



BANBRIDGE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ROBERT GILMORE FCIS FCMI  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

2 April 2007

Ms Julie Gillespie  
Legislation Progress Unit  
Room A4.01  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SR

Dear Ms Gillespie

**PROPOSAL FOR A DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL: THE PUBLIC  
AUTHORITIES REFORM (NI) ORDER 2007**

Thank you for inviting the Council to comment on the Draft Order in Council.

Members have considered the consultation document and have expressed concern at the proposed abolition of the Northern Ireland Housing Council.

You will be aware that the Housing Council is not an unaccountable quango and has secured the support and active participation of Councils throughout Northern Ireland.

We believe that the Housing Council continues to provide an essential lynchpin to local democracy and should remain in place until a decision is taken on the structuring, role and remit of the NI Housing Executive.

We do not believe that the abolition of the Housing Council at this time is justified. We consider that the Housing Council continues to fulfil an important democratic representative role which cannot be replicated by any other body. We are concerned that at a time of mounting crises in local housing that the voice of the Housing Council is to be lost.

We urgently ask the government to reconsider this draft legislation and to suspend any decision on the abolition of the Housing Council.

Yours sincerely

  
PJ CUMISKEY  
Director of Corporate Services

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