

Meeting of the

HOUSING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE

Monday, 22 July 2019 at 6.30 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA – PACK 1

| | PAGE NUMBER |
|--|----------------|
| 8. FIRE SAFETY SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN UPDATE | 46 - 75 |

"If the fire alarm sounds please leave the building immediately by the nearest available fire exit, to which a Fire Warden will direct you. Please do not use the lifts. Please do not deviate to collect personal belongings or vehicles parked in the complex. If you are unable to use the stairs, a member of staff will direct you to a safe area. On leaving the building, please proceed directly to the Fire Assembly Point situated by the lake on Saffron Avenue. No person must re-enter the building until instructed that it is

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The Committee Services Officer **Page 44**
Tel: 020 7364 5554 E-mail: rushena.miah@towerhamlets.gov.uk

safe to do so by the Senior Fire Marshall. The meeting will reconvene if it is safe to do so, otherwise it will stand adjourned."

Agenda Item 8

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">22 July 2019</p> |  <p style="text-align: center;">TOWER HAMLETS</p> |
| <p>Report of: Mark Baigent – Interim Director of Housing and Regeneration</p> | <p>Classification: Unrestricted</p> |
| <p>Fire Safety Scrutiny Review – Action Plan update</p> | |

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update against the action plan (adopted by Cabinet on 31 October 2018) in response to the recommendations of the former Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee's scrutiny review of Fire Safety in high rises in Tower Hamlets. The Scrutiny Review aimed to drive improvements in fire safety policies, practices and compliance in existing and new developments; clarify roles and responsibilities across publicly and privately owned high rise buildings and amplify the voice and concerns of residents.

The Council's communications team are currently working on publishing a position and commencing work with the Tower Hamlets Housing Forums (THHF) to develop a joint communications strategy. Currently, THHF members have multiple methods to promote fire safety and in the main have utilised existing resident engagement structures to discuss fire safety. Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) has also established a new Joint Working Group on Fire safety which is exploring the development of a suite of KPIs, and a fire risk assessment dashboard. Most RPs have in place KPIs that track the completion of FRAs against an agreed programme for all blocks and track completion of recommended actions arising from the FRAs. Fire Risk assessments for THH blocks are available via the [THH website](#).

Good practices in fire safety management are shared through THHF, the private rented sector charter, and the landlord's accreditation schemes.

In 2018/19, the London Fire Brigade carried out 237 fire safety audits on purpose built flats, 33 instances (13.92%) of which resulted in some form of action being taken.

The government has recently launched its consultation on what it sees as the approach to implementing recommendations from the Hackitt Review, so the practical implications for authorities will shortly be known in draft. Proposals comprise of:

- clearer responsibilities for those building or managing these buildings;
- a stronger voice in the system and better information for residents;
- greater oversight by regulators; and
- tougher enforcement when things go wrong.

Recommendations:

The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee is recommended to:

- To note the progress made in implementing scrutiny recommendations.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report outlines progress against the implementation of recommendations from the Fire safety Scrutiny Review which was part of the committee's work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year.

2. DETAILS OF REPORT

2.1 Fire Safety Scrutiny Review

- 2.1.1 As part of its work programme for 2017/18, the former Housing Scrutiny Sub-committee carried out a scrutiny review on fire safety in residential high rises (above 18 metres) in Tower Hamlets (Scrutiny Review). The Scrutiny Review was prompted by the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017 in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which caused devastating loss of lives and homes. The Grenfell Tower fire was a tragic reminder of the importance of fire safety in residential high rise buildings and deemed particularly relevant for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (Tower Hamlets), which has a significant number of tall buildings in London and some of the tallest residential buildings planned to be developed.

- 2.1.2 The Scrutiny Review aimed to drive improvement in fire safety policies, practices and compliance in existing and new developments; clarify roles and responsibilities across publicly and privately owned high rise buildings and amplify the voice and concerns of residents. The four main areas of focus for the Scrutiny Review were:

- Roles, Responsibilities and compliance throughout the lifecycle of the building.
- Fire Safety Prevention
- Emergency Responses
- Resident Engagement

The Scrutiny Review was carried out in the context of a number of ongoing national inquiries and reviews into fire safety.

