executive for the FOI information.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan McCarty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Susan McCarty

Message: DS1/13/000278025

From: [Johnston, Jim HQ](#)
To: [Mills, Karen](#)
Cc:
Sent: 2/7/2013 at 07:40
Received: 2/7/2013 at 07:40
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs

Karen,

The matter is in hand ☐ I'll update you later this morning.

Jim

From: Mills, Karen [mailto:Karen.Mills@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 02 July 2013 08:14
To: records; Johnston, Jim HQ
Subject: RE: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

In my conversation with Margaret on Friday, she indicated that the second part of the request would not be available until Monday at the earliest.

Can you check on the status and let me know how you are progressing with this? It is still a matter of some urgency.

Grateful for any assistance.

Regards

Karen Mills

Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 28 June 2013 08:32
To: 'Johnston, Jim HQ'
Cc: McCarty, Susan
Subject: TRIM: URGENT - Spotlight FOIs
Importance: High

Jim

I have another urgent request regarding the Spotlight FOIs.

1. Very Urgent - would it be possible for you to track down an email from Declan Allen regarding Turkingtons (or Glass & Glazing Federation)? I think the date is on or around 16 April 2012. The Minister would like sight of this.

2. Urgent - could you provide copy of everything that you have released to Spotlight under FOI □ The Minister would also like sight of this.

Grateful if you can get back to me this morning (11am is the time of the meeting).

Regards

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel: 028 9082 9352

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

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Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3XX

4 March 2014

Dear Kevin

Social Development Committee Inquiry – Review of Evidence Phase 1

I refer to your letter dated 23 January 2014 and my subsequent reply dated 17 February 2014 with the further information you requested.

An additional document has been located in the Private Office in relation to your request for;

“A copy of all documentation related to the list of companies with an interest in specifications that had requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the double glazing contracts. This will include the initial request, all correspondence and briefing notes provided to the Minister in relation to the requests and the response from the Department/Minister in respect of these requests.”

This document is now attached and relates to the decision to agree to the request for a meeting from Dr W McCrea MP in relation to SuperSeal Windows.

I apologise that this was not previously included.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan McCarty', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Susan McCarty

COR / INV / GM / IOF 400

SPECIAL ADVISER Agree to meeting 5/3 16/07

MINISTER'S RESPONSE

- 1. Approved
- 2. Noted
- 3. Meeting to be arranged
- 4. Further information requested

Additional Comments

Minister please advise
if you would like to meet
with Mr McCrea in light of
the further info rec'd from
him.

Signed:

Dated:

.....



Level 4
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

Tel: 028 90829 030
Email: Billy.Crawford@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Social Development Committee Clerk
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

26 June 2014

Dear Kevin

**Inquiry into Allegations, Arising from a BBC NI Spotlight Programme Aired on 3 July,
of Impropriety or Irregularity Relating to NIHE Managed Contracts and Consideration
of any Resulting Action**

I refer your letters dated 24 June 2014 to Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development, Stephen Brimstone, Will Haire and Barbara McConaghie enclosing a copy of the Committee for Social Development's report in relation to the above Inquiry. In your letter you ask for comments to be provided by 12 noon on 2 July 2014.

We believe it is inappropriate and unfair for the Committee to seek comments on this report when we have not had sight of all the evidence that has been presented to the Committee. For example, paragraph 92 refers to "Mr Trevor Turkington's written evidence" which we have not had sight of. Therefore, in light of legal advice we have received, and in accordance with fairness and the principles of natural justice, the Committee needs to provide this evidence and any other evidence presented to the Committee which we have not yet seen. On receipt of full disclosure of any evidence we have not yet seen, and following due consideration of this, we will then be in a position to provide comments on the report.

I would also seek confirmation from you that the Committee has no intention of publishing this report until the individuals who it deemed may be adversely affected by its findings have had sight of all the evidence and due time to consider this before forwarding any comments to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy Crawford".

Billy Crawford

Committee for Social Development

Room 284
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

Our Ref: CSD/022/2013/2/CMcC

Mr Billy Crawford
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

26 June 2014

Dear Billy,

Inquiry into Allegations, Arising from a BBC NI Spotlight Programme Aired on 3 July, of Impropriety or Irregularity Relating to NIHE Managed Contracts and Consideration of any Resulting Action

I refer to your letter of 26 June 2014 regarding the Committee's request for comments on the report in relation to Phase One of the above Inquiry.

The vast majority of the written evidence which the Committee reviewed in respect of Phase One came from the Department. There are a small number of written submissions which the Committee received which did not come from the Department and these are attached for your reference. These include written submissions from Turkington Holdings Ltd and the Glass and Glazing Federation.

The remainder of the evidence relating to Phase One came from either Assembly Questions or oral evidence sessions. The Assembly Questions and minutes of evidence relating to the relevant oral evidence sessions can be accessed from the NI Assembly website: www.niassembly.gov.uk

In relation to your reference to 'due time' I can only reiterate that the Committee decided that it wished to receive responses from those who may be deemed adversely affected by the report in advance of next week's meeting. These responses will be included in the report. It is expected that the Committee will agree the report to be printed at next week's meeting and embargoed until the date of debate in the Assembly.

I will bring your letter to the attention of the Chair and members.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Pelan

Dr Kevin Pelan

Clerk, Committee for Social Development



Level 4
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

Tel: 028 90829 030
Email: Billy.Crawford@dsdni.gov.uk

Dr Kevin Pelan
Social Development Committee Clerk
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

26 June 2014

Dear Kevin

**Inquiry into Allegations, Arising from a BBC NI Spotlight Programme Aired on 3 July,
of Impropriety or Irregularity Relating to NIHE Managed Contracts and Consideration
of any Resulting Action**

Thank you for your letter dated 26 June 2014 forwarding written evidence that we had not previously had sight of.

I note from your letter that the Committee is expected to agree at next week's meeting that the report will be printed and embargoed until the date of debate in the Assembly. Therefore any representations from the individuals who the Committee deemed may be adversely affected by its findings will not change the content of the report, which will not be published until September at the earliest. Our legal advice is that this is not consistent with the approach that a public inquiry would take. The Department therefore asks the Committee to confirm that it will give due consideration to the representations from the Department as to the evidence in the report and its analysis, and where the Committee is satisfied that relevant evidence has been omitted or that criticisms made in the draft report are not justified, the Committee will then make appropriate amendments to its report.

Taking account of this and, in order to consider the additional written evidence you have provided and our need now to review the transcripts of the Inquiry to date, we will require an extension to the deadline to Friday 11 July 2014 for the comments that you will add to your report

We also note that whilst you were advised on 23 June 2014 that Mr Michael Sands had returned to work, he has not been forwarded a copy of the report, in which he is cited, for comments. We will therefore ensure that a copy is provided to Mr Sands to consider in line with your letter dated 24 June 2014.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy Crawford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Billy Crawford

Committee for Social Development

Room 284
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

Our Ref: CSD/2013/2/SK

Mr Billy Crawford
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

27 June 2014

Dear Billy,

**Inquiry into Allegations, Arising from a BBC NI Spotlight Programme Aired on 3 July,
of Impropriety or Irregularity Relating to NIHE Managed Contracts and Consideration
of any Resulting Action**

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2014 seeking an extension to respond to the
Committee's report. Your letter has been noted and forwarded to the Committee members.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Pelan

Dr Kevin Pelan

Clerk, Committee for Social Development

Committee for Social Development

Room 284
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Email: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9052 1864
Fax: 028 9052 1667

Our Ref:CSD/2013/2/CMcC

Mr Billy Crawford
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

3 July 2014

Dear Billy,

Inquiry into Allegations, Arising from a BBC NI Spotlight Programme Aired on 3 July, of Impropriety or Irregularity Relating to NIHE Managed Contracts and Consideration of any Resulting Action

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2014 seeking an extension to respond to the Committee's report.

Your letter was considered by the Committee at its meeting of 3 July 2014. The Committee noted your request for an extension however following division, the Committee agreed that it would not grant the extension requested.

The Committee did agree that it would accept any response submitted by the Department as an addendum to the Committee Report. The response should be submitted no later than 12 noon on 11 July 2014.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Pelan

Dr Kevin Pelan

Clerk, Committee for Social Development

British Broadcasting Corporation Second Floor, Broadcast Centre, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TP



Legal Division

Our ref : LG/Legal/BC2A3
Your ref : CSD/022/2013

Direct Line: 020 8008 1944
Fax: 020 8008 2210

Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk, Committee for Social
Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

24 October 2013

BY EMAIL: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk

Dear Dr Pelan

Inquiry by Committee for Social Development into allegations of impropriety surrounding NIHE contracts

Your letter dated 14 October 2013, addressed to Mr Chris Thornton at BBC Spotlight, has been passed to this department for attention.

We are currently taking our client's instructions and shall revert to you as soon as possible. In the meantime, we should be grateful if you would address any future correspondence on this matter to BBC Litigation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BBC Litigation'.

BBC Litigation Department

Second Floor, Broadcast Centre, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TP



Legal Division

Our ref : LG/Legal/BC2A3
Your ref : CSD/022/2013

Direct Line: 020 8008 1944
Fax: 020 8008 2210

Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk, Committee for Social
Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

20 November 2013

BY EMAIL: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk

Dear Dr Pelan

Inquiry by Committee for Social Development into allegations of impropriety surrounding NIHE contracts

We write further to your letter of 14 October 2013 addressed to Mr Chris Thornton at BBC Spotlight and our letter to you of the 24 October 2013.

Request for material:

Your letter refers to the Inquiry set up by the Committee for Social Development in relation to allegations regarding NIHE contracts and sets out the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry agreed at a meeting on 4 July 2013 and formally ratified on 3rd October. In particular, your letter states that the Committee is of the opinion that documents held by the Spotlight team in its research for the programme are "of importance" to the Inquiry and ends with a request that Mr Thornton make available to the Committee any documents held "which relate to the Inquiry".

