

Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

Agenda

Wednesday 6 September 2017

7.00 pm

Small Hall - Hammersmith Town Hall

MEMBERSHIP

Administration:	Opposition
Councillor Daryl Brown Councillor Adam Connell Councillor Alan De'Ath (Chair)	Councillor Harry Phibbs Councillor Donald Johnson

CONTACT OFFICER: Ainsley Gilbert
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
☎: 020 8753 2088
E-mail: ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk

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Date Issued: 29 August 2017

Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

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6 September 2017

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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
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3. MINUTES	1 - 6
4. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR	
As Councillor Lucy Ivimy, the previous Vice-Chair, was removed from the PAC membership at Council on 19 July 2017 the committee is asked to consider electing a new Vice-Chair.	
5. FIRE SAFETY UPDATE	7 - 27
6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME	28 - 30

The next meeting will be held on 8 November 2017 in the Small Hall at Hammersmith Town Hall. The meeting will start at 7:00pm.

Members and residents are invited to submit suggestions for the work programme, either at the meeting or by email to ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk

**If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.*

At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.

Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest. Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Audit, Pensions and Standards Committee.

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham



Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Wednesday 5 July 2017

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Daryl Brown, Adam Connell, Alan De'Ath (Chair), Lucy Ivimy and Harry Phibbs

Other Councillors: Andrew Jones, Sue Fennimore and Lisa Homan

Officers: James Fitzgerald - Head of Culture, Thomas Dodd - Arts Development Officer, Brendan Morrow - Reviews & Complex Cases Manager, Fawad Bhatti – Policy and Strategy Officer

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Connell. Councillor Ivimy had sent her apologies for lateness.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June were agreed to be accurate.

11. ARTS STRATEGY UPDATE AND 2017-18 ACTION PLAN

James Fitzgerald explained that the Council's Arts Strategy had been launched in Mid 2016 and an Arts Development Officer had been appointed 6 months ago. The report detailed what progress had been made and what was planned for the next year.

Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting as a correct record of the proceedings and any amendments arising will be recorded in the minutes of that subsequent meeting.

Thomas Dodd explained that the highlights so far were the Hammersmith Poem by Robert Montgomery, which had been displayed under the Town Hall Extension and drawn significant attention; and the successful shop front studio in Kings Mall. The shop front studio was the first pilot scheme using an empty shop as a studio which had worked; it was intended to repeat the project.

Councillor Jones said that he was very pleased with how the Arts Officer had been taking forward the Arts Strategy and with the projects which were being developed. He noted that the Council had also organised the Shepherds Bush Comedy Festival, which had supported arts venues. Councillor Jones said that the Council was looking at a range of new ideas and was keen to ensure that the borough had sufficient gallery space.

A resident asked what the Council thought Arts Fest should be. Councillor Jones said that he felt Arts Fest should continue to be run by the community but that the Council should offer more practical support where this was possible. Councillor Fennimore noted that the Arts Fest received Council funding and said that it was hoped that business in the borough could be encouraged to give more. Councillor Jones added that the Arts Strategy was focussed on how the Council could work with partners to deliver exciting arts projects and facilities; he noted that the Council continued to have its budget cut by central government and that the Council did not have enough money to directly fund all of the projects it might want to.

Councillor Phibbs asked who had owned the unit in Kings Mall which the shopfront studio had used. Thomas Dodd said that the unit was owned by Schroeders, who had allowed Arts students from across London to use the unit for 6 months. Councillor Phibbs noted that buildings in private ownership might become unavailable very quickly; he asked whether there were any Council buildings which could be used, suggesting that exhibitions could be held at schools over the weekend. A resident said that performance and rehearsal space was also needed. James Fitzgerald said that officers were working with Property Services to look at options, especially for artists residencies. Councillor Brown noted that any arrangements in schools would need to have appropriate safeguards for children.

Councillor Ivimy arrived at this point in the meeting.

Councillor Phibbs noted that it was difficult to display the Cecil French collection because of the high value of some of the pieces of art but said that it was important that the collection be shown. He was pleased that some of the works had been loaned to galleries and asked whether fees had been charged. Thomas Dodd explained that, as was customary when loaning art, no fees had been charged. Mr Dodd added that when works were loaned out their value increased.

Councillor Phibbs said that the Council spent money on paying debt interest and suggested that the collection should be sold to reduce the Council's overall debt. This would, he said, leave more revenue to be spent on other

things including arts projects. He felt that the Council could not justify owning the collection whilst not displaying it.

Councillor Jones said that the administration did not want to sell off its assets. The Council's capital debt was held at low interest rates and so it was not necessary to sell the collection to reduce interest payments. He pointed out that the administration had renegotiated a number of agreements with developers to secure £56 million of additional capital. Councillor Jones explained that the majority of the value of the collection was made up of a few high value pieces, and that these were more regularly displayed than the rest of the collection. Discussions with developers were ongoing to try to fund a permanent display of the collection in the borough, whilst it was hoped that an exhibition of most of the collection could be put on somewhere in the medium term. He said that the collection needed to be catalogued and curated and that the Council was looking at how this could best be done.

