



Barry Quirk CBE
Chief Executive

Chief Executive's personal office
5th Floor Laurence House
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23 June 2017

Dear Councillor Hall

Lewisham's Tall Buildings and Fire Safety following Grenfell Tower

I write in response to your request for an assessment of the fire and other risks of the tall buildings in Lewisham Town Centre, and other regeneration areas in the borough, dated 22 June 2017.

You will be aware of the immediate and robust response that the Council has made to the Grenfell Tower disaster, which was set out in the letter from Kevin Sheehan dated 16 June. Our focus has been threefold.

First, we have been working closely with Lewisham Homes and RB3, the managers of the homes the Council owns, to be reassured that: fire risk assessments have been completed and actions responded to; that additional precautions have been taken for those high rise towers and homes that have been identified as most at risk; that they are providing clear information and reassurance to residents, and that together we are responding to the requirements of the DCLG.

Second, we have been in close contact with our registered social landlord (RSL) partners, seeking their assurance that they too are fully risk-assessing their properties, reassuring their residents, and complying with the requirements of the Government's on-going review into the circumstances of the fire.

You will know that in some places we are working actively in partnership with RSL partners to bring forward housing regeneration, and in these places our dialogue has been particularly close and focussed on ensuring risks are properly managed.

Finally, we have written to every landlord of every tall building in Lewisham, requesting that they too reassure us about the steps they are taking. The Council has no formal powers to require these landlords to respond, and they are not regulated by the Government in the same way as the Council and its RSL partners. Nonetheless we will continue to utilise

our partnership relationships to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities.

We are therefore taking a number of active steps to protect the safety of Lewisham residents, in the manner you suggest in your letter. Your letter also asks specific questions about developments in Lewisham Town Centre, and regeneration projects across Lewisham, and you ask that there is full disclosure of information relating to those projects to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

I can confirm that we will disclose all information that is available to officers, in relation to your questions, and that we will provide this in the form of a written report which will be considered at three separate committee meetings as follows:

- Housing Select Committee, 5 July
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 11 July
- Sustainable Development Select Committee, 19 July

Officers will collate the information that has been made available to them by our partners and private developers in relation to the projects you mention. In addition they will collate any relevant information that was included in the planning applications for these projects. Where Lewisham Council has provided Building Control services to the development, which will only be where the developer has chosen the Council from a market of potential providers, we will also include relevant information in that regard.

It is important to be clear, however, that the report to the Committees cannot provide an assessment of the fire or other risks attendant to any of the buildings in question. These assessments will be carried out for landlords by expert advisors, and I trust that you will agree that Council officers should not attempt to make assessments of this manner, using the limited information that is available to them.

Nonetheless I am confident the information that will be presented in this report will reassure you that the Council is taking all reasonable steps in response to the Grenfell tragedy, and to protect and reassure our residents.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Quirk
Chief Executive