Spotlight's investigation into the award, administration and maintenance of NIHE contracts and the conduct of government/public officials raises issues of significant public importance and the BBC welcomes the Committee's interest in the issues raised by the programme. As a matter of principle, and to the extent possible, the BBC would wish to comply with any reasonable request for assistance. However, it is also a matter of considerable public interest that the BBC is free to exercise its Convention rights of freedom of expression without undue interference. For this reason, any request for BBC journalistic material by a third party is necessarily, and understandably subject to the closest scrutiny.

Statutory Notice:

As you will be aware, the Committee's powers to call for documents is derived from section 44 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and by virtue of section 44(6), Standing Order 48(2).

Section 44(7) sets out that the Presiding Officer shall give the person in question notice in writing specifying:

- (b) the documents, or types of documents, which he is to produce, the date by which he is to produce them and the particular matters to which they are to relate.

Regrettably, the letter sent to the BBC on 14 October 2013 does not comply with the requirements of section 44(7) and is therefore invalid. Accordingly, the BBC is not in a position to respond to the request at this time.

The substantive merits of any re-drafted request in terms which are consistent with the above will be considered in due course. In anticipation of such a request we would make the following, additional observations:

Firstly, until such time as the Inquiry has heard all the evidence and exhausted all other avenues for obtaining relevant documents, a request for materials directed at the BBC would be premature. The Committee will be in a better position to specify what type of documents they need from the BBC once they know whether that material can be obtained elsewhere or indeed whether, on the basis of other evidence heard, a particular document or matter continues to be relevant or is no longer pertinent.

Secondly, Committee members will be aware from the content of the programme, this was a lengthy investigation by the BBC. As with most investigations of this nature, it raises a number of difficult issues relating to confidential material and, in particular, the need to protect confidential journalistic sources. Section 44(9) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 expressly provides that a person is not obliged to answer any question or produce any document which he would be entitled to refuse to answer or produce in proceedings in a court in Northern Ireland. Insofar as any reformulated request for evidence/documents encroaches on any issues of this nature, then the BBC would need to instruct Leading Counsel to make representations in this regard.

The BBC fully appreciates the important duty that the Committee is seeking to discharge in relation to this Inquiry and is aware of the role which it has played in bringing this matter to the public's attention. We would therefore wish to reiterate that to the extent that we are able, we will do what we can to assist with any reasonable request for documents. However, as we trust the Committee will appreciate, such a request must be framed in clearly defined terms, and in ways that are consistent with relevant legislation. An invalid request which is too widely drawn, and which is lacking in specificity, has a chilling effect on the BBC's ability to exercise its convention rights of freedom of expression – rights which are fundamental to the maintenance, and effective operation of, an open and free press.

Once again, we would like to assure the Committee that the BBC takes this request extremely seriously and that it has and continues to have our urgent attention.

Yours sincerely



BBC Litigation Department

Goodall, Roisin

From: McCarty, Susan
Sent: 26 April 2012 10:54
To: McCarty, Susan
Subject: FW: Deadline 10/5/12 - Double Glazing (SUB/429/2012)

Susan McCarty
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Phone x 38325/90829325

From: Mills, Karen
Sent: 26 April 2012 07:56
To: Owens, Michael
Cc: Bowsie, Margaret
Subject: FW: Deadline 10/5/12 - Double Glazing (SUB/429/2012)

Michael

Please record the above commission to Michael Sands and not Finance & Standards.

Thanks

Karen Mills
Director's Office
Housing Division
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JB
Tel. 028 9082 9352

From: Sands, Michael
Sent: 26 April 2012 07:54
To: Carragher, Damien; Housing, Director's Office; Owens, Michael
Cc: McKibben, Deborah; McFarlane, Janet; Walls, Wilma; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen; Wilkinson, Jim; Malcolm, David
Subject: RE: Deadline 10/5/12 - Double Glazing (SUB/429/2012)

Damien,

I agree with you, this is not purely about money but NIHE's specification, procurement and contract management. I brought this to Will's attention yesterday and it will need careful handling. Norman Sleator has already provided advice to me on NIHE's spec for installation. I will deal with this.

From: Carragher, Damien
Sent: 26 April 2012 07:45
To: Housing, Director's Office; Owens, Michael
Cc: McKibben, Deborah; McFarlane, Janet; Walls, Wilma; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen; Sands, Michael
Subject: RE: Deadline 10/5/12 - Double Glazing (SUB/429/2012)

I do not believe this is for my side. This is a housing management matter which doesn't sit directly with any branch in Housing Division.

The significance of the Minister's instructions, in my opinion, will require liaison between Jim and John McPeake.

Damien
Extn 38266
DD 028 9082 9266

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 26 April 2012 07:38
To: Carragher, Damien; Owens, Michael
Cc: McKibben, Deborah; McFarlane, Janet; Walls, Wilma; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: Deadline 10/5/12 - Double Glazing (SUB/429/2012)

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the Mail database.

2. Damien

i) One for your section. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-1523

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills, Ciara Dodds & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: McConaghie, Barbara
Sent: 25 April 2012 16:52
To: Wilkinson, Jim
Cc: Cousins, Heather; Haire, Will; Housing, Director's Office; DSD Private Office; McShane, Rose
Subject: Double Glazing

Jim

In respect of Sub 429/2012 the Minister has further considered the issue of 'double glazing' as outlined in that submission and has asked for the following:

1. The Minister wants to see a timetable for putting a tender to the market for the remaining stock still to be double glazed.

2. This will mean all further double glazing to be held until the new contract is in place; no more units to be started unless already so advanced that they cannot be stopped.
3. The Minister wants the issue of specification resolved in time to be included in the tender to make sure the right units and the right work is being procured.

The Minister believes the current method is not delivering VFM and does not want to see further money committed until a better contract can be put in place that will deliver a cheaper unit cost with the right specification for what exactly is required. If this has funding issues for NIHE this year then priority should be given to heating schemes, bringing them forward from future years if necessary. He also has concerns regarding the quality of the installation and wants to ensure that future work meets appropriate standards.

Grateful if you can arrange to provide the Minister with the necessary timetable and assurance in relation to the above.

Many Thanks
Barbara



From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 27 April 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

NIHE — DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATION

Issue: Further to Sub 429/2012 Minister has requested:-

1. **Timetable for procurement exercise for remaining stock still to have double glazing installed;**
2. **All further double glazing to be held until the new contract is in place; and**
3. **NIHE's review of their specification for window installations to be resolved in time for inclusion in new tender.**

Timing: Immediate

Priority: Housing Important

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable

Presentational Issues: Could be presentational issues if NIHE have told tenants that their houses will have double glazing installed this year. Contractors could complain through the Press if Housing Executive have already informed them that there is considerable additional work to come to them this year.

Financial Implications: Considerable concerns over current NIHE window installation specifications not delivering VFM. Industry standard spec could save considerable £m's. New Procurement exercise for 40,000 window installations would produce very competitive tendering prices and thus present further savings.

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you issue the attached draft letter to John McPeake holding any further window replacement installations until the new contract is in place. The only exception will be where a contractor has already ordered windows from a supplier for installation.

Detail

The Housing Executive presently uses four Egan type Contractors to carry out window installations through its External Cyclical Maintenance Programmes.

The contractors are:- PK Murphy; Bann; Mascott; and Dixons. These current Egan contracts are due to expire in January 2013.

2. The proposed double glazing programme is now fully funded and is scheduled for completion as follows:-

2012/13	9,350 homes	£25.4m
2013/14 }		
2014/15 }	30,000	£69m
Totals	39,350	£94.4m

3. For the current year commencing 1 April 2012 the contractors, at 26 April 2012, have already started installations in 412 homes, and officials were informed yesterday that the Housing Executive plans to have all 9,350 completed or started by 30 September 2012.
4. The timetable for putting a new procurement exercise to the market is:-

Action	Date
Complete Procurement Strategy	13 th June 2012
Board Approval	27 th June 2012
Tender Documentation Completed	20 th July 2012
Issue OJEU Notice	30 th July 2012
Return Date	10 th September 2012
Board Award Approval	31 st October 2012
Issue Letters of Intent and Standstill period commences	1 st November 2012
Framework Commencement	1 st Dec 2012

The current NIHE thinking is that they will put in place a framework agreement to which they will appoint multiple contractors. As schemes then emerge these contractors will carry out the work. The framework commencement date is therefore the date from which they can commence issuing works orders to those successful contractors.

5. There is considerable concern around the VFM of the Housing Executive's current specification to contractors for window installation. Particular concern centres around their requirement for:-

- (a) Removal of plaster around new window frame requiring re-plastering;
- (b) Damage to tenants' decoration caused by (a) above, requiring redecoration grant to be paid to tenants; and
- (c) NIHE's requirement to have 'Hotel' type hinges installed at 5 x times the cost of industry standard hinges to allow tenants to clean both sides of the window from within their home without the need for ladders or professional window cleaners.

6. With regard to 5(a) above the estimated cost saving of NOT having to remove and replace the existing plaster around the window frames is £180 per house.

With regard to 5(b) above the estimated cost saving of NOT having to pay out redecoration grants is between £424 and £770 say average of £597 per house.

With regard to 5(c) we await further information from the Housing Executive re lowering the spec for hinges so estimated savings are not possible at this time.

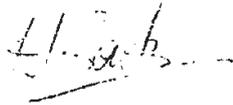
Nevertheless, taking 5(a) and (b) together there is a potential saving of $£180 + £597 = £777$ per house $\times 39,350$ houses = £30.6m.