- 2.1.3 Appendix 1 sets out the action plan to implement the recommendations arising from the review. Ten recommendations (1 to 3; 5 to 6; 9 and 10 to 13) have been accepted in full. One recommendation (7) has not been accepted on the basis that it is not the Council's responsibility to hold emergency contact details. Three recommendations (4, 8 and 14) have been accepted in part. Recommendation 4, relating to Fire Risk Assessment dashboards, has been limited to apply to Tower Hamlets Homes only. Recommendation 8 to engage private providers by developing a forum to share best practice has been limited to prioritise large private rented sector providers. Recommendation 14, relating to a feasibility study of automatic fire suppression systems in high rises and prioritising vulnerable residents and high risk buildings, has been limited to the Council's housing stock. The action plan was adopted by Cabinet on 31st October 2018.

- 2.1.4 Appendix 1 also provides a progress update against each action in implementing recommendations, as summarised below:

Recommendation 1: Tower Hamlets Homes, in consultation with the Council and members of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, develops monitors and evaluates a clear, easy-to-use separate notifications process for residents to:

- raise fire safety concerns separately from general repair issues

- receive clear timeframes for remedial actions, according to the level of risk
- Track the progress of remedial actions.

The new Joint Working Group on Fire safety (made up of involved residents, Tower Hamlets Federation reps, THH Board and THH staff) are looking at ways of monitoring enquiries. This includes working with THHF on this and data gathering at present. In addition, the use of a dedicated reporting facility e.g. by email account may be considered as a good practice example which RPs will consider through the THHF benchmarking sub group.

Currently, THHF members have multiple methods to promote fire safety and in the main have utilised existing resident engagement structures to discuss fire safety. All RPs have service standards for responding to resident reports, and remedial actions are completed as appropriate dependent on the particular circumstances of the block and issue.

Recommendation 2: The Council develops performance indicators to monitor and manage residents' concerns on fire safety in high rise buildings, in consultation with the London Fire Brigade, Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers and Private Providers, to report to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Tower Hamlets Homes Joint Working Group on Fire Safety is developing a suite of KPIs for THH. The Group are to consider the value of a range of indicators in Q2. At the end of Q1, 100% of tall buildings (over 18 metres) managed by THH had an up to date FRA in place. FRAs have been commissioned for the 9 substantial blocks to establish current risk tolerability and a rationalised FRA programme will be agreed with THH in Q2 for the remaining blocks in scope.

Most RPs have in place KPIs that track the completion of FRAs against an agreed programme for all blocks and track completion of recommended actions arising from the FRAs. Some RPs are also monitoring the levels of risk identified by FRAs to specifically report on high priority recommendations arising.

THH has delivered a presentation to the THHF housing management sub group on its approach to fire safety, and performance improvements.

The London Fire Brigade have carried out 237 fire safety audits on purpose built flats in Tower Hamlets during 2018-19 period of which :

- 33 instances of some form of action taken (13.92 %)
- 7 Formal Action Enforcement Notices issued (2.95 %)
- 26 Informal Notification of deficiencies issued (10.97%)

All other visits to residential premises, including purpose built flats were the result of post fire visits, complaints or requests for us to visit for various reasons. Additional hi-rise premises were also inspected due to the presence of ACM clad buildings in the area.

Recommendation 3: The Council develops a clear position statement encouraging all Responsible Persons in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to publish Fire Risk Assessments with a clear programme of works, outlining the scope and timing of the works.

A position statement will be published shortly. Fire Risk assessments for THH blocks are available via the [THH website](#). In addition, the Council's ALMO THH, has also published a communicated fire safety information, advice and guidance to its residents whether this be for fire in the home or in the block. This includes THH's approach to fire safety – buildings and its fire safety strategy.

The Council encourages RPs to publish information on FRAs. Data on the % of FRAs that are in place is reported as a KPI to both the Statutory Deputy Mayor for Housing and to the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee.

Recommendation 4: The Council develops a Fire Risk Assessment dashboard template, in consultation with Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers, Private Providers and resident representation to accompany published Fire Risk Assessments. The dashboard template should highlight:

- key risks
 - works taken and planned to address the risks
- Any implications for use of the building by residents.

This is being considered as a report by the Joint Working Group on Fire safety for THH properties. A methodology to determine the need for FRA's and criteria for prioritisation is in development.

Some RPs do have in place a dashboard that provides management information across the organisation. In addition some RPs in the UK are also developing Health and Safety check lists for each block to be placed in communal areas.

Recommendation 5: The Council develops a joint communication strategy with clear consistent messages, in consultation with the London Fire Brigade, Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers, Private Landlords or their agents and resident representation, to raise awareness with tenants and leaseholders accessible to all.

THHF support the development of a joint communications strategy. The Council's communications team are currently working with partnership colleagues requesting to attend the next THHF Exec meeting / asset management sub group to take this forward. A timetable and action plan will be drafted following the development of the communications working group.

Ending Feb 2019 include, THH has made 3,914 visits across 95 blocks, advising residents.

Recommendation 6: The Council invites Registered and Private Providers to the Tower Hamlets Resilience Forum and monitors attendance to ensure housing providers are aware of emergency protocols.

The Council's Civil Protection Unit delivered a presentation to the THHF Executive on 23rd May 2018. Participation by RPs at training sessions and exercises are ongoing, the next scheduled is the forthcoming Ex Safer City 2019 1st & 2nd May 2019. The Chair of THHF also attends the Borough Resilience Forum.

CPU will deliver a presentation to the re-scheduled Private Renters' Charter Forum on 10 September and Landlords' Forum on 9 October. Training will be offered to landlords.

Recommendation 7: The Council develops and maintains an emergency contact database of Private Providers of dwellings in High Rises.

N/A

Recommendation 8: The Council improves engagement with Private Providers by developing a forum to share best practice.

A presentation on Fire Safety best practice will be delivered at the Landlords' Forum on 9 October. An extensive briefing on this topic was also delivered to the forum in 2017. Fire

Safety is also promoted through the Private Renters' Charter and in the accreditation training that landlords undertake through the Landlord License Accreditation Scheme. These sessions take place quarterly at the Town Hall and in 2018/19 77 Tower Hamlets landlords were accredited.

Recommendation 9: The Council encourages Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers and Private Providers in the borough to develop personalized emergency evacuation plans with residents who need assistance to evacuate and priorities any remedial works or adaptations that are required to facilitate safe evacuation

RPs specialising in supported housing have developed PEEPs. The majority of blocks managed by RPs (General Needs properties) have a 'Stay Put' Policy in place. Some General Needs RPs have provided information on vulnerable residents either directly or indirectly to the LFB.

Recommendation 10: Within 6 months of the publication of the Government's response to the findings of the Independent Review of Building Regulations, the Director of Place submits a report to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee:

- detailing the legal, financial and resource implications on service areas
- advising how the Council proposes to implement the Review's recommendations
- assessing the impact on residents and the provision of affordable housing

Outlining how the Council will work with Registered Providers and private sector housing providers to engage residents in the implementation of the proposals.

The Government did not respond to the Independent Review of Building regulations until January 2019 so this unfortunately built in delay to the process. The government has recently launched its consultation on what it sees as the approach to implementing recommendations from the Hackitt Review, so the practical implications for authorities will shortly be known in draft. It is now anticipated that a draft report will be targeted at a September 2019 completion. An interim update was however provided to the committee in November 18 which outlined the recommendations from the Hackitt review and work locally and nationally on implementation.

