

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Meeting Scrutiny and Audit Panel
Date 23 July 2020
Title of Report Grenfell Action Plan Update
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Background Papers Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report – agenda item 30 S&A January 2020
NFCC Strategic Improvement Model

Appendices 1 ESFRS Grenfell Action plan

Implications

CORPORATE RISK	X	LEGAL	X
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	X
FINANCIAL		POLITICAL	X
HEALTH & SAFETY	X	OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES		CORE BRIEF	
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			

PURPOSE OF REPORT This report provides Members with an update on progress made by officers against the various recommendations contained within the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report (S&A Jan 2020) and specifically the ESFRS Grenfell Tower action plan. The report also updates Members on proposed new legislation emerging from the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower Fire namely The Fire Safety Bill and Building Safety Bill.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY On the 14 June 2017 London Fire Brigade received calls to a Fire in a flat at Grenfell Tower. Over the following hours the fire had spread to the majority of the building and a total of 72 people lost their lives.

Following the incident the Government and the NFCC instigated various reviews into both the incident itself and the underlying causes. Some of these activities are still outstanding such as Phase 2 of the Grenfell Inquiry, however

many reports and recommendations have already been released.

Officers have assessed these reports and produced an internal action plan containing 138 actions that was approved by Members in January. This report therefore provides an update and reassurance to Members that despite the impact of Covid 19 progress continues to be made against this crucial work for the Authority.

RECOMMENDATION

That the panel note this report and the progress detailed within the action plan.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 14 June 2017 London Fire Brigade received calls to a fire in a flat at Grenfell Tower. Over the following hours and days the fire had spread to the majority of the building and a total of 71 people lost their lives.
- 1.2 Following the incident the Government instigated an independent review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety in July 2017 led by Dame Judith Hackitt. This review resulted in an interim report in December 2017 and a full report entitled 'Building a Safer Future' in May 2018 that provided clear recommendations around both building regulations and fire safety legislation.
- 1.3 The activities that took place before during and after that incident itself are also subject of an inquiry carried out by The Rt Hon Sir Martin Moore-Bick. The inquiry has been split in to two phases to assist in its effective running and delivery. Phase 1 looked at the factual narrative of the events on the night and ran from the 21 May to the 12 December 2018. The inquiry released a report into this first phase on the 30 October 2019. Phase 2 will look at the underlying issues that allowed or caused the incident to happen. Phase 2 of the inquiry has been delayed until further notice due to the ongoing COVID situation.
- 1.4 At the same time the NFCC has been engaging with the fire sector to identify and assess strategic issues that need to be progressed by the sector itself. The NFCC sought the views of each Fire Service and other sector organisations by way of an on-line questionnaire that ESFRS responded to. These on-line responses and the issues detailed within have been collated into a set of 3 documents known as 'Strategic Improvement Models' (SIMs).
- 1.5 ESFRS has assessed all these reports and models to identify actions that we can implement locally to improve our operational delivery and effectiveness. An Action Learning Set (ALS) has been set up which has painstakingly gone through the various recommendations from these reports in order to identify and prioritise actions for ESFRS to carry out. This report provides an overview of progress against this internal action plan.

2 Action Plan progress

- 2.1 ESFRS has identified over 138 local actions that need to be progressed to conclusion. Further actions are being progressed at a national level and new actions will be identified following release of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report.
- 2.2 These 138 actions has been collated by ESFRS into 22 work streams. Of these 22 work streams, 5 have been completed and 17 are still outstanding with good progress made in all areas (see Appendix A).
- 2.3 The main areas completed include the following:
- a. A gap analysis on the 138 recommendations against our key operational policies has been carried out, with the majority of our policies being fit for purpose.
 - b. A new Fire Survival Guidance Policy.
 - c. New Fire Ground Digital Radios, repeaters and ancillary equipment has been purchased to improve incident ground communications.
 - d. Improvements to our SSRI process to require crews to gather and record effective operational information around building risk and operational tactics.
- 2.4 The main areas of risk that have not been completed are as follows:
- a. Training for crews and officers on building construction and fire safety requirements and how to change from a stay put to a full evacuation. Training packages are being drafted and will be rolled out using our existing Elearn packages. We will also blend this learning into the existing command courses.
 - b. Training has been provided to officers around evacuation procedures and how they link to operational tactics at recent officer training days. This needs to be rolled out to crews and needs to be refreshed and blended into our SBTAP program to ensure regular refreshment of knowledge.
 - c. Training for crews on the new SSRI process.
 - d. Training for commanders in JESIP principles via the Local Resilience Forum (LRF).
 - e. Training for our crews on our new FSG policy.
 - f. A full assessment on the need for new equipment is being carried out within our Future Firefighting Project. This is looking at items such as smoke hoods from casualties, smoke curtains to protect means of escape, extended duration BA sets and the need for an application of new tablets on the fire ground.

