

**QUESTION NO 16**

**By Councillor Webber for answer by  
the Convener of the Housing,  
Homelessness and Fair Work  
Committee at a meeting of the  
Council on 10 February 2022**

The aim of housing standards is to improve houses, not to criminalise homeowners. It is right that the new standard for fire alarms should be built into the tolerable standard as improvement to fire safety should be part of the basic requirements on all tenures to improve fire safety. Most homeowners want to make their homes as safe as possible, and compliance will in time form part of any Home Report when they come to sell their home. As this will be a minimum standard for safe houses, local authorities will be able to use their statutory powers to require owners to carry out work on substandard housing. However, as is the case for other elements of the Tolerable Standard, any intervention must be proportionate, rational and reasonable and where owners are unable to meet the standard, it is not a criminal offence. Local authorities have broad statutory responsibility for tackling substandard housing in their area, and for major defects can require homeowners to carry out work, but any intervention will be proportionate, and we do not expect them to go beyond advising homeowners about fire alarms.

**Question** (1) What resource provisions have the Council made in relation to private home enforcement of the new Legislation on interlinked heat and smoke alarms?

**Answer** (1)

**Question** (2) Can the Convener confirm what proportion of Council homes are now compliant with the new legislation?

**Answer** (2)