



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

GRENFELL INQUIRY – GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 28 February 2020

Purpose of Report:

To update Members with developments in relation to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the publication of the Government's response to recommendations.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the contents of the report.
- Agree to receive further updates as the Government enact the actions outlined in their response.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 14 June 2017, a fire occurred at Grenfell Tower, London, which destroyed the 24-storey block of 129 residential flats, resulting in 72 people losing their lives.
- 1.2 The Right Honourable Sir Martin Moore-Bick was appointed as Chairman of the public inquiry; set up to examine the circumstances leading up to, and surrounding, the fire at Grenfell Tower.
- 1.3 The Phase One report was published on 30 October 2019. The first part of the report focused on three main areas;
 - An account of the building, its surroundings and the standard working practices of London Fire Brigade (LFB);
 - A detailed description of events on 14 June 2017 including events within the Tower and action by emergency services, the council and the Tenant Management Organisation; and
 - Conclusions about the fire and fire spread, the actions by emergency services, systemic failings of LFB, and failings in the fire safety regulations applied to the refurbishment of the building.
- 1.4 The second part of the Phase One report pays tribute to those who lost their lives in the fire and makes recommendations which can be dissected in to three audiences: LFB directly, the wider fire sector and emergency services, and other responsible persons such as building owners, Government and Local Authorities.
- 1.5 Phase Two of the inquiry will take place during 2020 and focus upon the circumstances leading up to the fire including the Tower's design, construction, composition, modifications and fire safety measures within the building.
- 1.6 Members were presented with a report at the December 2019 Fire Authority meeting outlining the Service's actions and the recommendations from phase one of the inquiry.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 On 21 January 2020, the Government published its response to the Phase One inquiry recommendations. The response is available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/859389/Government_Response_to_Grenfell_Inquiry_Phase_1_Report.pdf

- 2.2 The response sets out the actions taken by the Government in addressing the recommendations from the inquiry, and captures actions which have already been taken to date.
- 2.3 The first section of the response outlines the work that has been undertaken in response to the use of combustible materials on the exterior of buildings; noting the £600 million funding which has been made available for the removal of unsafe cladding from high rise residential homes. It also notes the work undertaken by fire and rescue services (FRSs) and local authorities, to ensure that appropriate interim measures are in place whilst remediation works are completed.
- 2.4 The document then references the recommendations that will require changes in law. The forthcoming Fire Safety Bill from the Home Office is quoted as putting 'beyond doubt' that building owners or managers of multi-occupied residential buildings of any height will be required to fully assess and mitigate any fire safety risks of external wall systems and front doors to individual flats. This section also points towards further developments to fire safety legislation and the testing of other, non-ACM, cladding types on building exteriors.
- 2.5 In relation to 'stay put and evacuation', the response highlights ongoing work by the Home Office to conduct an evidence review which will be followed by a technical 'operational' research with FRSs to assist the development of national operational guidance.
- 2.6 The response refers to future changes to fire safety (Approved Document B) legislation, including the requirement for sprinklers in buildings and reviewing the height requirement for certain prescribed fire safety solutions.
- 2.7 The Government makes several recommendations to building owners, within the response, for actions to take prior to being required to by law. This includes appropriate signage within landing areas of high rise premises, the testing of cladding and fire doors and the provision of evacuation alert systems.
- 2.8 The Government announces within the document, that work will begin immediately to establish a new Building Safety Regulator within the Health and Safety Executive, including the appointment of a Chief Inspector of Buildings and the establishment of a board, chaired by Dame Judith Hackitt, to oversee the transition to this new regime.
- 2.9 The response finishes with an overview of the recommendations made to LFB, and the steps that are being taken to address these under the new Commissioner, the implementation of the Protection Board (chaired by NFCC) and the work of the Home Office to ensure greater interoperability and communications between emergency services, as detailed in the recommendations by Sir Martin Moore-Bick.
- 2.10 This response from Government does not alter or affect any of the steps put in place by the Service to address the recommendations from Phase One of

the inquiry. It does, however, highlight the continuing changing landscape in relation to fire safety, the developments that are anticipated for the next 12 months and the increased demand on the Service, particularly the Fire Protection function.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equalities implications arising from this report as no changes to existing, or introduction of new arrangements of the delivery of services are proposed.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report, however, Members should be aware that proposed changes to fire safety legislation, and statutory requirements of fire and rescue services, are likely to have a future impact on the resourcing requirements of the Service.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Learning from local and national incidents is essential to ensure the Service continues to mitigate the risk presented by fire to both communities and employees. The co-ordinated response with local partners, and the wider fire sector, is designed to ensure that a proportionate, risk-based approach to actions concerning fire spread in the built environment is adopted.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report, however, the Service is working with Nottingham City Council in addressing the risks posed by multi-occupancy residential buildings in the City area. Additionally, the Service will

continue to work with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service in the enactment of recommendations from the Phase One report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members;

10.1 Note the contents of the report.

10.2 Agree to receive further updates as the Government enact the actions outlined in their response.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER