

# MDA No.: 1328

## Title: Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee – Building Safety and Inclusion within the London Fire Brigade (LFB) Letters

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the FREP Committee meeting on 22 September 2021 on the topics of building safety and inclusion within the LFB the Committee resolved that:

*Authority be delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.*

- 1.2 Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chairman is asked to agree the Committee's letters to the Mayor of London and to the London Fire Commissioner on building safety and inclusion within the LFB, as attached at **Appendices 1 and 2**.

### 2. Decision

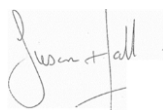
- 2.1 **That the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, agrees the letters to the Mayor of London and to the London Fire Commissioner on building safety and inclusion within the LFB, attached at Appendices 1 and 2.**

#### Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

**Signature:**



**Printed Name:** Susan Hall AM, Chairman of the FREP Committee

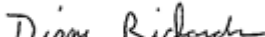
**Date:** 18 November 2021

### 3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

#### Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 On 22 September 2021, the Committee delegated authority to the Chairman, in consultation with party Group Lead Members to approve the letters to the Mayor and to the London Fire Commissioner on building safety and inclusion within the LFB.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority approving the letters to the Mayor of London and to the London Fire Commissioner will be formally submitted to the FREP Committee's next appropriate meeting for noting.

#### Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): 

Printed Name: Diane Richards, Committee Officer

Date: 17 November 2021

Telephone Number: 07925 353478

#### Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signature (Finance): Not Required

Date: Not Required

#### Legal Implications:

The Chair of the FREP Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Date: 17 November 2021

Telephone Number: 020 7983 6550

#### Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Anne Clarke AM, Hina Bokhari AM and Zack Polanski AM

### 4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.

- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

**Part 1 - Deferral:**

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? **NO**

If yes, until what date:

**Part 2 – Sensitive Information:**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? **NO**

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**Lead Officer / Author**

Signature: P. Goffe

Printed Name: Philippa Goffe

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 17 November 2021

Telephone Number: 07729 625453

**Countersigned by Executive Director:**

Signature: *Joanna Davidson*

Printed Name: Joanna Davidson

Date: 18 November 2021

Telephone Number: 07813 796 175

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## LONDON ASSEMBLY

**Susan Hall AM****Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

Andy Roe  
London Fire Commissioner

(Sent by email)

18 November 2021

Dear Andy

**London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee: actions following meeting on 22 September 2021**

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee following its meeting on 22 September 2021. At this meeting the Committee discussed the issues of building and fire safety and inclusion in the London Fire Brigade (LFB).

At the meeting, the Committee discussed the new enforcement measures that are being introduced in the Government's Building Safety Bill, currently before Parliament. We agreed that it will be critical to the LFB to ensure that building owners and managers are aware of these new measures and the costs that can be incurred in the event of non-compliance. **The Committee recommends that the LFB undertakes an awareness campaign for building owners and managers ahead of the implementation of the Bill to encourage compliance.**

The Committee was interested to hear of the LFB's ambitions and plans for increasing inclusion and diversity in the LFB and was encouraged to hear details of your Togetherness strategy and the work in progress to increase diversity in the workforce. However, we noted current levels of representation that are well below that achieved by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The Committee is keen to see the LFB make more progress. We heard that between 2019 to 2021 the

ratio for Black, Asian and minority Ethnic (BAME) staff increased from 10 per cent of the workforce to 33 per cent. Over the same period the ratio for female staff increased from 9 per cent to 22.8 per cent. However, diversity for top earners showed less improvement with BAME top earners joining the LFB increasing by a total of six between 2017 to 2021, whilst white top earners joining increased by 72. However, The percentage of BAME fire and rescue service staff top earners remains off target (13.1 per cent against a target of 16 per cent).

The Committee asked about targets currently set by the LFB for diversity of new recruits as compared with the challenging targets set by the Mayor for the MPS of 40 per cent for BAME and 50 per cent for females. You informed the Committee that current targets are those set in the London Safety Plan which is due to be replaced next year by the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). You accepted that it would be good for the LFB to set itself some ambitious stretch targets to aid the drive to increase diversity and support culture change. **The Committee recommends that the LFB set ambitious stretch diversity targets in the upcoming CRMP and looks at matching the targets set by the Met in due course. Reporting on diversity targets should be included in the LFB's quarterly performance digest.**

We also discussed the LFB's data recording for its LGBTQ+ and disabled staff. You acknowledged that this is not as detailed as for BAME and female staff. **The Committee recommends that recruitment and progression data recorded for LGBTQ+ staff and disabled staff is held at the same level of detail as other minority staff.**

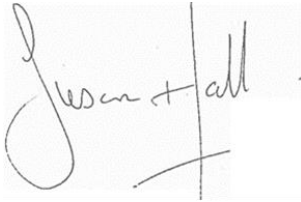
The Committee was pleased to hear about the extensive training now being undertaken and delivered to the LFB workforce to promote diversity and support culture change across the organisation. It was also good to hear that unconscious bias training and inclusion training are both mandatory and continuous, with your assurance that inclusion is a key part of professional practice. It was reassuring to learn that every member of staff is required to have an equality objective as part of the performance and talent process. We welcomed the leadership commitment to delivering change and, as a consequence, driving a more diverse and inclusive LFB. We are concerned, however, about whether there is sufficient staff resource to deliver such an ambitious change programme and the necessary training. **The Committee recommends that the Togetherness Board reviews the staff resources allocated to delivering the strategy to ensure that the LFB has the capacity and capability to achieve this and meet the targets within the required timescale/s.**

The Committee also discussed the LFB's outreach work and how that can help reach a more diverse future workforce, as well as understand some of the barriers underrepresented groups experience. **The Committee recommends that the LFB is more proactive in reaching out to local schools and informing them about the opportunities available in the LFB and help break down out of date views and stereotypes of what a firefighter does.**

The Committee was pleased to hear about the considerable investment in change and the work underway to achieve a truly diverse and inclusive LFB, although it see that there is clearly a lot of work to be done. We look forward to seeing ambitious targets for diversity set in the new CRMP and look forward to being updated about progress made.

I would appreciate a response to the recommendations and actions identified in this letter by 16 December 2021.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a vertical line through the 'H'.

**Susan Hall AM**

**Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

# LONDON ASSEMBLY



**Susan Hall AM**

**Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
City Hall

(Sent by email)

18 November 2021

Dear Sadiq

**London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee: actions following meeting on 22 September 2021**

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee following its meeting on 22 September 2021. At this meeting, the Committee discussed the issues of building and fire safety and their impacts on the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and its work, delivery of the Building Safety Programme (BSP) in London and the impact on Londoners living in high rise buildings with fire safety defects.

We were grateful to Tom Copley, the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development (DMHRD), for his attendance to answer our questions about these issues, in addition to the LFB.

Tom updated us on the progress of the remediation of high rise residential buildings in London under the Government-funded BSP. He told us that as at 31 August 2021 there were 54 buildings over 18 metres in height that still had dangerous aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding, over four years since the Grenfell Tower fire.

The Committee was concerned about the slow progress of remediation of London buildings, as highlighted in the Government's monthly BSP data release for July 2021 that showed only 121

buildings (46 per cent of all buildings identified) in London had completed remediation compared to 61 per cent in Greater Manchester and 76 per cent in the Rest of England.<sup>1</sup> Tom told the Committee that you previously wrote to a number of building owners/managers to urge them to progress remediation which he said had had some success. **The Committee recommends that this exercise is repeated for buildings which have yet to start remediation or where work is still required, in order to urge completion of remediation as soon as possible.**

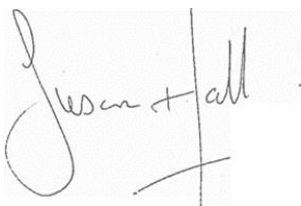
The LFB told us that, as at 15 September 2021, 1,003 buildings in London had simultaneous evacuation measures in place as 'stay put' had been suspended due to fire safety defects. These buildings require waking watches or a common fire alarm system, with some having a common fire alarm system but still needing simultaneous evacuation in the event of a fire; approximately one third of the total applies to each category. It is a concern that so many buildings remain dependent on simultaneous evacuation pending remediation of fire safety defects.

Many London leaseholders are still experiencing difficulties in selling or remortgaging their properties due to the lack of an External Wall System (EWS) 1 form. The DMHRD spoke about the Task and Finish group you set up to improve how social sector landlords respond to the EWS1 process. **The Committee requests an update on the work of this Task and Finish group.**

In response to information provided by Tom Copley at our meeting, the Committee is writing separately to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). We are urging them to open the Waking Watch Relief Fund to residential buildings between 11 to 18 metres in height so their residents can benefit from the fund and be relieved of the costs of waking watches. We are also asking DLUHC to provide funding to London boroughs to meet the request from the Department to undertake fire safety assessments of residential buildings between 11 to 18 metres in height to identify those with dangerous cladding.

I would appreciate a response to the recommendations and actions identified in this letter **by 16 December 2021**.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and title.

**Susan Hall AM**  
**Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Housing, [Communities and Local Government, Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release, England: 31 July 2021](#), 31 July 2021