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| Report for | Overview & Scrutiny Committee |
| Title | Intrusive Fire Risk Assessments (Type-4) |
| Date | 28 th November 2022 |
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 After the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, across the housing sector it was identified that there was a need to gain greater understanding of the fire risks in the housing stock, especially in high-rise blocks.
- 1.2 In 2020 and 2021 a programme of intrusive (Type 4) Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) were carried out to 68 blocks, identified as being high risk due either to their height or type of construction.
- 1.3 The programme was designed to gain a greater understanding of the fire safety risks within high-rise and timber frame blocks, due to the higher risks associated with these types of buildings.
- 1.4 The legal requirement is to carry out Type-1 FRAs, which are non-destructive. This is carried out in common parts of a block but not individual properties and identifies any visible fire risks.
- 1.5 Type 4 FRAs are more comprehensive than the standard Type-1 FRAs. Type 4's incorporates both the communal areas and dwellings, with intrusive investigations such as removal of fixed panels, and/or drilling into voids and other sealed spaces around the building.
- 1.6 Until Homes for Haringey (HfH) was brought back into the Council in June 2022, the duties under the relevant fire legislation were undertaken by HfH on behalf of the Council. For the purpose this report whether the duties were undertaken by HfH or Haringey Council, a distinction has not been made.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is recommended to: -

- a) Note the report

3. Background

3.1 Fire Safety is covered by two significant pieces of legislation the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety Act (2021).

3.2 It is a requirement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, (RRFSO) under Article 9 (1) that *“the responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions he needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on him by or under this Order”*.

3.3 There are four ‘Types’ of Fire Risk Assessment, known by their type:

- Type 1 FRAs are undertaken in common parts only and are non-destructive
- Type 2 FRAs are undertaken in common parts only and are destructive
- Type 3 FRAs are undertaken in common parts and dwellings and are non-destructive
- Type 4 FRAs are undertaken in common parts and dwellings and are destructive

3.4 ‘Destructive’ refers to the need to often break into or through walls and finished surfaces of the building both internally and externally, to view the otherwise enclosed spaces, where fire could spread undetected, from floor to floor or from flat to flat.

3.5 Haringey has historically undertaken Type 1 FRAs to all its residential blocks within the housing stock to comply with the above RRFSO requirement.

3.6 After the Grenfell disaster in 2017, a decision was taken to undertake type 4 FRAs, in high rise and timber frame buildings to gain a greater understanding of the fire risk within the high-risk buildings in the Councils stock.

3.7 High-rise buildings were those which were more than 6 storeys or 18 metres high. The definition of a high-rise building has since been defined more clearly in the Building Safety Act (2022) and is 18 metres to the floor of the highest storey or 7 storeys.

3.8 Separately to this the Broadwater Farm Project team commissioned Type 4 FRAs to all buildings excluding Tangmere and Northolt, due to their impending demolition.

3.9 The main outcomes of the type 4 surveys were:

3.9.1 **Change in buildings fire safety strategy**

The blocks on the Headcorn and Tenterden estate in Tottenham moved from a stay put strategy to an evacuation strategy, on a permanent basis. The works to the blocks have been completed to comply with these changes. None of the related costs have been passed on to leaseholders.

3.9.2 **Spandrel Window Panel Testing**

Thirty-nine blocks were identified as having a window design which could potentially increase the spread of fire. A testing programme was put in place to establish the makeup of the panels. The tests confirmed that all 38 blocks require remediation works to replace the panels and/or the windows as soon as reasonably possible.

One block, Stellar House was identified as high-risk and was moved from a stay put policy to an evacuation policy until the windows can be replaced. The replacement windows are currently in the procurement process.

Seven blocks were identified as being a substantial risk but when the fire strategy was reviewed, the risk assessor did not consider it necessary to move to an evacuation strategy. The works to 3 of these blocks are programmed for 2023/24. One block is being demolished and the remaining two blocks are being surveyed to see if additional fire safety measures need to be put in place in advance of the works being undertaken in 2024/25.

Thirty one blocks were classed as moderate risk and the works will be undertaken in line with the planned investment programme.

3.9.3 **Fire Risk Assessment Actions**

A team was set up in August 2020 to manage the actions resulting from FRAs, including Type 4 FRAs. The works for type 4 FRAs were originally delivered through the major works programme.

In February 2021, the Head of Housing Building Compliance was appointed. Based on analysis of the 2021/22 programme it was

determined that the integrated approach of delivering fire safety works as part of the wider asset investment programme was not giving them the required focus. As a result of this a team is to be set up under the Head of Housing Building Compliance. The proposed Property Services structure, to include this team, was reviewed as part of the in-sourcing process and will be recruited to once it is approved and signed-off. This team will manage Fire Safety works programmes to ensure they are delivered as quickly as possible.

4. Considerations

The Committee should consider:

- 4.1 That since the intrusive Fire Risk Assessments were undertaken the Building Safety Act became law and that the information from these FRAs will be fed into the Building Safety Cases for all buildings which are classed as high rise under the Building Safety Act.
- 4.2 The pilot building case has been undertaken on Kenneth Robbins House in Northumberland Park but the outcome of this has yet to be seen by the business.
- 4.3 A further report will be brought to the next scrutiny meeting detailing the outcome of this pilot and plan for the other buildings in the borough to have a Building Safety Case in place in accordance with the regulatory deadline for registering these buildings in October 2023.