7. We have been advised by our professional colleagues in our Housing Advisory Unit that the Glass and Glazing Federations (GGF) guidelines i.e. 'The Good Practice Guide for the Installation of Replacement Windows and Doors' describes, amongst other things, removal techniques for framed windows and doors and emphasises, in a number of places, that it is good practice to 'minimise disturbance and damage to decoration'. This damage limitation approach advocated by GGF appears to be less destructive than what is understood to be the Housing Executive requirement of cutting away the plaster reveals (thus creating the need to redecorate) and to be less expensive. It would be the experience of the architectural staff in Housing Advisory Unit that the techniques outlined by the GGF are those used by many window installers throughout NI.
8. Housing Advisory advice is that the aggregated costs of the double glazing programme and the associated potential for economies of scale are significant.
9. In view of the above the Housing Executive should be asked to rigorously review its entire glazing specification, approach to removal/installation and procurement strategy in order to offer opportunities to enterprises of all sizes to bid and to ultimately deliver best VFM. Until this review is completed all further double glazing installations should be held until the new contract is in place in January 2013 which should include any revised specification. The only exception to this would be where a contractor has an order with a supplier in place and any cancellation of the contract would mean nugatory expenditure.
10. We firmly believe that the current Housing Executive specification for window installation is not delivering VFM and we would not want to see any further funding committed until a better specification is established and a new contract can be put in place. If this has funding issues for the

Housing Executive then priority should be given to advancing the Heating Replacement Programme to enable the delivery of replacement Room Heater and Economy 7 systems as part of the Fuel Poverty Initiative.

Conclusion

11. That you write to John McPeake along the lines of the attached draft. I am of course available to discuss.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell

Dr John McPeake
Chief Executive
NI Housing Executive
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

Dear

DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATION PROGRAMME

Officials have been looking at the Housing Executive's specification for window replacement across your stock and I am concerned that the current Housing Executive specification for window installations is not delivering best VFM.

In view of this I would ask you to rigorously review your entire glazing specification especially the requirement to remove and re-plaster around frames thus necessitating payment of redecoration grants and the standards set down for hinges and handles, would industry standard be sufficient to meet tenants' requirements?

Until the review is completed all further double glazing installations should be held until the new contract provisions, to include any revised specifications, can be put in place. The only exception to this would be where a current Egan Contractor has a contract placed with a supplier for delivery of frames and any cancellation would mean nugatory expenditure.

This holding of window installations should create funding issues and you should then give priority to advancing your Heating Replacement Programme to enable

the delivery of replacement Room Heater and Economy 7 systems as part of the Fuel Poverty initiative.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND
Minister for Social Development



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dspdni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

**Dr John McPeake
Chief Executive
NI Housing Executive
2 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8PB**

Our ref: SUB/465/2012

30 April 2012

Dear John

DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATION PROGRAMME

Officials have been looking at the Housing Executive's specification for window replacement across your stock and I am concerned that the current Housing Executive specification for window installations is not delivering best VFM.

In view of this I would ask you to rigorously review your entire glazing specification especially the requirement to remove and re-plaster around frames thus necessitating payment of redecoration grants and the standards set down for hinges and handles, would industry standard be sufficient to meet tenants' requirements?

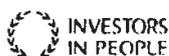
Until the review is completed all further double glazing installations should be held until the new contract provisions, to include any revised specifications, can be put in place. The only exception to this would be where a current Egan Contractor has a contract placed with a supplier for delivery of frames and any cancellation would mean nugatory expenditure.

This holding of window installations should create funding issues and you should then give priority to advancing your Heating Replacement Programme to enable the delivery of replacement Room Heater and Economy 7 systems as part of the Fuel Poverty initiative.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities



From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

COR/399/2012

Date: 21 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVIEW OF NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING SPECIFICATIONS

Issue: Letter from W. Montgomery Consultancy re your concerns about windows and installation.

Timing: 21 May 2012

Priority: Routine

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: **That you reply to Mr Montgomery along the lines
of the attached draft.**

Detail

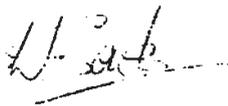
William Montgomery of W. Montgomery Consultancy (Quality Standards and Specification Management (Building)) has written to you about manufacturers who have invested heavily to ensure that the product they supply is of the highest quality and in full compliance with the requirements of the Housing Executive Specification.

2. Mr Montgomery states that he, while then working for the Housing Executive, carried out the initial research on the current NIHE specification and gathered facts and visited local authorities in Scotland, had discussions with manufacturers and installers to arrive at the current specification. It would appear therefore that the current specification is largely his recommendation.
3. Mr Montgomery does accept that if the current NIHE requirement to remove plaster from all reveals was brought into line with the Glass and Glazing Federation Good Practice Guide for the Installations of Windows and Doors, recent costing would indicate an average saving of £97 [his figures] per dwelling and result in little or no disruption to tenants' decoration and greatly reduce the time on the installation process. This would then lead to a significant reduction of the redecoration/disruption grant allowance per dwelling.
4. Therefore, while he believes that the window frames, as recommended by him while in the employ of NIHE, are excellent value for money they could produce some savings if the specification was brought into line with current manufacturers and installation guidelines.

5. Mr Montgomery goes on to congratulate the Minister for the promptness with which he acted in seeking to protect the public purse but believes that you have been given misleading information about the hinges, which were his recommendation.

Recommendation

6. That you reply to Mr Montgomery along the lines of the attached draft.



MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Housing Director's Office

Mr W Montgomery
W Montgomery Consultancy
18 Carshaulton Road
DONAGHADEE
Co Down
BT21 0QB

Dear Mr Montgomery

Thank you for your letter of support re my promptness in seeking to protect the public purse by eliminating any unnecessary expenditure in the current Housing Executive specification for frames and installation of double glazing.

I have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review the current NIHE specification. As you highlight and support in your letter I am particularly concerned about the requirement to remove and re-plaster around frames which necessitates the payment of redecoration grants to tenants. There are significant savings to be made if the current specification, on this alone, is amended.

While I await the NIHE's review I have agreed the category groups and schemes that should proceed and the Housing Executive will write to all contractors to confirm the position.

Yours sincerely

NELSON McCAUSLAND
Minister for Social Development



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 2JB**

**Fax: (028) 9082 9548
e-mail: private.office@dadni.gov.uk**

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

**Mr William Montgomery
W Montgomery Consultancy
18 Carshaulton Road
DONAGHADEE
Co Down
BT21 0QB**

Our ref: COR/399/2012

23 May 2012

Dear Mr Montgomery

Thank you for your letter of support re my promptness in seeking to protect the public purse by eliminating any unnecessary expenditure in the current Housing Executive specification for frames and installation of double glazing.

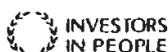
I have written to the Housing Executive's Chief Executive asking him to rigorously and urgently review the current NIHE specification. As you highlight and support in your letter I am particularly concerned about the requirement to remove and re-plaster around frames which necessitates the payment of redecoration grants to tenants. There are significant savings to be made if the current specification, on this alone, is amended.

While I await the NIHE's review I have agreed the category groups and schemes that should proceed and the Housing Executive will write to all contractors to confirm the position.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

Goodall, Roisin

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 18 May 2012 13:24
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; McCarty, Susan; Goodall, Roisin; Best, Christine; Mills, Karen; Mills, Karen
Subject: deadline 7/6/12 - COR/399/2012 - William Montgomery - Concerns expressed regarding the 'Current process used by the Housing Executive Contractors' as being 'Extremely & unnecessarily expensive'
Attachments: FW Letter to Minister from Window Manufacturing Group.msg; COR 399 2012 - William Montgomery - Concerns expressed regarding the Current process used by the Housing Executive Contractors as being Extremely & unnecessarily expensive.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr database.

2. Michael

i) One for you. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5346

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: ellen.corry@dssni.gov.uk [<mailto:ellen.corry@dssni.gov.uk>]
Sent: 18 May 2012 11:53
To: Wilkinson, Jim; Best, Christine; McCarty, Susan
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Ciara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dssni.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael; Housing, Director's Office
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/399/2012 : WILLIAM MONTGOMERY CONCERNS EXPRESSED REGARDING THE 'CURRENT PROCESS USED BY THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE CONTRACTORS' AS BEING 'EXTREMELY & UNNECESSARILY EXPENSIVE'

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/399/2012
Raised By: William Montgomery

Subject: WILLIAM MONTGOMERY CONCERNS EXPRESSED REGARDING THE 'CURRENT PROCESS USED BY THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE CONTRACTORS' AS BEING 'EXTREMELY & UNNECESSARILY EXPENSIVE'

Referred To: WILKINSON JIM (DSD)

Date Referred: 18/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and a draft reply for signature by the Private Secretary.

To be with Private Office not later than 07/06/2012 before Noon

For further information etc. contact :

**Ellen Corry (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38060**

**Copied To For Information:
General CC List
Housing Directors Office**

DS1/12/000233053

Page 1 of 4

Message: DS1/12/000233053

From: McGrugan, Samuel
To: McCarty, Susan, Goodall, Roisin
Cc:
Sent: 20/06/2012 at 09:21
Received: 20/06/2012 at 09:21
Subject: FW: 20120620 infhea Amended supplementary (ii) MB2490 Committee for Social Development re Double Glazing Installation

For information.

Sam

From: McGrath, Bill [mailto:Bill.McGrath@NIHE.GOV.UK]
 Sent: 20 June 2012 10:21
 To: McGrugan, Samuel
 Cc: Mason, Wenda; Shields, Rosemary
 Subject: 20120620 infhea Amended supplementary (ii) MB2490 Committee for Social Development re Double Glazing Installation
 Sensitivity: Confidential

Sam

Apologies for the delay in responding. I referred your additional query to the Policy & Standards unit, in our Housing & Regeneration Division who advised as follows.

The Housing Executive initially responded to the Minister's remarks regarding double glazing installation by examining all the components of windows and our installation procedures. A series of internal meetings were held and these led to the formulation of the broad basis for our revised approach. Although there was no detailed review or economic appraisal to support the revised specification, there was a critical examination of the specification and decisions taken with regard to this issue.

