

## **Independent Report shows that NIHE contractors are owed money by NIHE**

Mascott Construction, PK Murphy Construction, Bann Ltd and Dixon's Contractors have today issued details of a Report conducted into the allegations of £18m overpayment which were made by Minister Nelson McCausland and Chairman of NIHE, Donald Hoodless on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013. These allegations have always been strongly denied by the contractors and a new, independent report supports their position.

Following the allegations, which were made initially in the Assembly and then in the media, two investigations were commissioned. The first investigation, focusing on the management of contracts by NIHE and the allegations, was carried out by Campbell Tickell and details of that report are due to be discussed tomorrow (Thursday) at the Social Development Committee in Stormont. The contractors have never been consulted on this report nor have they ever been shown any details of any evidence to support the £18m allegation.

The second, more detailed investigation, looked at a wide range of Projects with both NIHE and each of the contractors, inspecting and investigating at random with two independent expert cost consultants, one appointed by NIHE and one appointed by each of the four contractors.

Four separate reports were produced from this, each one specific to each of the four named contractors.

Four reports, which have now been signed off by the Independent Experts show that in fact the contractors are currently in an "*Underpaid*" position.

At the outset of the investigation both the contractors and NIHE agreed that any over or underpayment would be honoured and paid.

A spokesman for the contractors said: "We are delighted that our position has been vindicated. The impact of these allegations on all our businesses has been immense. We have always known we had carried out the work required of us to the Ethos of the Contract. In addition, over the years that we have worked with NIHE, we had implemented, at our own suggestion, many improvements in procedure which have resulted in really significant savings for NIHE. Not only have we never received recognition for this, we have been publicly and wrongly accused of trying somehow to take advantage of our client. This latest report, which finally allows us to present proper, detailed and accurate evidence to independent consultants, who have agreed on the findings, has been a great relief. We are now looking forward to being able to put this behind us."