
From: Brian Martin
Sent: 11 June 2010 13:33
To: Mike Larking; Sandy Bishop; Robert Attrill
Cc: Siobhan Larking; Anthony Burd; Kerry MacHale; Louise Upton; Harinder Sahota
Subject: RE: Bob Neill - Harrogate speech - Sprinklers

Thanks Mike

I've talked this through with Anthony and Siobhan.

We'd very much support the idea of setting out the approach to regulation. The key message would be something like;

"If you think that more fire protection would be good for UK businesses then you should be making your case to the business community, not to the Government. Understanding commercial risk is what business does and it is not the place for Government to tell people how to run their businesses."

I think this ties in with the stuff that's coming back from the Entec work .

As for the repeal of Local Acts we agree that it would make sense to say something but this should leave some room for manoeuvre. I.e.

"The Government is keen to reduce regulatory burden on business wherever it is possible. One area we are looking at is the additional fire protection measures that are located in some local Acts. If we are satisfied that these are unnecessary then we will be looking to see if they can be repealed."

That said, the Wales office have suggested that we run this past Welsh Ministers before going public. I'm planning to put up another sub on the Local Act Repeals next week to cover the proposed timetable and I'll include a draft Ministerial letter to WAG.

Brian

From: Mike Larking
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2010 9:56 AM
To: Sandy Bishop; Robert Attrill
Cc: Brian Martin; Siobhan Larking; Anthony Burd; Kerry MacHale; Louise Upton; Harinder Sahota
Subject: Bob Neill - Harrogate speech - Sprinklers

<< File: 105019-Submission on revoking Fire Protection in Local Acts.doc >>
Sandy/Rob,

Regarding the issue of sprinklers, we've agreed that we should use Bob Neill's key note address at the Fire Conference on 29/30 June to send a clear and unambiguous message to the fire world that the Govt will not welcome calls for more regulation, and that in the spirit of localism will expect FRSs to work at the local level with partners to explore non-regulatory routes for encouraging the greater use and installation of sprinklers.

You'll be aware that the Programme Team is responding to a request from Secretary of State for advice on areas where we can reduce burdens on business and other partners by reducing regulation or repealing or revoking legislation. Sustainable Buildings colleagues have therefore offered up around 30 Local Acts that could be repealed under the Building Act 1984, covering additional fire safety provisions beyond the scope of the Building Regulations (such as sprinklers). Attached minsub refers. Bob Neill has now given the go ahead to repeal the Local Acts.

These proposals are likely to be very unpopular with the loud and noisy sprinkler lobby. There is, however, a clear evidence base to show that these provisions are unnecessary and that there would be no significant safety implications. Clearly, we need to consider how we articulate this news to fire partners, and so I was wondering if Bob Neill's speech at the end of this month affords us a good opportunity for him to tell the fire world of his plans to repeal these Acts? Anthony and Brian will have views on the appropriateness and timing of announcing this news at

the conference, but I thought it helpful to get some dialogue going between FRD, SB and the Programme Team in terms of handling and announcing this issue.

I'm copying this to Siobhan and Kerry who are respectively coordinating this work and the media handling strategy.

Grateful for you thoughts.

Mike