In terms of the specific issues raised, see comments below:

1. Window Style
 - a. The decision was taken to move to casement style windows to align with the private sector and also to widen out the supply base. All our fully reversible windows for upwards on 6 years were sourced from only 2 suppliers coupled with only 1 hinge supplier

2. Energy Performance
 - a. Existing specification and from 2006 reflected a highly efficient double-glazed window - better known as a "B" Rating; as of now Building Regulations only call for a "E" Rated Window. We took the decision to move to the ultimate in energy efficiency, namely an "A" Rated window to reflect the proposed changes in

file:///C:/Documents and Settings/Aduffy - All user Settings/Temporary Internet Files/OL... 22/01/2012

DS1/12/000233053

Page 2 of 4

the new Building Regulations scheduled for issuance in October 2012 - they will increase their standards to a "C" Rated window (as a minimum)

3. Hinge Type

a. As mentioned above, our fully reversible window was serviced by a high quality hinge from one supplier. It offered full compliance with British Standards and importantly had the essential features of easy clean, egress and child restriction. It was always perceived as a costly component despite having a "zero maintenance" proven record. On the back of this, the decision was taken to align with the "private sector" and a lesser hinge option again to widen the supplier base and reduce costs.

4. Current Guidance under the British Standards & Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) Document

- a. Our Code of Practice for the survey and installation of windows was largely aligned to the British Standards. The standards applied to windows through a "performance specification" offered compliance.
- b. Our installation procedure, albeit invasive in terms of reveals was undertaken for many years resulting in widespread payment of redecoration grants. A new / revised protocol has been developed and issued that minimises damage to the reveals and will result in significant savings. This new approach is supported by both the respective British Standard and GGF Document/ Code of Practice.

5. Installation Method

a. Again - installation aligned to that stated in British Standard and GGF Code of Practice; windows fitting more akin now to private sector procedure and within 1 day; the use of polyurethane foam is now permitted which addresses weather-tightness around windows very quickly.

Our analysis has indicated that the changes with regards to the components used could save us some £m (over the CSR period) and there are greater potential savings from the change in fitting method. It was also our expectation that creating a dedicated procurement could also generate at least 20% further savings, but this would depend on market response.

I hope that this information is useful.

Regards,

Bill McGrath,
Central Information

DS1/12/000233053

Page 3 of 4

* bill.mcgrath@nihe.gov.uk
(02890 318719

From: Shields, Rosemary (mailto:Rosemary.Shields@dssni.gov.uk)
Sent: 15 June 2012 13:36
To: McGrath, Bill
Cc: Mason, Wenda
Subject: FW: MB2490 Supplementary Committee for Social Development re Double Glazing Installation
Sensitivity: Private

Bill

Thanks for this but it does not answer the query on the terms of reference. We really need some narrative as what was provided is only headings.

Rosemary

The terms of reference for the review were as follows:

Window style
Energy performance
Hinge type
Current guidance and recommendations under British standards and Glass and Glazing Federation Code of Practice
Installation method.

From: McGrath, Bill (mailto:Bill.McGrath@NIHE.GOV.UK)
Sent: 15 June 2012 11:05
To: Shields, Rosemary
Cc: Mason, Wenda
Subject: MB2490 Supplementary Committee for Social Development re Double Glazing Installation
Sensitivity: Private

Rosemary

Please see attached issued by our Chief Executive's Office to the Minister regarding Double Glazing Installation. I trust that this addresses the issues you raised.

Regards

DS1/12/000233053

Page 4 of 4

Bill McGrath,
Central Information

* bill.mcgrath@nihe.gov.uk
(02890 318719

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

***** IMPORTANT MESSAGE *****

The contents of this email from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive do not represent the expressed view of the Housing Executive unless that is clearly stated. It is intended only for the person(s) to whom it is addressed and is confidential. The Housing Executive does not accept any liability whatsoever for its contents (including attachments), usage or onward transmission. It may also be legally privileged and subject to internal monitoring.

Housing

Chief Executive
Dr John McPeake

2 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8PB

Mr Nelson McCausland MLA
Minister for Social Development
5th Floor, Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

15th June 2012

Dear Minister

Further to your letter of the 30th April 2012, regarding the double glazing installation programme, I am now in a position to respond fully to the issues you raised.

As you know, we had already begun a review of our specification for double glazing in anticipation of procuring a dedicated Framework Contract for this work and our Policy & Standards section has now completed its work, including an assessment of the fitting method which you helpfully highlighted in your letter.

We have produced a revised window specification for low rise stock with a new protocol for installation of windows and treatment of reveals and these proposals were presented to our Board on the 30th May 2012.

The Board were asked to consider and approve the following revisions:

1. Uplift energy performance standards of our windows to achieve a WER "A" Rating. This increase will improve energy efficiency by at least 6% and is justified because of the significant fuel poverty issue faced by tenants.
2. Move to Top & Side Hung Casement Style Windows utilising stainless steel friction stays / hinges with egress, easy clean, child safety restriction features and opening sash weight capabilities of up to 50kg in our Traditional Stock/Low Rise (1-3 storeys). This change will apply to the vast majority of the stock.
3. Retain existing Top Swing Fully Reversible Style Windows utilising galvanised fully reversible hinges with egress, easy clean, integral restriction and opening sash capabilities of up to 60kg in our Medium & High Rise (4-20 storeys).



Telephone 028 9031 8720 Fax 028 9043 9803
Typetalk no: 18001 03448 920 900 Email: john.mcpeake@nihe.gov.uk



This approach will apply to a small percentage of dwellings, but is justified because of the particular problems of higher rise dwellings and is consistent with the practices of other major social landlords with higher rise dwellings.

4. Introduce a new Code of Practice for Survey & Installation of Windows to significantly limit damage to existing reveals, introduce PVC-u trims as internal linings and promote a whole house window installation as a one day operation. This is consistent with the approach detailed in the Glass and Glazing Federation Code of Practice.
5. Removal of payment of redecoration grants in the majority of cases and only allow such payment in exceptional circumstances.

The revised specification will apply to the new procurement, but we have concluded that it would be appropriate to apply the revised Code of Practice for Survey and Installation to schemes initiated within the current planned maintenance contract. Thus, since the Board meeting we have worked to clarify the instructions required to give effect to the new installation protocol. This revised Code of Practice has now been issued to the current Framework Contractors and they have been instructed to comply with these revised installation requirements with immediate effect.

I can confirm that, following earlier correspondence with your officials, we have restricted the number of double glazing schemes this year to those where orders had been placed with the supply chain or with the contractor.

Further, I confirm that we have taken steps to increase the heating programme to compensate for the reduction in double glazing activity in the current year.

In terms of moving forward with the dedicated procurement, it is our intention to communicate the changes in the specification in order that contractors/suppliers can manage their own activities and stock holding. Clearly, there is no guarantee that the existing contractors or supplies will be part of the new contract – this will be wholly dependant on the outcome of the procurement exercise – but it is considered good practice to communicate the proposed changes as part of normal commercial contract management.

Yours sincerely



John McPeake
Chief Executive



Housing

Chief Executive
Dr John McPeake

7 Adelphi Street
Belfast BT2 8PB

Minister Nelson McCausland
Department for Social Development
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB

PRIVATE OFFICE

05 SEP 2012

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4 September 2012

Dear Minister

NI HE WINDOW REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Thank you for your letter of 16 August in which you raised three specific issues with me regarding the specification for the proposed dedicated double glazing programme.

Hinges – as you point out we have estimated that there are some 15,690 dwellings which require double glazing. The £50-£80 saving per dwelling relates to those where we will use the new hinge, as opposed to the existing hinge which will be retained for the higher rise properties. So, it would not be appropriate to apply the average saving to all dwellings, as not all dwellings will receive the new hinges. That said, in setting the likely savings at circa £500k we have aimed on the side of caution – the actual savings could well be higher, but as we are working with estimates and assumptions we did not want to over state the case. We are confident that the new hinge specification will produce significant savings.

Glazing – your assessment is correct



Asbestos Survey – our obligations in regard to asbestos are set out in the Control of Asbestos Regulations (NI 2012), the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978), and the CDM regulations 2007. Under these various regulations we have a duty to manage asbestos and prevent exposure to employees or others working in or on our properties. For that reason it is not appropriate to delegate the responsibility to the contractor. We had previously considered such a move but it was concluded that this would be in contravention of our obligations as an employer.



Telephone: 028 9031 8720 Fax: 028 9043 9803
Tynemouth no: 18001 03448 120 900 Email: john.mcpeake@nihe.gov.uk



It is our aim to build up a 100% data base of all our properties in order that we can advise employees and/or contractors about the presence of asbestos prior to the commencement of any works in the properties in question. Our approach is to use the programme of schemes as the trigger for a whole house asbestos survey for each property in the scheme where such a survey has not previously been completed. The fact that the double glazing schemes relate only to a single dwelling component is not relevant as we use the scheme as the vehicle to complete the whole house survey.

However, in some cases, for capacity reasons with the asbestos survey limits, it has proved difficult to coordinate the surveys with scheme start dates. To resolve this, we have, with the agreement of the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, arranged asbestos surveying for certain window schemes to focus only on those components. I believe that these are the "walk by" inspections referred to by Councillor Palmer, but it is important to note that in all cases we require the consultant surveyors access to the property to complete either the whole house survey or the more focused survey of the windows alone. We will be engaging directly with Councillor Palmer on these issues. Needless to say, if we complete only a windows survey the surveyors will need to return to complete a whole house survey at a later date.

The £200 fee relates to the whole house survey, which we refer to as a "management survey," and includes accessing all areas of the property, taking samples, and recording the information on a database, which can be accessed by NIHE staff and contractors. The current asbestos survey arrangements are subject to an ongoing procurement exercise.

On the broader issue of the procurement, we remain on track to have the new contract in place for the end of January 2013 to coincide with the expiration of the existing planned maintenance contracts, thus avoiding a potential legal challenge from existing contractors had the dedicated contract overlapped their current contract. To meet this timetable, we intend to publish the Notice in the EU Journal in mid October which means that the final version of the specification will be considered by the Board at its September meeting.