A resident said that the Cecil French collection formed part of the borough's heritage and should not be sold.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether a listings section for arts and cultural events could be added to the Council's webpage. Whilst residents noted that a number of newsletters did exist Thomas Dodd agreed to look at the suggestion and see if it could be done.

A resident noted that a cultural trust had been discussed with a recent Arts network meeting and asked what more had happened on the scheme. James Fitzgerald said that the Arts Network had agreed the terms of reference for the trust and that more information would be presented to the network soon.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether the Council could set up a scheme to match artists with businesses, such as cafes, which would be prepared to display their work. James Fitzgerald said that this idea would be looked into.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether Pub Theatres could be offered business rate relief to encourage more performance space to be provided. Councillor Jones said that it was difficult to provide business rate relief; however, pubs had been encouraged to take part in the Shepherds Bush Comedy Festival which the Council had organised and planning policy was being looked at to encourage the provision of more performance space. A resident said that some pub theatres charged very high rates for the hire of their spaces which meant that groups often lost money by performing there; Councillor Phibbs thought that increased competition between venues would ensure that rates were reasonable. Councillor Jones agreed to look into the business rates implications for a business if it were to convert spare space into a theatre.

Councillor Phibbs noted that the Council's archives housed at the Lila Huset contained many paintings of local scenes which could be displayed across the Council's property portfolio. He had previously suggested this and asked whether any action had been taken. James Fitzgerald said that he would look into this, although it was noted that much of the archive's contents needed to be catalogued before it could be displayed.

Councillor Phibbs suggested that school arts competitions could be sponsored by businesses. James Fitzgerald said that officers could look at this, however, there were a great many ideas for arts projects requiring business support and so these had to be prioritised; those which were easy to arrange and would have the biggest impact would be the first schemes which officers would try to facilitate.

Councillor Phibbs asked that he be updated on progress made on schemes he had raised at the meeting by email, rather than waiting for the PAC to discuss the Arts again.

The Chair asked whether the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy supported the Arts. Councillor Jones said that the policy provided a good balance between protecting residents and encouraging a vibrant cultural and night time economy. The Council's planning policies had been amended to encourage culture and the arts.

12. HOUSING FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Brendan Morrow explained that the report set out the support the Council provided for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and those with no recourse to public funds.

Those who had been granted refugee status were entitled to work, and claim benefits and access social housing in the same way as British citizens.

Those who were claiming Asylum were provided with accommodation and subsistence payments by the National Asylum Support Service; this support continued until their application had been determined and the Council were not usually involved in this support.

The Home Office sometimes granted leave for people to remain but with no recourse to public funds. This meant that they could not claim benefits or receive help with housing in the normal way. Children and vulnerable adults did however have rights to some assistance through Social Services legislation such as the Care Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989; this was because of the Council's safeguarding duties. Where Adults or Children's Services accepted that the Council had a duty to provide assistance they would ask the Housing Solutions service to provide suitable accommodation and provide subsistence payments. Housing Solutions would place those entitled to this type of assistance in private rented accommodation which would be funded from through budgets delegated by Adults and Children's Services.

Mr Morrow explained that the team which provided the No Recourse to Public Funds Service was currently undergoing a review, with a view to closer working with Adults and Children's Services. The Council had also got access to a system called Connect which allowed officers to see immigration information and liaise with a dedicated home office team.

Councillor Fennimore said that this was a very complex area involving lots of technical legislation which many people struggled to understand. She said that she felt it was important that where the Council had a duty to support people it did this well and praised the work of officers who ensured that Hammersmith and Fulham did this. Councillor Homan added that Councillor Fennimore had taken a personal interest in this area and her work had led to improvements in the service. She noted the good work of Housing Options staff in sourcing accommodation and helping residents.

The Chair asked what the impact of the removal of the provision enabling asylum seeking families with children to remain supported until they left the UK would be. Brendan Morrow explained that the change would mean that more families who had not left the UK but whose applications for asylum had been rejected would need to be supported by the Council owing to its safeguarding duty to the family's children.

Councillor Phibbs said that the system seemed very confusing and would benefit from being clearer and easier for the public to understand. He said that he felt it was wrong that Asylum Seekers were not allowed to work whilst their claims were being processed.

Councillor Phibbs asked whether there was any incentive to the Council to reduce the costs of providing services to those with no recourse to public funds. Brendan Morrow said that the Council had a statutory duty to support those with No Recourse to Public Funds who qualify for the provision of accommodation & subsistence and that this service had to be met from existing budgets. Funding for accommodation and subsistence costs was set by Adults and Children's Services. These budgets were managed by Housing solutions which sought best value for money in sourcing competitively priced accommodation.