Recommendation 11: The Planning and Building Control Teams develop clear guidance for developers on the distinct fire safety responsibilities in tall buildings throughout the building process, taking account of:

- requirements under the New London Plan
- international best practice; and the findings of and Government response to the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety

The overall position remains uncertain at a national and regional level. The guidance document cannot be committed to yet as the new London Plan policy has not been adopted. Until it is the need to consider fire safety matters at an earlier planning stage is not a policy requirement. Officers will continue to track this and are assembling best practice. Anticipate December 2019 for completion but dependent on London Plan timetable so maybe earlier or later.

Recommendation 12: The Council adopts a proactive approach to encourage residents to enter the Building Control and Planning professions and works with the Local Authority Building Control (LABC), other boroughs and key partners, to develop a joint strategy to attract and retain a skilled Building Control and Planning workforce. The Council should consider:

- Better use of shared resources
- Apprenticeship schemes to support local residents and economic development

Incentives to attract young people into university courses.

The process to address recruitment and retention issues was awaiting the formal introduction of a new corporate policy on recruitment and retention packages (market supplements). However, Planning is shortly to start its next round of targeted recruitment to fill some of its experienced role vacancies so once this concludes it will start to give us a clearer view of the recruitment picture. The Division is also shortly embarking on a fresh graduate intake by the end December 2019.

Recommendation 13: The Council continues to advocate for Government funding to fit automatic fire suppression systems in local authority housing in the borough

The Council is supporting the Local Government Association and London Councils to advocate for funding.

Some RPs advise that they are actively considering retrofitting fire suppressant systems to selected blocks whilst others indicate that they are prioritising passive fire protection measures and or waiting for further direction or developments.

Recommendation 14: The Council considers fitting automatic fire suppression systems in High Rises in the borough, prioritizing Vulnerable Residents (including residents with hoarding issues or who require assistance in evacuating) and high risk buildings by carrying out a feasibility study by March on:

- the anticipated cost of work; and
- the impact of the works on other housing services provided by the Council

The Council is awaiting the outcome of Hackitt recommendations and legislative changes before commencing a feasibility report with different models of costings for works.

However, THHF has commenced initial work to identify procedures in place for the evacuation of vulnerable households during a fire. One approach identified as good practice is a secure box with details of vulnerable households accessible to the fire brigade and updated annually. The THHF Asset Management sub group will further discuss this along with other approaches of good practice for wider roll out.

3. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

4.1 This is a report updating the committee on the Action Plan arising out of the Fire Safety Scrutiny Review. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),

- Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
- 5.2 The recommendations in scrutiny review are made as part Scrutiny Sub-Committee's role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the Council, as required under its Best Value duty.
- 5.3 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.
- 5.4 The recommendations of the Scrutiny Review are based on areas of risk and for improvement for the Council and its partners and the actions seek to address these.
- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder reduction implications arising from the report or recommendations.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- [Fire Safety Scrutiny Review Report \(hyperlink\)](#)

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Fire Safety Scrutiny Review Action Plan Update

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

- NONE

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Appendix 1 - Fire Safety Scrutiny Review Action Plan - Monitoring template

Recommendation 1:

Tower Hamlets Homes, in consultation with the Council and members of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, develops, monitors and evaluates a clear, easy-to-use separate notifications process for residents to:

- raise fire safety concerns separately from general repair issues
- receive clear timeframes for remedial actions, according to the level of risk

Track the progress of remedial actions.

Comments from Service:

Comments from Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) - The current system in place is working well and the reporting fire safety concerns has been widely publicised to residents. The current process has been discussed with Tenants and Residents Association Chairs and Members. Fire safety enquiries/ concerns coming into THH via Members Enquiries and Complaints are logged on iCase with 'Health and Safety' code so can be easily monitored and extracted for reporting purposes.

Repairs system – THH record incidents that have happened on a separate code 'Caused by Fire'. Fire related repairs are logged as a repair and normal approach based on priority system and residents kept informed. Note that the majority of fire safety repairs come from routine inspections, walk about and FRAs findings rather than resident requests.

Accessing services is available to residents in a number of ways – in person, telephone, and writing. Further development work on recording fire incidents is planned which will automatically alert the Health and Safety Team to any fire related incidents.

It would be good to keep the detailed dialogue going as THH are considering adopting the findings of the Dame Judith Hackitt report (particularly on the Resident's voices section) and the national picture will continue to evolve.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Housing and Regeneration set up a meeting with Tower Hamlets Homes to discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a separate fire safety notifications system / adapting current repairs system so residents can notify | Mark Baigent / Susmita Sen | October 2018 | THH is currently working to identify incoming calls dealt with by the Housing Services Centre at the point of contact and these are generally less than five per week. Fire safety concerns are also recorded on the Tenants and Residents Association Actions Trackers so are visible and monitored and THH hold fire specific |

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| <p>fire safety concerns separately (including for residents who do not have internet access);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how monitoring and evaluation feeds into performance indicators referred to in Recommendation 2 • How to feedback to residents on the progress of these items. | | | <p>sessions with TRA reps. The new Joint Working Group on Fire safety (made up of involved residents, Tower Hamlets Federation reps, THH Board and THH staff) are also looking at ways of monitoring enquiries. The Tower Hamlets Housing Forum is also working with members on this and data gathering at present.</p> |
| <p>Tower Hamlets Homes to discuss fire safety notifications processes at the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum to establish best practice around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timeframes for responding to residents • timeframes for addressing issues • How best to keep residents updated on progress (including residents without internet access). | Tower Hamlets Homes | March 2019 | <p>THHF members have multiple methods (publicised via newsletters, leaflets, website, articles, noticeboards, social media engagement, annual action days etc.) to promote fire safety and by which residents can raise concerns, including through dedicated channels. RPs have in the main utilised existing resident engagement structures to discuss fire safety. THH has also created a joint working group within its existing Governance structure.</p> <p>All RPs have service standards for responding to resident reports. Remedial actions are completed as appropriate dependent on the particular circumstances of the block and issue.</p> <p>The use of a dedicated reporting facility e.g. by email account may be considered as a good practice example which RPs will consider through the THHF benchmarking sub group.</p> |

Recommendation 2:

The Council develops performance indicators to monitor and manage residents' concerns on fire safety in high rise buildings, in consultation with the London Fire Brigade, Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers and Private Providers, to report to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Comments from Service:

While Housing and Regeneration and Tower Hamlets Homes can consult with Registered Providers in the borough through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, the Council has no statutory powers over Registered Providers or Private Providers to require them to report on performance indicators.

Indicators being monitored at present by THH include (Business Critical Indicator) Fire Safety: reduce risk on 9 High Rise Blocks to tolerable, and (Key Performance Indicator) Fire Risk Assessments in place. A key challenge likely to have an impact on THH's ability to reduce the risk on 9 high rise blocks to tolerable, will be the replacement of leaseholder doors, which may receive objections from leaseholders. This could therefore keep the BCI in red status.

For Tower Hamlets, the Fire Brigade has a target of 800 fire safety visits per annum across residential (purpose built flats over 4 floors) and commercial properties. Safety tests which raise concerns are actioned with informal or formal action. Informal action which includes a written letter of deficiency and recommendations and formal action which includes enforcement notice leading to a prosecution if not actioned within the time allowed.

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| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Reporting annually to the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the percentage of tall buildings (over 18m) owned by the Council and RPs that have an up to date FRA in place, inclusive of recommendations outstanding for more than 12 months. | Mark Baigent / THHF | June 2019 | <p>The Tower Hamlets Homes Joint Working Group on Fire Safety is developing a suite of KPIs for THH which will be useful for this recommendation. The Group are to consider the value of a range of indicators in Q2.</p> <p>Most RPs have in place KPIs that track the completion of FRAs against an agreed programme for all blocks and track completion of recommended actions arising from the FRAs. Some RPs are also monitoring the levels of risk identified by FRAs specifically report on high priority recommendations arising. Timescales for completion of recommendations arising from FRAs will vary dependant on the specific issues found and the level of risk.</p> |