I hope that the above response has addressed the last remaining issues regarding the specification but if there are further queries please let me know as soon as possible

Yours sincerely



John McPeake
Chief Executive



Daithi McKay MLA
12 Main Street
DUNLOY
Co Antrim
BT44 9AA

Roisin Goodall
Housing Director's Office
Level 2
Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9082 9329

Email:
roisin.goodall@dsdni.gov.uk

Our reference: DSD/2012-0164

Date: 4 September 2012

Dear Mr McKay

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information you requested on 10 August 2012 about meetings between Minister McCausland and the Glass and Glazing Federation, as well as 'all communication within the Department concerning the suspension of the scheme to replace housing executive windows with double glazing units and copies of all communications, e mails, notes etc from and to the Minister on this issue'.

I am happy to advise you that a number of documents can be disclosed and I have provided you with hard copies of these for ease of reference. However, some of the information cannot be disclosed for the reasons I have detailed in the attached Public Interest Test and Schedule of Information Items.

You have the right to request that the Department formally review this decision within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you wish to do so, please write to: The FOI Team, Records Management Branch, Department for Social Development, Ground Floor, Lighthouse Building, 1 Cromac Place, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Rd, Belfast BT7 2JB.

If after such an internal review you are still dissatisfied with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roisin Goodall". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Roisin Goodall

Encs

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

DSD/2012-0164

Decision Taken

Withhold documents under Section 35 – Formulation of Government Policy and Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Commercial Interests

- Release of the information is exempt as it relates to the formulation or development of Government policy.
- Release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial interest of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

Background

Earlier this year Minister McCausland had concerns that the Housing Executive's specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing did not offer value for money and asked the Housing Executive's Chief Executive to rigorously and urgently review this specification

Public Interest Test

Section 35 is a qualified exemption and is aimed at protecting the government policy-making process and its proper use is essential to ensuring the delivery of effective government. Section 35 applies to information which relates to:

1. the formulation and development of government policy;
2. communications between Ministers (including Cabinet proceedings);
3. the provision of advice by the Law Officers (or any request for advice); and
4. the operation of any Ministerial private office.

Although the exemption is triggered, the decision whether to disclose the information is made taking into account public interest factors such as promoting accountability of government or allowing greater participation in decision making. Since the public interest in upholding the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure in this case the information should not be released.

In making this decision it is considered that a premature indication of the possible direction of government policy might make that policy more difficult to develop. Since policy is currently being developed the information is considered sensitive at this time and to release the information could jeopardise future debate and consideration of policy options if there was a possibility of disclosure before policy was decided upon.

Section 43 is a qualified exemption and deals with Commercial interests. It is concerned with protecting the commercial interests of third parties namely those companies mentioned in the investigation, which if disclosed prematurely could:

- (i) Damage business reputation or the confidence that customers, suppliers or investors may have in them
- (ii) Have a detrimental impact in commercial revenue or threaten their ability to obtain supplies or secure finance
- (iii) Weaken their position in a competitive environment by revealing market-sensitive information or information of potential usefulness to its competitors.

To release the information would:

- demonstrate that the Department is embracing the spirit of the FOI Act – the right of the public to have access to information
- demonstrate transparency in the use of public funds, showing how much public money is spent
- demonstrate that the decision making process has considered value for money – accountability for spending and therefore increase public trust and confidence when purchasing goods and services.

In considering the application of Section 43(2), the Department bore in mind the commercial sensitivity that disclosure may have on the company's ability to provide those services which they have been engaged to carry out. Also the Department considered the need to preserve confidentiality having regard to the subject matter and the circumstances of the information. Disclosure may:

- Damage business reputation or the confidence that customers, suppliers or investors may have in the company(ies)
- Have a detrimental impact in their commercial revenue or threaten their ability to obtain supplies or secure finance
- Weaken their position in a competitive environment by revealing market-sensitive information or information of potential usefulness to competitors.
- Make it less likely that companies would provide the Department with commercially sensitive information in the future and therefore undermine the ability of the Department to fulfil its role
- Create an imbalance in the marketplace by potentially issuing documents that may be accessed by interested parties before commencing a procurement exercise giving one individual a commercial advantage over other potential bidders.
- The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 requires all contracts are let in a manner which is fair, open, honest and non-discriminative. To provide one economic operator with information now well in advance of the actual competition would be seen to contravene these four tenets.

Furthermore, in the interests of due process, it would be inappropriate and premature to publicly release any papers in relation to the investigation until it has been fully considered and until appropriate steps have been taken by the department or other bodies in relation to the report.

For the reasons above, non disclosure outweighs disclosure in this case.

Schedule of Information Items

(a) Date of Record	(b) Author	(c) Title (or Addressee)	(d) Brief Description	(e) Exemption claimed if any (indicate if whole record or parts thereof e.g. "lines 2-14 on page 3")
16 April 2012	B. McConaghie	Minutes of meeting with Representatives of Glass & Glazing Federation	Minutes	Released in full
23 April 2012	B. McConaghie	Minutes of meeting with Fusion 21	Minutes	Released in full
26 April 2012	K. Mills	Commission email	Commissioning email to Michael Sands	Released in full
27 April 2012	K. Mills	Submission	Submission from Michael Sands to Minister	Released in full
30 April 2012	Minister McCausland	John McPeake	Letter re: Double Glazing	Released in full
9 May 2012	M. Henderson	M. Sands/S. McCarty	Email forwarding approved press release	Exempted Section 21 – Information already readily available
10 May 2012	S. McCarty	M. Sands	Email forwarding press release	Exempted Section 21 – Information already readily available

15 May 2012	S. McCarty	M. Sands	Email forwarding form of words to be used to answer Assembly Questions	Exempted Section 21 – Information already readily available
15 May 2012	C. Best	B. McConaghie	Email forwarding details of scheme and technical specification from NIHE	Exempted Section 43 (2) – Commercial in confidence
16 May 2012	A. Maskey	Minister McCausland	Letter from SDC Chair re: NIHE double glazing programme	Exempted Section 21 – Information already in public forum
18 May 2012	M. Sands	Minister McCausland	Submission on SDC request for information on NIHE double glazing programme	Released in full
18 May 2012	Housing Director's Office	M. Sands	Commission email re: COR/399/2012	Released in full
21 May 2012	M. Sands	Minister McCausland	Submission re: COR/399/2012	Released in full
21 May 2012	Housing Director's Office	M. Sands	Commission email re: COR/405/2012	Released in full
22 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQO 2018/11-15; AQO 2019/11-15; AQO 2022/11-15; AQO 2023/11-15; AQO 2024/11-15 & AQO 2027/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland	Mr Montgomery	Letter	Released in full

23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11084/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11085/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11160/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11509/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11534/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
23 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 11566/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
25 May 2012	Minister McCausland	A. Maskey	Letter re: NIHE double glazing programme	Released in full
29 May 2012	Minister McCausland		AQW 10955/11-15	Exempted Section 21 - Information already readily available
30 May 2012	M. Sands	Minister McCausland	COR/405/2015	Released in full

31 May 2012	Minister McCausland	Sandra Overend MLA	Letter	Released in full
15 June 2012	J. McPeake	Minister McCausland	Letter about double glazing installation programme	Exempted Section 43 (2) – Commercially sensitive
27 June 2012	N. Sleator	M. Sands	Email re: NIHE Window replacement programme (revised specification)	Exempted Section 43 (2) – Commercially sensitive
29 June 2012	M. Sands	Minister McCausland	Submission on NIHE Window replacement programme (revised specification)	Exempted Section 35 – Formulation of government policy
14 August 2012	M. Sands	Minister McCausland	Submission on NIHE Window replacement programme	Exempted Section 43 (2) – Commercially sensitive

The Schedule of Information Items should record:

- (a) the date of the record;
- (b) the author of the record and **either** the person or persons to whom it is addressed **or** the title of the record if it is a report or a submission of some kind;
- (c) a brief but sufficient description of the record or its contents;
- (d) **[if appropriate and a complete record]** the specific exemption claimed;
- (e) **[if appropriate and part(s) of a record]** a clear indication of the part(s) relevant to the request, e.g. "paragraph 5 or lines 2 – 14 on page 3" and **[if appropriate]** any public interest considerations.

Goodall, Roisin

From: Housing, Director's Office
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:33
To: Sands, Michael; Owens, Michael
Cc: McIntyre, Patricia; Goodall, Roisin; Best, Christine
Subject: Deadline 30/5/12 - COR/405/2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme
Attachments: ek118000.PDF; COR 405 2012 - Sandra Overend - NI Housing Executive double glazing programme.tr5

Hi

1. Michael

Please could you record in the MinCorr1 database.

2. Michael

) One for you. The relevant container is attached. DS1-12-5375

ii) When the reply is being sent back to private office please could you copy to Michael Owens, Karen Mills & myself to update our database.

Thank you

* If you believe this commission does not fall under the remit of your business area can you please notify the Director's Office with immediate effect

From: paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk [mailto:paul.o'hare@dndni.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 May 2012 12:19
To: Housing, Director's Office
Cc: Permanent Secretary (DSD); Pyper, Jenny; Cousins, Heather; DSD Private Office; Crawford, Billy; Lavery, Julie; Sisk, Margaret; Press Office; Dolan, Clara; Wall, Dave; stephen.brimstone@dndni.gsi.gov.uk; McConaghie, Barbara; McConnell, Grainne; McShane, Rose; Henderson, Michael
Subject: Correspondence -- Ref. Number: COR/405/2012 : NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

URGENT - CORRESPONDENCE

Reference: COR/405/2012
Raised By: Sandra Overend

Subject: NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DOUBLE GLAZING PROGRAMME

Referred To: HOUSING DIRECTORS OFFICE (DSD)

Date Referred: 21/05/2012

ACTION REQUIRED

Please provide advice and a draft reply for signature by the Minister.

To be with Private Office not later than 30/05/2012 before Noon

For further information etc. contact :

Paul O'Hare (Private Office)
Lighthouse Building Tel : 38049

Copied To For Information:
General CC List



From: Michael Sands
Deputy Director of Housing

Date: 30 May 2012

1. Stephen Brimstone
2. Nelson McCausland

REVIEW OF NIHE DOUBLE GLAZING INSTALLATIONS

Issue: Letter from Sandra Overend MLA re Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts they had been awarded.

Timing: 30 May 2012

Priority: Important

FOI Implications: This note may be disclosable.

Presentational Issues: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

Legislation Implications: N/A

Equality Implications: N/A

Executive Referral: N/A

Recommendation: That you reply to Sandra Overend MLA along the lines of
the attached draft.

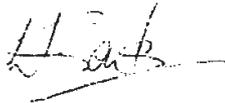
Detail

Super Seal Window Systems six contracts were confirmed by the Housing Executive as part of the contracts they had already awarded prior to your letter to the Chief Executive on 30 April 2012.

2. The draft letter contains the relevant information.

Conclusion

3. That you reply along the lines of the attached.

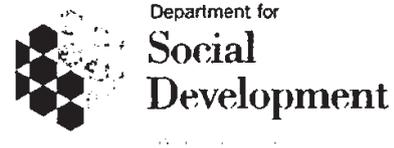


MICHAEL SANDS

Ext: 38346

cc: Will Haire
Heather Cousins
Jim Wilkinson
Michael Sands
Deirdre Ward
Housing Grade 7s
Michael Henderson
Grainne McConnell
Barbara McConaghie
Chris Barry

DRAFT RESPONSE



**5th Floor
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1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
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BT7 2JB**

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e-mail: private.office@dndni.gov.uk

Tel: (028) 9082 9034

**Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX**

**Our ref: COR/405/2012
Date:**

Dear

Review of NIHE Window Replacement Installations

I am replying to your letter of 18 May re your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

**NELSON MCCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**



Department for
**Social
Development**

From: The Minister

**5th Floor
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
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**Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Rm 308 Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX**

Our ref: COR/405/2012

31 May 2012

Dear Sandra

REVIEW OF NIHE WINDOW REPLACEMENT INSTALLATIONS

I am replying to your letter of 18 May regarding your constituents Super Seal Window Systems Ltd and the six contracts to fit 5285 windows.

I am happy to confirm that, as allowed in my Press Statement of 9 May, I have already agreed that as these contracts had been placed with Super Seal then they would continue. The Housing Executive is to confirm this position in writing to Super Seal.

Yours sincerely

Nelson McCausland

**NELSON McCAUSLAND MLA
Minister for Social Development**



Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities

British Broadcasting Corporation Second Floor, Broadcast Centre, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TP



Legal Division

Our ref : LG/Legal/BC2A3
Your ref : CSD/022/2013

Direct Line: 020 8008 1944
Fax: 020 8008 2210

Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk, Committee for Social
Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

2 May 2014

BY EMAIL: kevin.pelan@niassembly.gov.uk

Dear Dr Pelan

Inquiry by Committee for Social Development into allegations of impropriety surrounding NIHE contracts

Thank you for your letter dated 17 April 2014 inviting “relevant BBC Spotlight programme makers” to give oral evidence to the Inquiry. We write in response. As it’s conduct has demonstrated the BBC is prepared to co-operate with the Committee to the fullest extent possible consistent with the editorial freedoms protected by law, however, after careful consideration, we are writing to inform the Committee that the relevant BBC personnel will not voluntarily attend the committee hearings to give the evidence requested. Our reasons are set out below.

1. THE BACKGROUND AND THE BBC’S JOURNALISTIC OBLIGATIONS

1.1 As set out in previous correspondence the BBC feels strongly that it should be free to exercise its rights of journalistic freedom of expression under Article 10 of the Convention (and indeed the common law) without undue interference by any public authority. These include the obligation to gather and then convey information and ideas on matters of public interest to the public. Any attempt by politicians to question or investigate the exercise of this right under statutory powers is an interference with this important right. In such a situation the BBC must satisfy itself that the questioning or investigation proposed is a justified interference with these important rights. It was for these reasons that we wrote to you previously about the nature and extent of your request (of 14 October 2013) to provide copies of journalistic material to the Committee. In particular we pointed out that the request was insufficiently particularised to comply with section 44(7) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (“the Act”), making it such an undue, or unjustified, interference. The Committee has since indicated that the original request made of the BBC on October 14 2013 was not a notice pursuant to section 44(7) but nonetheless re-framed the original request and provided additional information which brought the request more in line with section 44(7). That being the case and, in the spirit of cooperation, we voluntarily provided

some material to the Committee on 11 March 2014. In doing so, we made clear that any future requests would fall to be considered on a case by case basis.

- 1.2 We have now considered your latest request on the same basis. Regrettably, the basis upon which you seek the attendance of Spotlight witnesses suggests a misunderstanding of both the factual position and, in any event, the correct legal position. Again therefore we consider that there is an undue interference with our journalistic rights.

2. EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

- 2.1 Your letter quotes one sentence from the lengthy script for the Spotlight programme.

"It is possible Mr McCausland thought that the men from Turkingtons were there as representatives of the Federation, but the Housing Executive has told us that their two officials who attended the meeting were not aware that the men from Turkingtons were representing the Glass and Glazing Federation."

It then states that the Committee would like *"to explore with the relevant Spotlight officials the allegations made in the programme that the Committee may have been misled"*. In particular the Committee is said to be *"interested to hear how this position could be sustained, given that the above statement appears to suggest that the Minister may have believed that he was meeting with Glass and Glazing Federation representatives"*. This is the only indication in your letter of any matter/s on which the Committee seeks oral evidence.

- 2.2 The misunderstanding of fact is straightforward. The allegation made in the programme that the Committee had been misled was made by Daithi McKay MLA. This is quite clear from the following. In the introduction to the programme the viewer was told that: *"In a major investigation the Housing Minister is charged with misleading the Assembly"* (emphasis added). The section of the programme dealing with this matter came towards the end. The viewer was informed of the facts about the 16 April 2012 meeting and the differences between the draft version of the letter of 24 May 2012 to the Committee and the final version of this letter as sent by Mr McCausland. Daithi McKay MLA, was then quoted as saying: *"I think it is obvious that the Minister is misleading the Assembly Committee...so the question has to be asked why that is..."* (emphasis added). The programme then went on to report:

- Mr McCausland's assertion that he had understood that the Turkingtons representatives at the meeting were representing the GGF and his statement to the Assembly to this effect;
- The denial by Ian Young of Turkington's that they had told Mr McCausland this;
- The observation of another MLA, Michael Copeland, that there were two people *"saying entirely different things and ...that the Social Development Committee, will be very anxious to clarify what the truth is..."*

The sentence you quote in your letter comes after this, followed by a further allegation by Mr McKay that *"the Minister has misled the Assembly Committee..."*

- 2.3 This section of the programme simply reported what different participants in the meeting had said about it and what two of Mr McCausland's fellow MLAs then said in light of this.

The programme makers did not allege that Mr McCausland may have misled the assembly. They reported Mr McKay's view (or *charge*) that he had done so. The programme makers did not adopt this allegation as their own but rather reported it as a matter of fact – as it was their journalistic obligation to do so given that it was an allegation made by one MLA against another. Mr McKay's allegation was a matter of legitimate public interest. The reporting in this section of the programme was balanced (the sentence you quote is an example of precisely that balancing – acknowledging the possibility that Mr McCausland had believed the men were representatives of Turkingtons). It contained each side of the case and placed the issues raised by this episode before the viewer as matters of public importance. The viewer was left to make whatever judgment about the episode that he or she chose to do so. This is political reportage and it is a strongly protected aspect of the press' free speech right in a democracy. It is self-evident that Spotlight programme-makers will not be able to say anything more to the Committee beyond what is described above. Nothing further would be shed upon the factual issues being decided by the Committee on the primary evidence it has now received in relation to the Phase of its Inquiry.

- 2.4 For all those reasons, we do not see how Spotlight's attendance before the Committee would assist in furthering Phase One of the Inquiry. Insofar as the Committee may have been misled by the Minister, we have already provided the evidential basis for that judgment in the programme itself. Moreover, the Committee has already heard from all 8 officials who attended that meeting. The Committee has already heard from Ian Young and Jim McKeag from Turkingtons who both confirmed that they attended the meeting as representatives of Turkingtons. They have heard from John McPeake and Declan Allen from the Housing Executive who both confirmed that they were requested, and indeed did, attend a meeting with Turkingtons and not the Glass and Glazing Federation. The Committee has heard from the Glass and Glazing Federation who say they have no record of it being a Glass and Glazing Federation meeting. They have heard from Michael Sands who gave evidence that he was told to change the letter from Turkingtons to the Glass and Glazing Federation by the Minister's private office. The Committee has also heard from Stephen Brimstone, the Special Advisor. In addition, the Committee has had access to internal DSD memoranda and minutes and they have also had access to the draft letter referred to in the programme.
- 2.5 The Committee has also heard from the Minister himself who apologised for inadvertently misinforming the Committee and who now concedes that it was a meeting with Turkingtons and not the Glass and Glazing Federation. By implication, the Minister accepts that the Committee was misled (albeit unintentionally) and so on the face of it, enquiries in relation to this aspect of Phase One appear to have been exhausted. The only conceivable further enquiry that remains is whether the Committee were knowingly or intentionally misled. That does not appear to be within the Terms of Reference and it is not something that Spotlight could give evidence about in any event.