Councillor Phibbs asked why accommodation which was not self-contained could not be offered to refugees being resettled by the council via the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. Councillor Fennimore explained that the Home Office required self-contained properties to be offered, noting that this policy was controlled by the Conservative UK Government. Fawad Bhatti explained that the Home Office's explanation for this policy was that refugees needed to have sustainable long term accommodation leading to independence and self-sufficiency, which lodging did not provide. He also said that there was a higher risk of the 'live in' landlord and refugee tenant relationship breaking down compared to self-contained accommodation. Fawad Bhatti added that the Home Office had also specifically asked if we can accommodate larger family units with children. He noted that to his knowledge all of the 7,000 Syrian refugees who had been helped so far had been offered self-contained accommodation. Councillor Phibbs asked that the Council write to the Home Office to request a change in their guidance to allow people the choice of shared accommodation which he felt would allow more people to be helped and might allow some people to integrate more easily. Councillor Homan said that she did not share Councillor Phibbs confidence that there would be residents willing to share their homes with refugee families in the long term.

Councillor Phibbs asked how many Syrian refugees the Council had housed, noting that Camden had managed to accommodate many more families. Councillor Fennimore explained that we would have around 19 / 20 people in the near future via the Syrian and the Vulnerable Children's schemes with more in the pipeline. She said that earlier on Camden had benefitted from very philanthropic landlords enabling them to take a number of families quickly. She noted that Refugees Welcome had been working hard to encourage Hammersmith and Fulham's landlords to do the same as well as encouraging local residents to support refugees.

13. GRENFELL FIRE RESPONSE

A resident asked that an update be given on what the Council had done to help with the Grenfell Fire. Councillor Fennimore explained that on the morning of the fire Kim Dero, the Chief Executive, had called Nicholas Holgate, the Chief Executive of Kensington and Chelsea to offer support. Hammersmith and Fulham had provided staff in a number of roles with staff helping in rest centres, with housing needs assessments and many other things. Regular meetings were held to identify what further support could be offered. 41 victims of the fire were staying in hotels in Hammersmith and Fulham and these people were visited every day to provide support and advice. Councillor Homan noted that the community response to the fire had also been fantastic giving the examples of food vouchers being offered by restaurants and collections for the victims being run by TRAs.

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME

It was agreed that the next meeting would be about Fire Safety and that all other items would be postponed to another meeting.

Councillor Phibbs noted that an issue had been referred to the PAC by the Audit Committee but had not been scheduled. The Clerk explained that the item had continued to be considered by the Audit Committee, and that most of the issues they had initially raised had been resolved, and so an item had not been brought; he apologised for not having highlighted the referral to the PAC.


A resident asked that a meeting of the PAC be held in the South of the borough. The Chair agreed to look at whether this would be possible.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 8.35 pm

Chair

Contact officer: Ainsley Gilbert
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
☎: 020 8753 2088
E-mail: ainsley.gilbert@lbhf.gov.uk

Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting as a correct record of the proceedings and any amendments arising will be recorded in the minutes of that subsequent meeting.

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham ECONOMIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND THE ARTS POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE 6 September 2017		 hammersmith & fulham
FIRE SAFETY IN THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING PORTFOLIO		
Report of the Director of Property Services, Jane Martin		
Open Report		
Classification - For Policy & Advisory Review & Comment		
Key Decision: No		
Wards Affected: All		
Accountable Director: Jane Martin, Director of Property Services		
Report Author: Graham Coupar	Contact Details: Email: graham.coupar@lbhf.gov.uk Tel: 020 8753 5666	

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the council's approach to fire safety for housing. It will look at our fire safety strategy, Fire Safety Plus programme, fire risk assessments and compliance management.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.2. The Committee is invited to review and comment on the work that has been undertaken and future proposals.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

We have been working on the strategic review since March 2017. We have adapted our strategy to respond to issues raised from the Grenfell Tower fire. Full Council has endorsed the fire safety plus programme.

Following Audit Committee findings in March 2017, the revised approach to fire safety was put together. This noted key areas where a step change was required. It is also in recognition of the serious fire at Shepherds Court, Charecroft estate, on 19 August 2016. To date we have:

- Revised our fire safety strategy to reflect best practice.
- Developed strong / positive links with the London Fire Brigade (LFB).
- Set out a Fire Safety Plus investment programme that will see £20m invested into the stock over the next two years, all targeted at making sure residents' homes are safe. This includes tenants' and leaseholders' homes and goes way beyond minimum standards.

Overview of the revised approach

3.1 Fire Safety Strategy 2017

The Fire Safety Strategy sets out the vision and purpose of how we will manage fire safety. The new strategy confirms the officers responsible for contributing towards the legal duties and the roles, responsibilities and outcomes required. Checklists and process maps supplement these to ensure there is a clear audit trail, accountability, and clear timescales to conclude the required actions. The strategy includes requirements for staff training and a comprehensive training plan for all involved is being developed with the first structured training sessions being delivered to Estate Services & Security staff during August.

The strategy reflects national policy, most notably the 'person centered' risk assessments for sheltered schemes, published by the National Fire Chiefs Council (formerly the Chief Fire Officers Association). The strategy also embeds the LFB audit tool for improvement works with fire safety implications.

The revised strategy was shared with the LFB and reflects earlier feedback received from them.

Rather than seeing the strategy as a fixed and rigid approach, it will be kept under review and the council will issue updates as they become appropriate. This is particularly important in an environment where legislation and working practices may change significantly and frequently.

3.2 Fire Safety Plus

Following Full Council's decision to endorse significant investment in fire safety, housing has implemented the Fire Safety Plus programme. By 22 August, 71 residents had requested a check and appointments have been booked.

Some aspects of the programme can be delivered quickly (e.g. free plug adaptors) but some are more complex. This includes the retro fitting of sprinklers which will be designed on a block by block basis and differing systems may be needed for taller blocks in contrast to those below ten storeys. We have appointed C S Todd & Associates to assist in ensuring we have the best solution on every installation.

The safety of everyone living in each block is central to the Fire Safety Plus programme. It has been agreed that designated works from Fire Safety Plus will be provided to all residents, free of charge. Normally, the council would recharge leaseholders for a proportion of the cost of improvement works. A commitment has been made to an 'amnesty' period where the council will reinstate any unauthorised work free of charge, which may have compromised fire safety. This offer is to help make sure there is a higher level of fire integrity as possible. The amnesty offer is limited and once finished, anyone undertaking unauthorised works will be recharged accordingly.

There has been media interest in faulty electrical appliances resulting in serious fires. The Commissioner of the LFB has commented on the high frequency of calls the LFB receive in relation to this. Central to the Fire Safety Plus strategy is the electrical testing of white goods and if an appliance fails the test it will be replaced free of charge. This applies to all residents including leaseholders.

The Council has put a link to the Which? web site on the Council's website for all residents to check known defective tumble dryers against. This can be viewed at www.lbhf.gov.uk/checkyourappliance

3.3 Fire Risk Assessments

We have independent experts reviewing fire safety in all communal areas of blocks. Current standards don't require these assessments to check the outside of the building – cladding and external panels are not usually checked. So we have raised our standards in H&F and asked our expert fire reviewers to look at all external panelling.

Experts are also quality checking our own risk assessments for all sheltered schemes and blocks with 6 storeys plus and this will be completed by December 2017

3.4 Fire Safety Checks

In August 2017, housing staff completed safety checks on communal areas of every block and converted street properties. The process was based on good practice within the housing sector and staff were trained on how to apply the checklist consistently and uniformly. The check picks up common management issues that can be resolved quickly, for example, fire notices, damaged fire doors, items left in communal areas that can block fire exits.

The results of the checks will be published on the internet to offer reassurance to residents and residents can look up their block to see the safety check.

3.5 Working with the London Fire Brigade

The Fire Safety Strategy includes developing and maintaining a positive and proactive working relationship with the LFB. This involves the Borough Commander, fire safety regulation representatives and senior management

from Housing Services. Regular on-site meetings support this to demonstrate progression and to discuss alternative approaches. There is a lead contact within housing for any issues that the LFB require escalating.

The outcome of the above approach is a much clearer understanding of what the key issues are and how best to address these. It also has enabled our lead advisors, in particular CS Todd and Associates, to develop their recommendations in full consultation with the LFB at an early stage.

3.6 Management Actions

We have no council blocks that have cladding like that used on Grenfell Tower. We only have three tower blocks that have cladding. These blocks are on the Edward Woods estate and have 23 floors each. They are clad in Rockwool product. We have had both the materials used and the installation tested by independent experts BRE, and the Edward Woods estate passed these tests.

We have completed some fire safety work on the Edward Woods estate including altering the smoke alarm system, and removing panelling to the internal corridors on the top floors and extending the wet riser to the top floor.

Charecroft estate has four tower blocks each with 19 floors and these tower blocks have panels. We will be removing and replacing the window panels at Charecroft estate and we have round-the-clock fire patrols in all the Charecroft blocks to keep people safe while this work is being done.

Independent experts have also completed full checks on all other blocks with panels and where removal is recommended, this will form the basis of a future programme of works.

3.7 Compliance Management System

To ensure that all compliance actions from FRAs and safety checks are monitored a new compliance database (Geometra) was procured and commissioned. This went live in early August and enables FRA inspections to be collected in a uniform manner using a tablet device and once completed they can be uploaded to the database. Management and technical actions will be prioritised and assigned to individual officers to action. This will make sure a robust process control is in place as well as real time management reporting.

The database uses 'workflow' process by assigning tasks to individuals and setting a target date based on pre-agreed priorities. If the action remains outstanding near the target date, the system sends automated reminders as well as escalation to management.