- g. We need to enable a direct link from airborne assets to our command units and control rooms.
- h. We need to move to METHANE message for all of our informative messages. This needs changes to our electronic messaging system on our current data terminals.
- i. Once the new Fire Safety Bill comes into force, Business Safety will work with RPs to ensure risk information is provided to us in a timely manner to inform our risk plans. This legislative change is needed to make this information provision compulsory rather than a recommendation as it is in current legislation.
- j. Business Safety are working with Ops P&P to develop training material to enable our crews to confidently use fixed installations.
- k. Training needs to embed all of the above training into our BAU course and course material.

3 Legal / Health & Safety

- 3.1 There is a requirement for ESFRS to identify risk and mitigate this risk by introducing control measures including training and recording those control measures in risk assessments and policies.
- 3.2 The risks identified have been updated following the Grenfell Tower fire and Inquiry Phase 1 report. It is now our responsibility to learn from this incident and introduce additional control measures within our policies and training material to reduce any foreseeable risk to a reasonable level.
- 3.3 The Grenfell action plan details how ESFRS are complying with our legal requirements to learn from and implement these control measures.

4 Policy

- 4.1 Within the various recommendations there is a clear requirement to produce and implement new policies around how we would deal with an incident of this scale, specifically dealing with Fire Survival Guidance.
- 4.2 Ops P&P have drafted, consulted and had signed off a new Policy detailing how ESFRS would manage this. Further work is now needed to implement this policy with training to be provided to both ESFC and crews.
- 4.3 Other policies are being updated and produced including, our High Rise Policy, our Risk Information policy, a new policy on evacuation procedures and an amendment to our radio communication policies to name a few.

5 National situation

- 5.1 The NFCC have produced documents called 'Strategic Improvement Models' (SIMs). These documents detail the work ongoing at national level to improve the national

situation around legislation, the various processes around a buildings life cycle and competencies of the people involved in the building and enforcement of standards and legislation.

- 5.2 Officers are linked into the work at national level through various NFCC working groups will take action to implement appropriate changes as recommended by Government or the NFCC.
- 5.3 Alongside the SIM NFCC has also established a Protection Board to support the new building safety regime highlighted later in the report and to provide greater assurance of protection activity and data collection across the sector.
- 5.4 A specific objective of the Protection Board is also to oversee the nationwide inspection of the estimated 11,000 HRRBs over 18m in height by December 2021. In support of this work Government has provided grant funding to assist with the review of high rise residential buildings (HRRBs) and support improvement in wider protection priorities. The funding is based on building stock within each FRA area and a report will be coming to Members later in the year outlining the impact of this work and details of the project to meet the expectations of the funding.

6 Proposed Legislation

- 6.1 Following the Grenfell Fire the Government have taken a number of steps around fire safety, and a new Fire Safety and Building Safety Bill form part of that response. These are part of a series of changes by the Government to both fire safety and building safety more generally, with further primary and secondary legislation to follow.
- 6.2 The proposed Fire Safety Bill builds on action already taken to ensure that people feel safe in their homes, and a tragedy like the Grenfell Tower fire never happens again.
- 6.3 The Bill will amend the Fire Safety Order 2005 to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied, residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for:
 - the structure and external walls of the building, including cladding, balconies and windows
 - entrance doors to individual flats that open into common parts

This clarification will empower fire and rescue services to take enforcement action and hold building owners to account if they are not compliant.

- 6.4 Whilst the Fire Safety Bill deals with specific fire safety issues the Building Safety Bill will tackle wider issues, but work in both areas is closely related. The Building Safety Bill is intended to put in place new and enhanced regulatory regimes for building safety and construction products, and ensure residents have a stronger voice in the system.
- 6.5 Also included within these proposals was the announcement of a new regulator within the Health and Safety Executive to be responsible for implementing and enforcing a more stringent regulatory regime for higher risk buildings, as well as providing wider and stronger oversight of safety and performance across all buildings, and increasing the competence of those working on building safety.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Authority is determined to learn from the tragedy of Grenfell Tower. It has already completed many activities that are designed to make our employees and the community safer.
- 7.2 There are actions remaining that will need to be completed in order for us to achieve our objectives. These actions are known and are being managed effectively by the organisation.
- 7.3 Many will take months to complete as they require comprehensive initial and ongoing training. Many actions have not been completed due in part to the ongoing COVID pandemic.
- 7.4 Government have announced new Bill's for both Fire safety and Building Safety as part of a series of steps to improve fire safety within the built environment.