3. SECTION 44 NORTHERN IRELAND ACT

- 3.1 Given that, as explained above, Spotlight programme-makers have no evidence of any value to give to the Committee we trust that the following analysis of the statutory framework will be superfluous. It is important nonetheless that we state our understanding of the law.
- 3.2 The Committee has a scrutiny role but only *with respect to the Department with which it is associated*. See paragraph 9 of Strand One of the Belfast Agreement. This provision limits its powers of inquiry since these powers are necessarily limited to the same area of scrutiny. So

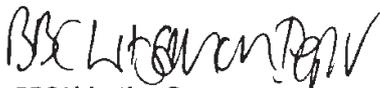
do the provisions of s.44(2) of the 1998 Act, read with s.44(6) and Standing order 48(2). Under these provisions the Committee can only compel evidence on the two matters identified in s.44(2), namely:

- (a) *transferred matters concerning Northern Ireland; and*
- (b) *other matters in relation to which statutory functions are exercisable by Ministers or the Northern Ireland Departments.*

- 3.3 The Committee has no power to inquire into editorial judgments made by television journalists when making a television programme, about how the content of the programme should be presented to the public. Nor can it require witnesses to give evidence about such matters. This would be an inquiry into a completely different set of issues from those within in the Committee's inquisitorial jurisdiction – namely how the programme makers chose to exercise their fundamental right to freedom of expression. The area of inquiry identified in your letter is therefore, in any event, outside of the Committee's remit. The Committee could not lawfully compel a witness to give evidence on the issue of how a particular perceived "*position*" of the programme-maker arising out of the content broadcast *could be sustained*". Nor can it properly (as a matter of public law) invite such evidence.
- 3.4 Moreover, as we have explained any attempt by the Committee to inquire into or question the BBC's journalistic or editorial decision making would be an interference with its right to freedom of expression. Any such interference has to be *prescribed by law* to be lawful (see Article 10(2) of the Convention). The Strasbourg case law makes clear that there must be a clear basis in law for such an interference. The provisions of the Strand One and the 1998 Act do not create such a basis. There would therefore be a clear violation of the Art 10 rights of the Corporation and the journalists concerned if they were compelled to give evidence on these matters to the Committee.

As the Inquiry moves into Phase Two, we would like to assure the Committee that we will continue to consider each request for assistance that comes in on its factual and legal merits. As we have made clear previously, the BBC is very conscious of the role that Spotlight has played in bringing this matter to the public's attention and we remain committed to providing what assistance we can. However, any requests that stray into areas of editorial judgment will necessarily be subject to the closest scrutiny. We are sorry that, on this occasion, we are unable to assist further.

Yours faithfully,


BBC Litigation Department



Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Fusion21
Link Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 6AP

Tuesday 12th November 2013

Ref CSD/023/2011/2

Dear Dr Pelan,

RE: Request to provide Oral Evidence Thursday 21st November 2013

I write in reference to our telephone conversation on 8th November 2013 to discuss a letter of request to provide oral evidence to the Committee for Social Development on 21st November 2013.

The letter sent requests that we should detail all of our knowledge of a meeting held on the 16th April 2012. I can confirm that we have no knowledge of a meeting held on this date and did not attend any meeting on this specified date.

During our conversation you requested that if we could supply information of any meetings that may be of relevance to the committee we should detail the date and provide a summary of the purpose of any such meeting.

It is my understanding that once you have reviewed this information you will inform us as to whether oral evidence is still required from us on 21st November 2013.

In relation to the context of the letter I can confirm that Fusion21 met with Minster McCausland on the 23rd April 2012 at 2pm.



Building Skills Centre, Huyton Industrial Estate, Huyton, Merseyside, L36 6AP
t: 0151 481 3000 f: 0151 481 3001 e: info@fusion21.co.uk www.fusion21.co.uk

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I can confirm attendees of this meeting were:

- Minster McCausland
- David Malcolm (DSD)
- Stephen Brimstone (DSD)
- Dave Neilson (Fusion21, CEO)
- Chris Murray (Fusion21, Chair)
- Janis Simpson- Mahoney (Fusion21, Regional Director)

The meeting took place in Stormont and lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The context of the meeting was an introduction of Fusion21, a social enterprise company. The Fusion21 procurement model was discussed and it was outlined how Fusion21 ensure social value is derived from its procurement activity in Great Britain. Project examples of the Fusion21 model were also provided to the Minster.

We can confirm that we did not discuss any particular contracts with the Minster and we did not discuss window specifications in this meeting. We did discuss generic benchmarking information on our projects including windows and doors with housing associations in England that were previously provided to the DSD. Outlining generic cost savings and local job creation outcomes that could be created by accessing the Fusion21 procurement model for various workstreams.

I trust this information clarifies the context of our meeting and sufficiently explains the purpose of our meeting with the Minster. I would be grateful if you could inform me of your decision as to whether we are still required to provide oral evidence upon review of this information.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Whelan

Fusion21



Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Fusion21
Link Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 6AP

Monday 18th November 2013

Ref CSD/023/2011/2

Dear Dr Pelan,

RE: Request to provide Written Statement to the Committee for Social Development

Please find attached a written statement provided by Fusion21 in relation to the above reference.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Whelan

Fusion21



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Introduction to Fusion21

Fusion21 is a social enterprise that promotes public procurement as a means to save money and create social outcomes.

Working nationally, Fusion21 links spending programmes across numerous organisations, to the creation of training opportunities and sustainable jobs for local people. As well as generating social value this model improves efficiency in the procurement process and generates significant cash savings. By using a small part of the savings generated through the procurement process, Fusion21 are able to fully fund our training and employment programmes ensuring that the model is not reliant on public funding and is wholly self sustaining

Since 2002 we have gained national recognition for our collaborative approach; delivering c£50m savings through the procurement process, creating over 1300 permanent jobs, and generating an estimated financial benefit in excess of c£32m through regular paid work and reductions in benefit claims.

Our aim is to help create the conditions where it is easier to deliver efficiency savings, to control costs, create jobs, train people and share best practice. We work by collaborating with social landlords, residents, local agencies, contractors and suppliers to deliver a wide range of programmes, skills training courses and commissioned consultancy projects.

Terms of Reference

This statement addresses strand (ii) from the terms of reference provided to Fusion21 that details:

ii: Allegations the Committee was misled by the Minister for Social Development over his decision to seek a review of the specification for the supply and fitting of double glazing.

This written statement seeks to address the above point as requested by the Committee for Social Development.

Summary

This statement confirms that Fusion21 did not meet with the Minister on the 16th April 2012 and outlines further information that the committee may deem useful.

Written Statement Submitted by Fusion21

1. The letter sent requests that we should detail all of our knowledge of a meeting held on the 16th April 2012. I can confirm that we have no knowledge of a meeting held on this date and did not attend any meeting on this specified date.
2. In relation to the context of the letter I can confirm that Fusion21 met with Minister McCausland on the 23rd April 2012 at 2pm.
3. I can confirm attendees of this meeting were:
 - Minister McCausland
 - David Malcolm (DSD)
 - Stephen Brimstone(DSD)
 - Dave Neilson (Fusion21, Chief Executive)
 - Chris Murray (Fusion21, Chair)

■ Janis Simpson- Mahoney (Fusion21, Regional Director)

4. The meeting took place in Stormont and lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The context of the meeting was an introduction to Fusion21, a social enterprise company. The Fusion21 procurement model was discussed and it was outlined how Fusion21 ensure social value is derived from its procurement activity in Great Britain. Project examples of the Fusion21 model were also provided to the Minister.
5. We can confirm that we did not discuss any particular contracts with the Minister and we did not discuss window specifications in this meeting. We did discuss generic benchmarking information on our projects, including windows and doors with housing associations in England that were previously provided to the DSD. This information outlined generic cost savings and local job creation outcomes that could be created by accessing the Fusion21 procurement model for various workstreams.

GGF PUTS GLASS AND GLAZING ON THE POLITICAL RADAR

- Posted 06/10/2011



In June, following the announcement of a boiler replacement scheme in Northern Ireland, the GGF drafted a letter to Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development in the Northern Irish Government, highlighting the merits of Energy Efficient Windows and proposing a similar replacement scheme for windows.

A meeting was subsequently arranged between Giles Willson, GGF Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs and Oliver McHugh, of the Fuel Poverty Strategy Team, to discuss this in more detail. This meeting is due to take place at the end of October 2011.

Prior to the GGF approach, there had not been any recent mentions of glazing in the Northern Ireland Assembly, however recently in the Assembly, Glazing was very much part of the debate as Mr McCausland stated:

“Getting the money to the people who need it most has to be our priority. We currently face a difficult time in regard to fuel poverty. I want to do all that I can, but the social protection fund is not the be-all and end-all. For example, I am considering bidding for additional funding in the October monitoring round to enable the Housing Executive to replace single-glazed windows in a number of its properties with double glazing and additional insulation measures to ensure warmth. I expect the Housing Executive to step up to the mark and ensure that as many of its properties as possible are double-glazed over the coming winter and in subsequent years.

The energy efficiency of homes is related to fuel poverty. Double glazing is an excellent way to deal with that. I understand that only 40% of the Housing Executive’s stock of 90,000 are double-glazed. Sixty per cent of its properties are single-glazed, and, in some areas, up to 70% of its properties are single-glazed. I intend to bid for that money, and I will meet the Housing Executive to see what we can do to get the maximum delivery on the ground and

the maximum amount of money out there to get double glazing in those homes. We can take forward that major development, with additional insulation measures, to ensure warmth in homes and cut fuel costs and fuel poverty.”

This is yet another example that demonstrates the benefits of the GGF continuing to highlight the energy efficient nature of windows to MPs in all parts of the UK. Now that a relationship is being established with Mr McCausland’s adviser, the GGF is in a strong position as a trusted resource to provide more high quality information to Mr McCausland’s team for use in their Government work.

The full text of the debate may be found here: <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/ni/?id=2011-09-26.5.35&s=energy+efficient+windows#g5.41>

If you have a comment to make or any information relating to this article please contact the GGF



GGF/NDR/AC

14 November 2013

Glass and Glazing Federation

Dr K Pelan
Clerk, Committee for Social Development
Northern Ireland Assembly
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Belfast
BT4 3XX

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London SE1 1EU
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www.ggf.org.uk

Dear Dr. Pelan

GGF response to the inquiry into allegations arising from the BBC NI Spotlight programme aired on 3 July 2013.

The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) is a Trade Association representing employers and companies within the flat glass, glazing, home improvement and window film industries. The GGF has approximately 500 members who can be found in over 1,500 business locations throughout the UK. The GGF have a structure which covers different technical groups e.g. windows and doors as well as regions. The GGF have a Northern Ireland Region, this currently has 11 members registered for the region. Details of these companies can be provided.

