

MDA No.: 1377

Title: Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee – Building Safety Letter

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the FREP Committee meeting on 3 February 2022 the Committee discussed building safety and progress on recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and the Committee resolved that:

Authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.

- 1.2 Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chairman is asked to agree the Committee's letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as attached at **Appendix 1**.

2. Decision

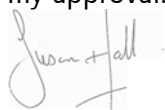
- 2.1 **That the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, agrees the letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, attached at Appendix 1.**

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Printed Name: Susan Hall AM, Chairman of the FREP Committee

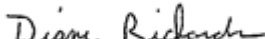
Date: 25 February 2022

3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 On 3 February 2022, the Committee delegated authority to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members to approve the output from the question and answer session with the London Fire Commissioner including discussion on building safety.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority approving the letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will be formally submitted to the FREP Committee's next appropriate meeting for noting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): 

Printed Name: Diane Richards, Committee Officer

Date: 23 February 2022

Telephone Number: 07925 353478

Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signature (Finance): Not Required

Date: Not Required

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the FREP Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Date: 24 February 2022

Telephone Number: 020 7983 6550

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Anne Clarke AM, Hina Bokhari AM and Zack Polanski AM

4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FOIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? **NO**

If yes, until what date:

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? **NO**

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: P. Goffe

Printed Name: Philippa Goffe

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 23 February 2022

Telephone Number: 07729 625453

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 24 February 2022

Telephone Number: 07813 796 175

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Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

(Sent by email)

25 February 2022

Dear Michael,

London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee: actions following meeting on 3 February 2022

I am writing to you as Chairman of the London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee following its meeting on 3 February 2022. At this meeting the Committee discussed progress on recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry with the London Fire Commissioner and Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience.

The Committee was interested to hear from the London Fire Commissioner, Andy Roe, about recent constructive discussions that he has had with you on how Government will work with partners to implement the remaining recommendations that fall to the Government and address building safety issues.

The London Fire Commissioner made clear the importance of Government implementing the following two recommendations:

- **Recommendation 32** – Legislate to require building owners to prepare Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for all residents whose ability to self-evacuate may be compromised.
- **Recommendation 33** – Legislate to require building owners to include information about residents with reduced mobility in the premises information box.

The Committee is particularly interested in progress with these in light of the London Fire Brigade publishing data that shows more than 1,100 high-rise residential buildings in London currently have simultaneous evacuation policies in place.¹ Of these buildings, 264 are below 18 metres in height, meaning they are not eligible to receive money from the Building Safety Fund.

The Committee discussed with the Commissioner the importance to the Brigade of vulnerable residents of high-rise buildings having PEEPs and this information being made available to them in the event of a fire to ensure that the most vulnerable residents in London are safe in their homes.

The Committee would welcome clarification on your plans to progress recommendations 32 and 33 from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase One report.

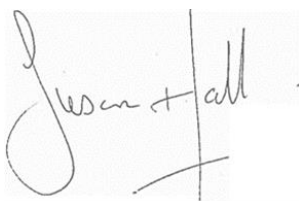
We also discussed your recent announcement that industry will be asked to fund remedial works for unsafe cladding, including for high-rise residential buildings that are 11-18 metres in height. We very much welcome this announcement and believe this is the right step to ensure that Londoners can live safely and that leaseholders are not unfairly burdened.

The Committee is well aware of the wider safety defects that were seen at both Lakanal House and Grenfell Tower, such as issues with compartmentation, fire lifts and dry risers. We were therefore delighted to read your announcement on 14 February that the Government will be bringing into effect legislation in the Building Safety Bill to protect leaseholders (of high-rise buildings over the height of 11 metres) from having to pay for correcting these defects. In particular, it was reassuring to read that this will apply to existing buildings and that those responsible for the defects will be expected and required to pay for remediation.

We note that there is still a burden that can fall to leaseholders where a building owner cannot pay for remediation, with a cap of £15,000 on the liability falling to a leaseholder. This would represent a large burden to leaseholders already needing to pay their mortgage and day to day costs at a time of rising inflation. The Committee would therefore welcome clarification on the criteria that will apply when building owners say they cannot pay, and whether there has been any assessment of how many buildings/leaseholders may be affected by this.

I would request a response to the issues identified in this letter by Friday 25 March 2022. Please copy your response to Janette Roker and Philippa Goffe, the Committee's Senior Policy Advisers (janette.roker@london.gov.uk) (philippa.goffe@london.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee

¹ BBC News, [More than 1000 buildings in London need waking watch](#), 7 February 2022