3.8 Support to residents of Grenfell Tower

The council offered immediate support to the families placed within our borough following the Grenfell Tower fire. We've had up to 70 families placed

in 7 hotels across the borough and the numbers are currently remaining stable.

Officers from housing and adult social care regularly visit the hotels to meet and support the families. All families are provided with contact details should they need to reach officers at any time. We continue to provide restaurant vouchers, oyster cards top up, referral for emotional support and liaison with keyworkers.

Officers also supported by helping to organise donations that were collected at Hammersmith Town Hall.

3.9 How we communicate with Residents

Appended to this report is a detailed schedule of the communications issued by the council post Grenfell. The vast majority of these are resident focused and the emphasis was upon reassurance.

3.10 Approach to Continuous Improvement

A step change in approach to fire safety has occurred since March 2017 and critical to this is to make sure it is sustainable. Housing is planning to seek the externally accredited SP205 quality assurance standard. SP205 is an industry standard for organisations undertaking fire risk assessments. It sets out criteria and requirements for the competency of those carrying out the risk assessments, and the competency of those who review and sign off the reports before they are issued.

4.0 PROGRESS TO DATE, KEY ACHIEVEMENTS & ISSUES

The approach to fire safety management has contributed to:

- A substantial investment programme in Fire Safety Plus that looks at property condition, management approaches and resident involvement to achieve safe homes.
- An approach to fire safety in line with best practice.
- A risk based approach to delivering fire risk assessments, recognising complexity, and overall delivery of the entire programme.
- A reinvigorated and clear relationship with the LFB at several levels.
- A commitment to developing systems and procedures to ensure these fully support the prompt and effective delivery of a complex fire safety service to a diverse housing portfolio.
- An embedded continuous improvement regime with a view to formalising this and seeking external accreditation in due course.

4.2 Next Steps & Key Priorities

4.2.1 Three strategic priorities are:

- **Objective 1 – The timely delivery of Fire Safety Plus in consultation with residents**
- **Objective 2 – Fully embedding an externally accredited quality control process as it relates to fire safety**
- **Objective 3 – Signing off all recommended actions of the Internal Audit report (February 2017)**

6.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

No equality implications have been identified as part of the work on this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Leases will need to be checked to establish to whom the front entrance door is demised and whether there are any other legal implications arising under the terms and conditions of the lease.

Implications verified/completed by: Rhian Davies – Chief Solicitor

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No direct financial implications from this report, however, members should note that the expected costs of the Fire Safety Plus programme are between £20-50million.

Implications verified/completed by: Kath Corbett – Director of Housing Finance and Resources.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS

There are no identified business implications because of the fire safety strategy.

APPENDICES

1. Fire safety plus booklet
2. Schedule of communications issued post Grenfell Tower fire



**WE'RE
WORKING
TO KEEP
YOU SAFE**

WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP YOU SAFE

"The fire in Kensington has made one thing clear - just meeting minimum fire standards is not enough. The regulations are clearly not good enough. So we've put together an H&F Fire Safety Plus programme and we'll be going above and beyond what is required.



"We want our residents to know that we care deeply about your safety, we understand your concerns, and we will do everything it takes to keep you safe.

"All councils need to do more to make sure tenants' and leaseholders' homes are safe. We've got work to do here - that's why we've developed an H&F Fire Safety Plus programme to make sure our properties meet higher standards. And we've set aside £20million to pay for it.

"Tenants and leaseholders have been working with us to shape our Fire Safety Plus package. We've been visiting estates and hearing residents' concerns and suggestions for improving fire safety - and we're acting on that with a massive programme of works."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Cowan', written in a cursive style.

Cllr Stephen Cowan

Leader of Hammersmith & Fulham Council

OUR FIRE SAFETY PLUS PROGRAMME

Our Fire Safety Plus programme is about doing more than is required of us to keep you safe. We've set aside the money to fund a major package of testing, works and free equipment for our residents.

① Replacement concierges

We are bringing back concierge staff to Edward Woods and Charecroft estates and looking to do the same at other estates where concierge staff have been removed in the past.

② Sprinklers in tower blocks

We are working on a plan to install sprinklers in all high-rise blocks. As a first step, we are drawing up specifications for the work for each block where sprinklers would help improve safety, and we'll be in touch with you about detailed plans for your estate or block.

We will not be charging leaseholders for installing sprinklers.

③ Better fire assessments

We have independent experts reviewing fire safety in all communal blocks. Current standards don't require these assessments to check the outside of the building - cladding and external panels are not usually checked. So we've raised the standards in H&F and asked our expert fire reviewers to look at all external panelling. They will also do much more detailed and thorough assessments than in the past.

Continued over page

4 Free safety checks for every home

We are offering every resident an individual safety check visit, with priority for people in high-rise homes (six stores or more). As well as our standard smoke alarm and gas checks, we're offering every home an H&F Fire Safety Plus package.

- **New fire doors** - If, during our safety visit, we find the external fire door to your flat doesn't meet safety standards, we'll replace it with one that resists fire for 60 minutes. There will be no charge, including to leaseholders, and we won't take any action against anyone who has altered their door.
- **Free replacement appliances** - We'll give your white goods (washing machines, fridges, tumble dryers etc) a free portable appliance test (PAT) safety check. We'll replace any appliance that fails the test with a brand new one - for free. That includes for leaseholders.

The fire in Shepherds Court last year was started by a faulty Hotpoint tumble dryer. If you haven't yet checked whether your appliances are on the Hotpoint, Creda or Indesit recall list, please do so and book your upgrade with them. Check whether your tumble dryer is affected at: www.lbhf.gov.uk/checkyourappliance

- **Free heat detectors** - During our visit, we'll also install free heat detectors and check any detectors or alarms you already have to make sure they're working properly.

Book now

To book your Fire Safety Plus visit, please call the customer services centre on **0800 023 4499** or email: lbhf.housingrepairs@mitie.com

5 Free plug adaptors

The London Fire Brigade advise residents not to use cube-style plug adaptor/extensions. They say linear adaptors with circuit breakers built in are safer.

If you are presently using an adaptor which looks like this:



Then we will happily swap it for an extension lead which looks like this:



You can exchange your cube-style plug adaptors for FREE for a safer type of extension lead. We hope you've already received the invitation to our exchange events. But if you haven't, go to www.lbhf.gov.uk/fire

Enquiries

If you have any questions about this Fire Safety Plus residents' package, please contact Mitie on **0800 023 4499** or email: lbhf.housingrepairs@mitie.com

BLOCKS WITH CLADDING

We have no council blocks in H&F that have cladding like that used on Grenfell Tower.

We have only three blocks that have cladding - all at the Edward Woods estate. We have had both the materials used and the installation tested by independent experts BRE, and the Edward Woods estate has passed these tests.

There are some housing association blocks in the borough that have failed the cladding tests. None of these are council properties, and the housing associations that own them are working to make them safe.

EXTERNAL PANELS

The fire at Shepherds Court in Shepherds Bush on 19 August 2016 was caused by a faulty tumble dryer igniting. There was no loss of life or serious injury and initial fire reports showed the fire was well-contained. However, the fire brigade subsequently raised concerns about external panels below lounge windows.

We have commissioned one of the leading firms in the field to carry out additional testing and assessment of these window panels.

We will be removing and replacing the window panels at Charecroft estate and we have round-the-clock fire patrols in all the Charecroft blocks to keep people safe while this work is being done.

We have commissioned a review of all our other communal blocks to check if these panels are used elsewhere, to check their safety, and, if necessary, to replace these too.

LISTENING TO RESIDENTS

One of the main lessons from the Kensington fire is that councils should do more to listen to residents and act on their concerns. Here's what we've been doing to make sure residents' voices are heard:

- Fire safety officers are currently visiting all our estates to talk to residents, and to check fire safety arrangements.
- We've begun the process of setting up a residents' advisory group on fire safety, to work with us on our improvement plans.
- We have held advice and listening sessions at the Edward Woods and Charecroft estates in Shepherds Bush - some of our tallest tower blocks where there have been concerns about cladding and window panels.
- We've written to all residents in high-rise blocks in H&F to offer advice and reassurance where we can. We've also written separately to residents of Edward Woods and Charecroft estates about their specific concerns.
- We've met our tenants' and residents' associations to hear their views on actions we need to take, and will continue to work closely with local people.

PLEASE HELP KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

There are some simple ways you can help keep your home and family safe. The following requests are based on fire brigade advice.

- Please keep communal areas and hallways clear of obstructions, such as furniture, bikes and boxes. It could save lives.
- Please talk to your family about your fire plan - and make sure everyone knows what they should do, including children. Each block has its own fire safety procedures, but you can also find general advice from the London Fire Brigade at **www.london-fire.gov.uk**
- Please don't smoke in bed or leave candles unattended.
- Please don't remove or alter the external fire door to your flat. These are crucial to stopping the spread of fire in any block and give you the protection you need to stay safe until the fire brigade is able to put out any fire.
- We really need you to help us by allowing us access for fire and safety inspections so we can test equipment and fire doors.
- If you have concerns about any of the appliances in your house or in your block, please tell one of your local housing officers. The details for your local housing offices are on the back cover of this booklet.
- Please talk to your neighbours and help them with their fire plans if they need it, especially older people living alone or people who have recently moved to the area.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN YOUR BUILDING

Fire safety in all buildings also depends on good maintenance and housekeeping.

Here are some things to keep an eye on.

