



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.

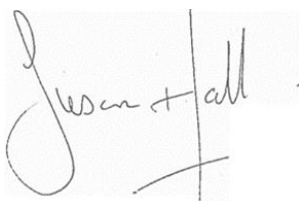
We also discussed your recent announcement that industry will be asked to fund remedial works for unsafe cladding, including for high-rise residential buildings that are 11-18 metres in height. We very much welcome this announcement and believe this is the right step to ensure that Londoners can live 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