To become a member of the GGF an organisation needs to provide financial accounts for the past three years trading, three trade references, successfully complete a site visit (this checks the calibre of the company), agree to join GGF Fund Ltd if deposits are taken and agree to comply with the rules of the GGF. Further details of the application process can be provided.

The GGF run meetings which have a GGF member of staff as the Secretary and an elected member as the Chair. All meetings are minuted, have a calling notice and have strict guidance to prevent discussions prohibited by the Competition Act 1998 or the Enterprise Act 2002; in particular the issue of prices or market share will not be raised or discussed. Copies of the minutes from GGF Northern Ireland's meetings can be provided.

GGF members can use the GGF logo on their publications, letterheads and business cards. The rules for using the GGF logo are covered by GGF guidance and rules. Copies of this can be provided.

The GGF do have meetings with Government Officials to represent the GGF. These are usually undertaken by GGF staff or can be undertaken by a member with specialist knowledge and a brief from a supporting committee or group they are representing. The last such meeting undertaken in Northern Ireland was with Oliver McHugh from the NIHE on 10 April 2013, this was attended by Giles Willson, Deputy Chief Executive of the GGF. Notes from this meeting are attached for information.

The GGF were approached in June 2013 by Chris Thornton for the BBC Spotlight program. The questions and the GGF response is shown below:

Dear Chris,

In response to your email, I have discussed your queries internally with my colleagues responsible for GGF Northern Ireland . Please see answers (in blue) to your questions below:

- Was the GGF aware of an initiative by Turkingtons Windows resulting in a meeting with the Northern Ireland Social Development Minister Nelson McCausland in April 2012? No
- Was the GGF aware of this meeting in advance? No
- Did the GGF give the Turkingtons officials the authority to represent themselves as acting on behalf of the GGF? No
- If so, who gave that authority and was it communicated to the chairman of the Northern Ireland branch? No idea who gave authority, but it was no-one at the GGF and it was not communicated to the Regional Chairman
- Is there a formal record that such authority was given? No
- If the GGF was not aware in advance, are there any circumstances in which a member firm can purport to represent the GGF? If the GGF is represented in a meeting by a Member Company, it is with a specific mandate from either a GGF specialist group or region to address specific industry issues.
- What action would be taken with a member firm which purported to represent the GGF without authority? If someone has misused or broken our rules we would investigate and review through our Finance and Membership Committee.
- Was any contact made with the GGF by officials acting on behalf of Nelson McCausland following the 16 April 2012 meeting? Yes as the industry authority and to represent GGF Members, the Federation has sent GGF Officers (employees) to meetings with NIHE as we do with many other Government officials globally.

I trust this background information will help with the production of your programme.

Best regards

James Lee
GGF Marketing and Communications Manager

The GGF would be pleased to provide any of the supplementary information referenced above when Giles Willson GGF Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs attends the committee meeting which takes place on Thursday 21 November 2013 at the Parliament Building.

Yours sincerely



Nigel Rees
Group Chief Executive
Glass and Glazing Federation

Enc./ Notes from GGF Northern Ireland Regional Meeting – 11 December 2012



Glass and Glazing Federation

Private and Confidential

Minutes of: Glass and Glazing Federation N.I. Regional meeting held at the Wellington Park Hotel, 21, Maloney Road, Belfast NI. BT96RU on the 11th December 2012

Present:

David Blair	Getty Glass
Robin Getty	Getty Glass (Chair)
Ian Young	Turkington
Cary Hindman	Turkington
Norman Cameron	Thermoseal Group
Willie Montgomery	CEN Solutions
Declan Moore	GGF

Apologies:	John Agnew	Toughglass
	Martin Moore	Glass-Seal (NI) Ltd
	Roland Sarin	Edgetech
	John Agnew	
	Jim Mcguire	Excel Glass

1. Chairman

DM: opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Ireland regional meeting and requested a volunteer to act as chairman for the meeting. RG agreed to act as Chairman for the day and the meeting commenced.

2. Apologies and AOB not covered by the agenda

The Chairman noted the apologies and they will be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

3. Previous Minutes

The previous minutes were approved by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting held on the 4th September 2012

4. State of Trade Discussion

DM: reminded the meeting of the competition act 1988 and the enterprise act 2002 as detailed at the top of the agenda and asked that members refrained from talking of issues relating to pricing and market share.

CH: explained that it is a very tough market out there and whilst they feel busy there is real pressure on margins and getting paid can be a real problem.

WM: noted that if it were not for the HE (Housing Executive) work there would be not very much happening at all.

RG: felt they had become a cash only business

CH: suggested that the GGF is a valued badge and the credentials of deposit protection should be of value

NC: explained that since our last meeting, three more companies have gone out of business although he feels that Northern Ireland is a little more stable than the south. There has been a lot of downsizing and there may be too many Zombie companies around which are simply surviving on a credit card, they should be gone but are hanging on. No one is buying any machinery at the moment which is a very bad sign.

DB: explained that the industry is thinning out to the size it should be and even the sole traders (one man and a van) type operators are thinning out.

RG: explained that he thought that people perceived the GGF as more expensive than it really is. He went on to suggest that the GGF road show should be held at the Hilton at Temple Patrick and could focus on relationships with the finance industry and CE marking. DM: agreed to pursue this and come back with details.

CH: It would appear that NI is excluded from green deal and we should be included and also include solar panels.

DM: agreed to try to get Giles Wilson over to meet with ministers now that we have the services of GK political we should make better progress.

The group had discussion around GK political and agreed that they would like them to push for HE work to be given directly to contractors so there can be better management of payments with a focus on time lines.

5. Technical report

The technical report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and taken as read.

6. Health and Safety

DM: provided the meeting with an update on all Health and Safety activities which included the following.

Fee For Intervention now live as of the 1st October 2012

GGF database being cleaned up –we will require your stats in Jan to get your current certificate (this will be relevant in the future CAT C)

We will be requesting that companies with multi branches register them individually.

We will be reviewing the merit scheme for a RED / AMBER / GREEN – companies will be able to move backwards as well as forward

It will be suggested that we have two types of meeting in 2013 - a working committee type and - an information dispensing type meeting

7. Working Groups

The following working groups are currently under way:

Health and Safety Training

This working group will be meeting in October and will address the H&S training needs of the fenestration industry- this will build on our existing success with NOS and BBS and will focus on three areas

- Official HS training such as IOISH
- Industry Specific such as Glass Handling / WAH replacement windows
- Management strategy training

Environmental Waste Management

This working group will meet again in September and it is expected that a working draft guidance document will be available in October. The scope of this group will be established on the 13th September

Working at Height

This document has now been complete and has achieved a level 4 endorsement from the HSE now with GGF awaiting publication

Personal Protective Equipment

A further meeting for this working group is pending

Asbestos AIB

The latest draft of the LAR working code of practice has been reviewed and a further meeting held with the HSE. The latest version of the LAR document has

been released for comment on the 14th May and has been distributed to the working group

Stillages

This document is scheduled for review and the working group are expected to reconvene in October

Glass Handling

This Document is due for review in 2012

8. Social Housing in NI

DM: Updated the meeting on the meetings and activities which had taken place and now we are getting support from GK political we hope to make better progress early in 2013.

DM: agreed to keep everyone posted on any further developments.

9. GGF Website

DM: provide a presentation of the new GGF website and show the new GGF promo film which was very well received

10. AOB

CH: Requested that someone at the GGF consider putting triple glazing on the energy calculator. DM: to find out about this and report back to the meeting.

11. Diary Dates 2012

DM: will confirm the meeting dates for 2013

The Chairman brought the meeting to a close and thanked everyone for their time and input.

3 March 2014



Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk
Committee for Social Development
Room 412
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Glass and Glazing Federation

54 Ayres Street
London SE1 1EU
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Fax 020 7357 7458
www.ggf.org.uk

Dear Dr. Pelan

Re: Clarification on GGF's relationship with Minister McCausland's Special Advisor.

Further to your letter dated 29 January 2014, we are pleased to confirm the following information:

The GGF has met Mr Oliver McHugh twice; this is the individual we referred as Minister McCausland's advisor within our October 2011 press release.

The GGF has not had any meetings or dealings with Mr Stephen Brimstone, Minister McCausland's Special advisor.

We hope this provides all the information required?

If we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giles Willson', written in a cursive style.

Giles Willson
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs
Glass and Glazing Federation



Glass and Glazing Federation

Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk
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13 January 2014

Dear Dr. Pelan

Re: Inquiry following BBC NI Spotlight programme.

Further to your letter dated 16 December 2013 and the copy of Hansard for 12 December 2013 covering the above inquiry, we would like to make the following comments:

The GGF Press release dated October 2011, was prepared to raise the merits for replacing windows with energy efficient product. The inertia to prepare this release was the news of a boiler replacement scheme for Northern Ireland announced in June 2011 by Mr McCausland.

The GGF, representing their membership want to raise the profile of replacement windows, hence the use of a press release, we also arranged a meeting with Mr Oliver McHugh (Fuel Poverty Strategy Team), to discuss replacement windows and doors. This was the first time the GGF had met Mr McHugh and was used as a way to explain who the GGF are what we could do to assist with any projects to upgrade the fenestration in social housing in Northern Ireland.

The press release would have been prepared by the GGF marketing department and signed off by Nigel Rees Chief Executive of the GGF or in his absence Giles Willson, Deputy Chief Executive.

The GGF would also like to clarify the structure of the Northern Ireland Region and the members who are part of this.

All GGF members are members of their local region, they each have a Secretariat (who is an official from the GGF), there is an elected Chair and Vice chair for each region (from the membership companies). Each of the Chairs from all regions are members of the GGF Regional Representatives Committee, the Chair of this committee sits on the GGF Board. We hope from this description can provide you with the confidence that there is sufficient Governance in the GGF structure.

GGF Northern Ireland used to have Mr Declan Moore at the Secretary, as stated he no longer works for the GGF, currently this role is being managed by Mr Giles Willson.

We hope this provides all the information required?

If we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giles Willson', written in a cursive style.

Giles Willson
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Technical Affairs
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