
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	5 September 2017
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report	EDUCOM/70/17/EM
Contact Officer:	Eddie Montgomery	Contact No:	01475 712472
Subject:	Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) Cladding		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the assurance activities undertaken across the Inverclyde School Estate in response to the Grenfell Tower fire in London and the subsequent Scottish Government activities in respect of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) Cladding.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has undertaken assurance activity across its estate in connection with the concerns over Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding. No safety concerns have arisen from that activity.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

Wilma Bain
Corporate Director Education,
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4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following the Grenfell Tower fire in London, the Scottish Government formed a Ministerial Working Group (Building and fire safety working group) to oversee a review of existing building and fire safety regulatory frameworks, and any other relevant matters, in order to ensure that people are safe in Scotland's buildings, and make any recommendations for improvement as required. The work programme for the group can be viewed at the following link:
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/building-and-fire-safety-working-group-work-programme/>
- 4.2 Concerns have been raised about the cladding material used at Grenfell Tower and the information requests from the Scottish Government have focused on the use of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) as part of new build or refurbishment of Local Authority Estates.
- 4.3 The Scottish Government contacted all Councils with the initial priority of seeking assurances regarding high rise domestic properties (over 18 metres) and this information was returned and an update provided by Scottish Government – see <https://beta.gov.scot/news/comment-on-cladding-and-high-rise-buildings/>
- 4.4 As part of the information and intelligence gathering to inform the work programme of the group, the Scottish Government (through the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills) contacted all Local Authority Directors of Education requesting information on the use of cladding made of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) as part of any school new build or refurbishment projects.

5.0 ALUMINIUM COMPOSITE MATERIAL (ACM) CLADDING

- 5.1 Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) panels are commonly used for cladding buildings, typically as a form of rainscreen which is part of a double-wall type construction. The rainscreen itself simply prevents significant amounts of water penetrating into the wall construction. Thermal insulation, airtightness and structural stability are provided by the second, inner part of the wall construction.
- 5.2 ACM cladding varies in construction but generally consist of two skins of aluminium bonded to either side of a lightweight core of polyethylene (PE), polyurethane (PUR), profiled metal or a mineral core. The specific type of panel used on Grenfell Tower was Reynobond PE and this has not been used on any Inverclyde Schools.

6.0 INVERCLYDE SCHOOL ESTATE ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

- 6.1 Inverclyde's Legal & Property Services section undertook a review of all existing school buildings including co-ordinating information from relevant external organisations and consultants involved in the various construction projects. The review confirmed that three school projects included use of a type of ACM cladding on a proportion of the external walls (Kilmacolm Primary School / Lomond View Academy / St Columba's High School).
- 6.2 It should be noted that the Ministerial Working Group have advised that:

“Scottish Building Standards and regulations mean that the specific type of ACM which was used on Grenfell Tower should not be used in the cladding systems of high rise domestic properties. In the case of other buildings, in some controlled circumstances specified by Scottish building regulations, some ACM products can be used as part of the cladding systems if correctly installed”

The refurbishment projects for the three schools above involved appropriate arrangements for construction quality monitoring including a Council appointed Clerk of Works. These arrangements were in place to ensure that the systems have been installed correctly and in accordance with Scottish Building Standards and regulations in force at the time of their installation.

6.3 The health, safety and wellbeing of children, young people, teachers and staff, and all building users are paramount. In respect of the schools noted, this is addressed through a number of operational procedures and physical building systems with the following in place:

- Robust fire risk assessments.
- Established evacuation procedures involving immediate evacuation (typically achieved in under 4 minutes for a secondary school).
- Automatic fire detection and alarm systems.
- Automatic fire suppression systems (sprinklers).

6.4 The Council's Legal & Property Service in conjunction with the Corporate Health & Safety section, have carried out an internal review of the fire risk assessments for the schools noted above and are satisfied that an appropriate package of fire safety measures is in place at each facility. Legal & Property Services have also engaged a consultant (Member of Institution of Fire Engineers) to provide an external review of the fire risk assessments and this is currently on-going. It should be noted however that it is not anticipated that this external review will result in a change to the current situation / arrangements.

7.0 FUTURE GUIDANCE

7.1 The Council will continue to monitor the outputs from the Ministerial Working Group and any impact on current fire and building regulatory frameworks.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

8.1 There are no financial issues.

Legal

8.2 There are no legal issues.

Human Resources

8.3 There are no human resources issues.

Equalities

8.4 There are no equalities issues.

Repopulation

8.5 There are no repopulation issues.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 There are no financial implications in this report and therefore the Head of Finance has not been consulted.

- 9.2 There are no direct staffing implications in respect of the report and as such the Head of Organisational Development, HR and Communications has not been consulted.
- 9.3 There are no legal issues arising from the content of this report and as such the Head of Legal and Property Services has not been consulted.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Letter from Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills – 24 June 2017.
- Letter from Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills – 1 August 2017.