- All front doors of flats and doors on corridors and staircases must be 'self-closing' fire doors.
- Fire doors must 'self-close' properly, and not be held or wedged open. They are designed to stop the spread of fire.
- Things shouldn't be stored in corridors or staircases. This can block escape routes and stop firefighters doing their job. They can also feed the fire.
- Storage on balconies should be kept to a minimum.
- There should be signs that show you how to escape a fire.

If you're concerned about any of these things, please contact your local housing office for more details.

SHOULD I STAY PUT OR GET OUT?

This is the advice from the fire brigade. We've checked, and their advice remains the same after the Kensington fire.

If your home is being affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear:

- Get everyone out, close all windows and doors and walk calmly out of the building.
- Do not use the lift.
- Call 999, give your address, the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

If there is a fire or smoke inside your home, but your escape route is NOT clear:

- It may still be safer to stay in your flat until the fire brigade arrives.
- Find a safe room, close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke.
- Go to a window, shout *"HELP, FIRE"* and call 999.
- Be ready to describe where you are and the quickest way to reach you.

If there is a fire in another part of the building:

- You are usually safer staying put and calling 999. Purpose-built blocks of flats are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors can hold back flames and smoke for 30 to 60 minutes.
- Tell the fire brigade where you are and the best way to reach you.
- If you are in the common parts of the building, leave and call 999.

Why is it usually safer to stay put?

The London Fire Brigade's guidance is to 'Stay Put' unless your flat is being affected by fire or smoke.

This is because:

- Blocks of flats are usually built to prevent the spread of fire - 'compartmentalisation' includes fire breaks between flats and between floors.
- By leaving your flat, you may walk into smoke or fire in communal areas.
- Opening your fire door may allow the fire into your home and help spread smoke and flames.
- Staying put will also allow firefighters to tackle the fire safely and quickly without being delayed by many residents evacuating down the stairways.
- During the Shepherds Court fire in 2016, residents were advised to follow the standard fire brigade advice for tower blocks and to stay in their homes. Many families remained in the upper floors until the fire was brought under control.
- This 'stay put' advice, together with the swift response to the fire and the building's good quality fire-retardant systems, led to the initial fire report concluding there had been 'no rapid fire growth' and shows these combined measures can and do work successfully.

English

Information from this document can be made available in alternative formats and in different languages. If you require further assistance please use the contact details below.

Arabic

يمكن توفير المعلومات التي وردت في هذا المستند بصيغ بديلة ولغات اخرى. إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مزيد من المساعدة، الرجاء استخدام بيانات الاتصال الواردة أدناه.

Farsi

اطلاعات حاوی در این مدارک به صورتهای دیگر و به زبانهای مختلف در دسترس می باشد. در صورت نیاز به کمک بیشتر لطفا از جزئیات تماس ذکر شده در ذیل استفاده کنید.

French

Les informations présentées dans ce document peuvent vous être fournies dans d'autres formats et d'autres langues. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide complémentaire, veuillez utiliser les coordonnées ci-dessous.

Portuguese

A informação presente neste documento pode ser disponibilizada em formatos alternativos e em línguas diferentes. Se desejar mais assistência, use por favor os contactos fornecidos abaixo.

Somali

Macluumaadka dokumentigan waxaa lagu heli karaa qaabab kale iyo luuqado kala duwan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad intaas dhaafsiisan fadlan isticmaal xiriirka faahfaahinta hoose.

Spanish

La información en este documento puede facilitarse en formatos alternativos y en diferentes idiomas. Si necesita más ayuda por favor utilice la siguiente información de contacto.

Contact us:

www.lbhf.gov.uk/firesafetyplus-translate

Appendix two

H&F response to Kensington fire – Communications and Engagement Actions

<p>Initial emergency comms response:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed and published initial lines to the H&F council website and intranet. • Send email briefing to all staff. • Briefed media and answered in-coming enquiries. • ‘Stood up’ emergency comms response team. • Issued briefing to all councillors. • Circulated media updates to cabinet members and lead officers. • Liaised with RBKC comms and neighbouring boroughs • Managed social media engagement via Twitter and Next Door • Briefed contact centre and resident involvement team on lines to take. • Daily briefings to SRG and agreed new lines • Briefed cabinet members and discussed detailed comms responses • Updated emergency team on lines to take in answering resident enquiries. • Updated website, Cllr briefings and intranet • Updated comms messages at least daily • Published initial lines to residents via e-newsletter to 75,000 homes • Worked with new multi-agency task force on communications.
<p>Reassurance campaign</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote, cleared, designed, printed and distributed letter to all high-rise residents. • Supported service’s initial meeting to brief TRAs • Published detailed reassurance messages on the council website. • Co-ordinated messaging across departments to ensure consistency. • Prepared Fire Safety Plus offer – wrote booklet for all tenants and leaseholders on H&F Fire Safety Plus package. • Cleared Fire Safety Plus booklet with officers and councillors. • Produced fridge magnets with key contacts to all tenants and leaseholders • Organised design, print, enveloping and distribution of booklet and magnets to all tenants and leaseholders. • Prepared news story and updated media lines on Fire Safety Plus offer. • Launched Fire Safety Plus offer – including release of news story, e-news, social media. • Created and updated web version of Fire Safety Plus booklet. • Published schedule of FRAs to the website. • Worked with H&F housing associations with failed cladding to support their resident comms.
<p>Edward Woods and Charecroft</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote two letters each, with detailed reassurance messages, to Edward Woods and Charecroft residents. • Worked with services on resident meetings at Edward Woods.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with services on resident meeting at Charecroft. • Produced briefing for Edward Woods residents on answers to questions raised at the meeting. • Produced letter to Edward Woods – with Q&A and concierge messages. • Dealt with detailed media enquiries and FOIs relating to Charecroft window panels.
Community response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicised RBKC donations site and activities of local groups • Set up and managed donations systems and co-ordinated activities of volunteers across the borough. • Stakeholder management – worked with community leaders and groups offering support. • Organised photos and vox pops of volunteers in action • Wrote and published story on volunteers and donators • Working on ‘thank yous’ to stakeholders and community volunteers. • Working on thank you event
Kensington families in H&F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published briefing on the H&F service for people affected. • Liaised and agreed lines with housing associations and Premier Inn on their cladding issues. • Worked with services to set up H&F support package for survivors . • Provided leaflets and vouchers for victim support services. • Created news story on local restaurants offering meals. • Worked with services to set up children’s centre. • Worked with ESFA on letter to, and meeting for, residents on Aldridge Academy relocation.
Staff messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published staff messages to intranet on initial response. • Worked with RBKC on response to naming of officers on social media. • Updated staff messages on counselling support for staff. • Wrote, cleared and sent ‘thank yous’ to staff, community groups, businesses and volunteers. • Organising hackathon with the community to prepare a community emergency response plan.
Fire risk assessments, cladding and panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed detailed briefings and ‘lines to take’ on cladding and window panels. • Worked with services to research and develop narrative and Q&As on FRAs. • FRAs for Charecroft released to TRA • Handled substantial numbers of media enquiries on FRAs • Managed FOIs.

Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

13th June 2017 Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Low Cost Home Ownership	Labab Lubab	To consider what schemes are available, how they are performing and what the Council has been doing to try to get more people into homes they own.
Performance Data for the Housing Department	Nilavra Mukerji / Kath Corbett	To scrutinise the performance of Housing Services against key targets.

5th July 2017 Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Arts	James Fitzgerald	To consider an update on progress made against the Arts Strategy.
Housing for refugees and asylum seekers	Glendine Shepherd / Jo Rowlands	To provide an overview of what the Council does to provide housing for refugees and asylum seekers, and the rules and funding streams relating to these.

6th September 2017 Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Fire Safety in Council Blocks	Jane Martin	To consider the Council's Fire Safety measures in its tower blocks.

Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

8th November 2017		
Small Hall, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Culture Led Place Making	Jo Rowlands	To consider the administration's strategy of developing a sense of place through cultural venues, activities and events.
Tackling ASB with Housing Providers	Jonathan Shaw	To consider the strategies Anti-Social Behaviour Officers use to work with housing providers to deal with ASB issues.
Leaseholder Services	Kath Corbett / Jana Du Preez	To hear about the improvements made to leaseholder services and identify further changes which could be made.
Housing Allocations Policy	Jo Rowlands/Glendine Shepherd	To consider proposed amendments to the Council's allocations policy.

16th January 2018		
Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Budget Proposals 2018-19	Kath Corbett / Mike Clarke	To consider the budget proposals for 2017-18.
Tenants and Residents Halls	Nilavra Mukerji	To discuss the council's work to try to get tenants and residents halls used more.
Garages	Nilavra Mukerji	To consider efforts made to improve lettings rates and to investigate whether the Council is using its garages on Housing Revenue Account land effectively.

Economic Regeneration, Housing & the Arts PAC Work Programme 2017/18

19 th March 2018		
Courtyard Room, HTH. 7:00pm.		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
The Council's home energy strategy and measures to tackle fuel poverty	Nick Austin/Justine Dornan	To review the work of the Council to make homes as fuel efficient as possible and how vulnerable residents will be protected during the winter.
Communal Heating Charges	Kath Corbett	To consider whether improvements could be made to the way in which residents with communal heating are billed.

Potential Future Items		
ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT BRIEF
Industrial Strategy	Jo Rowlands	To review the impact of the new Industrial Strategy
Housing for disabled people	Jo Rowlands	To consider the proposed actions for meeting the housing needs of disabled people following the report of the disabled persons commission.
Aids and Adaptation	Jane Martin	To consider the changes made to the Aids and Adaptations Service following its transfer to the Housing Department.
Mitie Health and Safety Compliance Checks	Jane Martin	To discuss the issues identified by an internal audit with Mitie's compliance checking processes and the action taken to resolve these.