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**William Humphrey
Chairperson
Public Accounts Committee
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
BELFAST
BT4 3XX**

Our ref: SCORR 317-2020

22 September 2020

Dear William

Re: Major Capital Projects Inquiry

Thank you for your letter dated 14 September requesting details on the external members of the Procurement Board and the cross-Departmental Group established to develop a sector strategy for construction.

A list of the current external members of the Procurement Board is attached at Annex A. Rhona Quinn is the Past President of Construction Employers Federation and represents the interests of the construction sector. Stephen Kane is Past Chair of the Northern Ireland Construction Group (NICG) and represents the interests of construction plant and equipment hire suppliers. Colin Maxwell advised the Procurement Board on design quality and the use of art in public sector construction. Colin resigned from his role on 18 June 2020.

Following a meeting with the Finance Minister in June 2020, NICG submitted a paper outlining a list of issues that it considers necessary to increase productivity and aid economic recovery from the pandemic. The list proposed:

- full use of Financial Transaction Capital and the NI investment fund;
- simplification of the procurement of buildings;
- reduction in the levels of professional indemnity insurance;
- clarity on funding and spending plans;
- mitigating sub-economic tendering during recovery; and
- ensuring appropriate risk allocation in contracts;

The Minister recommended to the Executive that a cross-Departmental Group was established to address the proposals from NICG. The Executive agreed to the recommendation on 6 August and the Group had its first meeting on 24 August. A draft response to the list of issues was discussed with NICG representatives on 16 September and a list of 5 priority actions has been agreed. These are:

1. A pipeline of projects coming to the market in the short to medium term;
2. Publication of capital spending data by Departments;
3. Development of a framework to guide the selection of procurement routes;
4. A review of the procurement procedures to speed up contract award; and
5. A review of risk management practice in contracts.

The Group will meet fortnightly until the end of October when the Group Chair, Des Armstrong, will provide a report to the Finance Minister.

A list of the Group members and the NICG representatives is attached at Annex B.

I will be happy to update the Committee on the Group's progress.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Gray". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

SUE GRAY

Procurement Board External Members

- Rhona Quinn - Chairperson at QMAC Construction Limited
- Stephen Kane - Managing Director at Ridgeway-Online
- Colin Maxwell - Consultant Architect at Consarc Design Group
- Ruth Fee - Professor of Public Services Education at Ulster University
- Paul Mac Flynn - Director of Nevin Economic Research Institute
- Lisa McElherron - Director of Insight and Engagement Group
- Emer Hinphey - Partner at Think People Consulting Limited

Cross Departmental Group on Construction

Members

Des Armstrong	DoF - CPD CEO, Group Chair
Mark O'Donnell	DfC - Director of Housing and Urban Regeneration
Alison Caldwell	DAERA - Director of Estate Transformation
Philip Irwin	DE - Director of Investment and Infrastructure
Sharon Hetherington	DfE - Finance Director of Management Services and Regulation Group
Andrew Dawson	DoH - Director of Infrastructure Investment
Linda MacHugh	DfI – Deputy Secretary, Resources, Governance and EU
TBC	DoJ

CPD Officials

Stewart Heaney	CPD Director of Construction Division
Brendan Smyth	CPD Director of Health Projects
Michael Watson	CPD Director of Policy and Performance Division
Michael McLornan	CPD Head of Construction Procurement Policy Branch - Secretariat

Northern Ireland Construction Group representatives

Alfie Watterson	NICG Chair: Specialist Engineering Contractors (SEC) Group
Denise McMahon	NICG – Professionals College Chair; Engineers Ireland (EI)
Ciarán Fox	NICG - Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA)
Gavin McGuire	NICG - Federation of Master Builders (FMB)
Gordon Best	NICG – Mineral Products Association NI (MPANI)
Joe Kilroy	NICG – Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
Mark Spence	CEF - Construction Employers Federation (CEF)