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| <p>THH to reduce risk on 9 high rise blocks to tolerable, with progress reported to the operational meetings, strategic meetings, Mayor's housing meeting and to the Place Directorate Leadership Team and the HSSC.</p> | <p>Susmita Sen / Mark Baigent</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>Progress on the 9 substantial risk blocks:</p> <p>Broddick House (1block) completed.</p> <p>Cranbrook Estate 6 blocks 99.9% complete only fire safety doors remaining. Delays are attributable to national shortage of supply for fire safety compliant doors. However, four suppliers have been identified and procurement for the fire safety doors will commence shortly, followed by works delivery with a completion target of Q3.</p> <p>Barleymow Estate: 2 blocks Malting and Brewster works are partially complete given the complexities involved. Extensive intrusive structural investigations were conducted by consultants resulting in the need for complex structural reinforcement works. Subject to the Mayor in Cabinet approval works will commence in Q2 taking at least 18months to complete.</p> <p>FRA's have been commissioned for the 9 substantial block to establish current risk tolerability.</p> <p>Progress reported through Council's ALMO client governance.</p> |
| <p>Progress updates against the THH Fire Safety action plan (high risk and low risk blocks) reported to operational meetings, strategic meetings, Mayor's housing meeting and to the HSSC.</p> | <p>Susmita Sen</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>The Fire Safety Action Plan has been completed and the work is being delivered through the THH Fire Risk Management Group, the Joint Working Group on Fire Safety and the Capital Delivery programme.</p> <p>A fire safety update was presented to HSSC at its meeting on 20 November 2018, inclusive of THH's risk management strategy, its approach to strengthening residents' voice and</p> |

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| | | | <p>influence communications, engagement and response to recommendations from the Hackett review.</p> <p>At the end of Q1, 100% of tall buildings (over 18 metres) managed by THH had an up to date FRA in place.</p> <p>For the 9 substantial risk blocks see above.</p> <p>For rest: A rationalised FRA programme will be agreed with THH in Q2.</p> <p>Additional KPIs for FRAs and fire safety works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of FRA to be undertaken per annum (proposed) • Update against the 900 blocks where FRA have been completed as follows • % of works carried out and • % of works remaining for the 900 blocks |
| London Fire Brigade to report annually to the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the percentage of residential purpose built flats visited, where informal / formal action has been taken. | London Fire Brigade / Marc Gibbons | June 2019 | <p>237 fire safety audits carried out on purpose built flats in Tower Hamlets during 2018-19 period</p> <p>33 instances of some form of action taken (13.92 %)</p> <p>7 Formal Action Enforcement Notices issued (2.95 %)</p> <p>26 Informal Notification of deficiencies issued (10.97%)</p> <p>The target relating to residential premises visits last year were those on the LFB inspection programme whose re-inspection period fell within the 2018/19 period. The frequency of these</p> |

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| | | | <p>visits is worked out by the relationship between the risk score attained during the last visit and the premises type. Last year this totalled c.40 visits, all of which were completed within the year.</p> <p>All other visits to residential premises, including purpose built flats were the result of post fire visits, complaints or requests for us to visit for various reasons. Additional hi-rise premises were also inspected due to the presence of ACM clad buildings in the area. However none of these visits were subject to targets</p> |
| <p>Housing and Regeneration to set up an initial meeting with Tower Hamlets Homes to discuss the data available and potential performance indicators, particularly around timeframes to address remedial actions, keeping residents informed and responding to fire safety notifications. (link to Recommendation 1)</p> | <p>Susmita Sen / Mark Baigent</p> | <p>September 2018</p> | <p>Indicators being monitored at present by THH include - Fire Safety: reduce risk on 9 High Rise Blocks to tolerable, and Fire Risk Assessments in place.</p> <p>THH are also in the process of developing a suite of KPIs.</p> |
| <p>Housing and Regeneration and Tower Hamlets Homes to discuss with Registered Providers of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum what data is available to monitor and benchmark Tower Hamlets Homes' performance</p> | <p>Mark Baigent / Susmita Sen / Sandra Fawcett</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>THH has delivered a presentation to the THHF housing management sub group on its approach to fire safety, and performance improvements.</p> |

Recommendation 3:

The Council develops a clear position statement encouraging all Responsible Persons in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to publish Fire Risk Assessments with a clear programme of works, outlining the scope and timing of the works.

