

James Dornan MSP  
Convenor of Education and Skills Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Dear Sir,

Further to your letter of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in relation to schools inspections, I can respond to the two part enquiry as follows:

### **Part 1 - Inspection and remedial work of the current estate since January 2016**

#### **To what extent:**

- **has the school estate been inspected?**

Visual inspections of all four PPP procured schools and three traditionally procured schools were carried out by a team of technical officers on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

In April 2016, BAM, who were the contractor for all PPP built schools in West Dunbartonshire, also carried out their own inspections of the four PPP schools.

BAM also provided documentary evidence of their own quality assurance processes including: Quality Assurance Records, Defects Avoidance Procedures, Internal Quality Audits and BSI Audit Documentation.

During April 2017 BAM also arranged for a third party specialist contractor WSP, to carry out a survey on fire stopping elements of the PPP buildings.

- **have faults been identified?**

In relation to the visual inspections, no faults were discovered either by WDCs technical officers in the four PPP and three traditionally built schools or BAMs inspection team in relation to the four PPP schools.

- **has remedial work been undertaken and the impact of this?**

In relation to the buildings structures, no work was deemed necessary.

In relation to fire stopping, surveys have taken place over the last two weeks however the report will not be available until after this response. Notwithstanding this, BAM have agreed, if necessary, they will attend to any remedial work highlighted in the report.

### **Part 2 - Quality Assurance Practices**

- **how quality assurance is undertaken on current capital projects on the school estate;**

West Dunbartonshire Council have an in house team of Clerks of Works who undertake quality assurance duties in all capital projects.

- **whether the quality assurance of school capital projects has been reassessed since 2016;**

In relation to traditionally procured contracts, West Dunbartonshire Council has always employed the services of our own Clerks of Works. In relation to PPP or DBFM contracts, we have reassessed the arrangement where the contractor principally retains responsibility for quality assurance but governed by the appointment of an Independent Certifier who provides a third party quality assurance service.

- **whether there are, or were, particular issues depending on the funding model and the lessons to be learned?**

In previous PPP and DBFM contracts, the contractor was principally responsible for quality assurance with further scrutiny being provided by the Independent Certifier. As seems to be the case, and indeed highlighted by Professor Cole in his report, this failed to provide the level of quality assurance required in many of the Edinburgh Schools contracts. As such West Dunbartonshire Council has taken the decision going forward that in any future contracts of these types, we will appoint our own in-house Clerk of Works to provide quality assurance advice to the Council for onward communication to the contractor.

With regard to the rest of the schools estate, visual inspections on building structures were carried out between 7th and 24th April 2014 following the tragic death of a pupil at Liberton High School, Edinburgh. As a result of these inspections, a number of minor repairs were carried out.

Furthermore, West Dunbartonshire Council employs two Property Coordinators who frequently visit all operational properties and are tasked, among other duties, with reporting any evidence of potential structural defects to our in house Structural Engineer, who would then follow up with a site visit and report if necessary.

I trust you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

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