

Notice of Motion - Audit Wales Cracks in the Foundations Report

Proposed by: Cllr Dan Rose Seconded by: Cllr Alasdair Ibbotson

Flintshire County Council notes:

- 1) The Audit Wales report “Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales”, commissioned following the Grenfell disaster;
- 2) That the report states “Factors that should be considered when setting fees are specified in the regulations. Apart from the principle of breaking even and staff costs, the factors include use of the building, floor size, and cost. However, other potential considerations such as the competitiveness of fees and comparing with others are not specified in the Regulations... We have concluded that many local authorities’ building control services are not charging and setting fees in line with the Regulations and CIPFA guidance.”
- 3) That Flintshire’s action plan to address the report states “Building Control is a competitive service. Customers can use other means to secure their Building Regulations outside of the Council (e.g. use independent Approved Inspectors) so a review and any subsequent review of Fees will need to ensure we remain competitive and do not out price the Council's services out of the market.”, and
- 4) That the action plan, despite critical comments at Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee, was passed by cabinet.

Flintshire County Council believes:

- 1) That the action plan as drafted directly contradicts the Audit Wales report. 2) That the council should comply with laws and regulations.

Flintshire County Council resolves:

- 1) That the council regrets the cabinet’s decision to approve an action plan which endorses a fee-setting approach which Audit Wales have said falls out with the regulations, and

- 2) That, in setting fees and charges for the Building Control service, Cabinet should ensure that it complies fully with the regulations and ignores alternative methods of calculation.