Comments from Service:

In 2017, the Council stated that all Fire Risk Assessments would be published for Council blocks. Accordingly Tower Hamlets Homes have committed to do this in their Business Plan. The Council has no statutory powers to require Registered Providers and Private Providers to

| publish Fire Risk Assessments but can publicise its expectations around this from other housing providers. THH have published all 911 FRAs along with guidance on the website and publicised this widely. . | | | |
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| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
| Housing and Regen to liaise with Communications, the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Mayor to agree wording for the position statement | Mark Baigent / Andy Bate | October 2018 | <p>A position statement will be published shortly.</p> <p>The Council's website provides access to fire safety information for all members of the community, whether this is in the home, at work or in school.</p> <p>In addition, the Council's ALMO THH, has also published a communicated fire safety information, advice and guidance to it residents whether this be a for fire in the home or in the block. This includes THH's approach to fire safety – buildings and its fire safety strategy.</p> <p>Fire Risk assessments for THH blocks are available via the THH website.</p> <p>The Council encourages RPs to publish information on FRAs. Data on the % of FRAs that are in place is reported as a KPI to both the Statutory Deputy Mayor for Housing and the HSSC.</p> |
| Communications team to develop and implement a plan of where this will be publicised (website, printed and digital media to be considered) | Housing and Regen / Communications officer | Dec 2018 | <p>As above Fire Risk assessments for THH blocks are available via the THH website and a printed version is available upon request.</p> <p>THH are also currently in the process of providing block specific fire safety information to the 34 ten story + blocks, detailing tenants and landlord obligations, standards, levels of protection and equipment within the building. This in line with</p> |

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| | | | <p>the recommendations of the Hackitt Review.</p> <p>A few RPs are publishing some of their FRAs, others are planning to do so. Most of the remainder will provide copies or summaries on request.</p> <p>NB. The FRAs identify potential risk and recommendations but do not generally set out the scope and timing of resolution.</p> |
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Recommendation 4:
The Council develops a Fire Risk Assessment dashboard template, in consultation with Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers, Private Providers and resident representation to accompany published Fire Risk Assessments. The dashboard template should highlight:

- key risks
- works taken and planned to address the risks

Any implications for use of the building by residents.

Comments from Service:
The Council has no statutory powers over Registered Providers or Private Providers to require them to develop and publish dashboards, accompanied by Fire Risk Assessments.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|---|
| Housing and Regeneration and Tower Hamlets Homes to meet to discuss developing dashboard templates | Mark Baigent / Susmita Sen | October 2018 | <p>This is being considered as a report by the Joint Working Group on Fire safety for THH properties. A methodology to determine the need for FRA's and criteria for prioritisation is in development.</p> <p>THHF – Whilst this isn't the case for all members for THHF, some RPs do have in place a dashboard that provides management information across the organisation</p> <p>Some RPs in the UK are developing Health and Safety check lists for each block to be placed in communal areas which</p> |

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| | | | may be relevant to the recommendation. |
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Recommendation 5:

The Council develops a joint communication strategy with clear consistent messages, in consultation with the London Fire Brigade, Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers, Private Landlords or their agents and resident representation, to raise awareness with tenants and leaseholders on the following issues:

- communal area fire doors and external fire doors on individual flats must meet the appropriate fire safety standards
- means of escape need to be kept free of storage items (including barbecues on balconies) and obstacles (including grilles over flat windows and doors)
- external areas around entry/exits to buildings must be kept free of obstacles to ensure emergency services can access the building
- minimizing fire risks in homes through referral services, such as London Fire Brigade home visits and encouraging residents or family members to seek mental health support for hoarding issues
- installing smoke alarms to save lives
- certain internal refurbishment works require approvals (including Building Control approvals)
- What to do in an emergency, including when to stay put, when to evacuate and how to develop personalized evacuation plans.

