

**Report for:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2 October 2018

**Item number:** 8

**Title:** Scrutiny Review of Fire Safety In High Rise Blocks

**Report authorised by :** Ayshe Simsek, Acting Democratic Services Manager

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** N/A

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 This report provides the Committee with a progress report on the Scrutiny Review on Fire Safety in High Rise Blocks, which was begun by the previous Committee as part of its work plan for 2017/18.

**2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

N/A

**3. Recommendations**

3.1 That the report on progress be noted;

3.2 That the Committee receive evidence from the Head of Organisation Resilience on emergency planning issues arising from the Grenfell Tower fire and the preparedness of the Borough to coordinate a response to a major incident;

3.3 That, in the light of the current uncertainty regarding the final outcome of plans for implementation of the recommendations of the Hackitt Review, consideration of conclusions and recommendations be deferred until later in the year.

**4. Reasons for decision**

4.1 The Committee began a review on Fire Safety in High Rise Blocks in 2017/18. This report provides the Committee with a progress report on this.

**5. Alternative options considered**

N/A

**6. Background information**

6.1 In the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Committee agreed at its meeting on 17 July 2017 to set up a review on the issue of fire safety in high rise blocks. The terms of reference for the review were as follows:

“Focussing on the 54 high rise blocks (over six storeys) owned by Haringey, housing association housing and privately owned homes where the Council has responsibility for building control, the review will consider the following:

- Building Safety:
  - How has the Council satisfied itself that its buildings and high-rise buildings in the Borough are safe from fire, including construction materials, containment, ventilation, evacuation routes, safety systems (e.g. sprinklers and alarms)?
  - What action has been identified and taken to date in response to Grenfell?
  - How is building safety monitored, including housing management policies and procedures?
  - How is fire safety for high rise blocks featured in the Council’s planning policy and building control responsibilities?
  - What is the Council and ALMO’s assessment of the effectiveness and application of current building regulations? Are there sufficient resources for enforcement?
- Engagement – How are residents engaged with in relation to fire safety, including awareness of procedures in the event of a fire and responding to concerns about fire safety?
- Access – Are the needs of residents with disabilities known and how are they reflected in fire safety arrangements and evacuation procedures?
- Procurement – what weight is attached to safety against other considerations in considering tenders for building works?
- Emergency Planning – how prepared is the Borough to coordinate the response to a major incident?
- Governance – are the current decision-making and accountability arrangements for the ALMO adequately considering issues of fire safety?”

6.2 Three evidence sessions of the Committee have so far been held. These were on 3 October 2017, 8 January 2018 and 14 September 2018. Notes of the meeting of 14 September are in the process of being finalised and will be available ahead of the meeting.

6.3 The meeting on 14 September was intended to be the final evidence session for the review. However, the Head of Organisation Resilience and the representative from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) were both as also unable to attend the meeting. The Head of Organisation will instead be giving evidence on the emergency planning issues at this meeting.

6.4 The Committee was also of the view that, in the light of the continuing Public Inquiry and the current lack of clarity regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Hackitt Review of Building regulations, consideration of final conclusions of recommendations should be deferred until later in the year.

## 7 Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 Priority 3 – Clean and Safe: A clean, well maintained and safe borough where people are proud to live and work.

## **8 Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement),Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)**

### **Finance**

8.1 This report provides the Committee with a progress report on the Scrutiny Review on Fire Safety in High Rise Blocks. There are no financial implications at this stage to consider in this progress report. A capital budget of £16m has been approved in the February 2018 HRA MTFs report for costs associated with Broadwater Farm.

### **Legal**

8.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in the report

### **Equality**

8.3 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

8.4 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;

- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
- Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
- Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
- Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.

8.5 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

## **9 Use of Appendices**

None

## **10 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**