The Communication strategy needs to consider

- a) A variety of communication channels, including digital, non-digital and meetings or 'fire safety awareness days'.
- b) The diversity of the borough and develop communication materials in key languages spoken in the borough.
- c) how information is accessible to those sub-letting and visiting the building

Best practice models in engaging elderly and disabled residents, such as the Social Model of Disability.

Comments from Service:

A joint Communications Strategy could be an effective method to ensure consistent messaging. The Council currently has very little access to Private Landlords and therefore proposes consulting with known private providers to share any lessons learned and approaches to fire safety messages to residents.

Environmental Health has contact details for about 300 of the 600 plus tall private sector residential buildings following the ACM work. Most private sector tall buildings are owned by companies who employ managing agents who would carry out the Fire Risk Assessments and communicate with residents.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| <p>Communications Team to liaise with the Chair of Tower Hamlets Housing Forum to <u>set up a working group</u> with the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum Asset Management Sub-group and the Council's communications team to develop key messages</p> | <p>Andy Bate / Sandra Fawcett</p> | <p>October 2018</p> | <p>THHF are very much in support for the development of a joint communications strategy. At present, all RPs have a variety of measures in place to communicate with residents on key messages such as fire safety.</p> <p>The Council's communications team are currently working with partnership colleagues requesting to attend the next THHF Exec meeting / asset management sub group to take this forward.</p> |
| <p>The working group to approach Chairs of Tenant and Resident Associations to better understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • residents' knowledge of the issues set out in the recommendation • potential challenges or reasons for non-compliance to determine how best to address these in key messages • to provide feedback/ experience from the Fire Safety specific meetings and training held with the THH TRA Chairs | <p>Tower Hamlets Housing Forum / Tower Hamlets Homes</p> | <p>January 2019</p> | <p>A timetable and action plan will be drafted following the development of the communications working group.</p> <p>In the meantime however, RPs have utilised existing resident engagement structures to discuss fire safety, and THH has created a joint working group on fire safety within its existing Governance structures.</p> |
| <p>The Working Group approach private providers through the Landlord Forum and the Housing Forum to share experiences and practices</p> | <p>Tower Hamlets Housing Forum / Tower Hamlets Homes</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>As above.</p> |
| <p>Based on its findings on residents' issues, the working group develops key messages in consultation with the London Fire Brigade</p> | <p>Tower Hamlets Housing Forum / Tower Hamlets</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>As above.</p> <p>THH have in place a programme for front door renewal and common area door renewal where this has been identified on</p> |

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| | Homes | | <p>the FRA. THH have been running a communications campaign on the bullet points above and ensuring fire safe front doors are in place and this extends to a joint letter between THH and LFB encouraging leaseholders and landlords to change doors where necessary or where law applies. THH are developing with the Council an approach to leaseholders buying into THH door replacement programmes.</p> <p>The THH fire safety team who are visiting residents to give advice and whilst the full details of outcomes have been provided in other reports, key stats up to Feb 2019 include: 3914 visits across 95 blocks, identified 452 vulnerable residents and 34 residents with hoarding tendencies, 22 suspected sublet properties, 35 Air B&B's, 3 properties have been returned following interviews under caution by the Fraud team, 359 Leaseholders have been referred to the LFB to fit smoke detectors and 314 repair works orders have been raised for faulty or missing smoke alarms to be fitted in tenanted properties, 302 HMO's have been referred to the council to check if licences are in place.</p> |
| <p>The Working Group to develop and implement a communications plan around how best to publicise the key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • across a variety of communication channels • in different languages spoken in the borough • so visitors to buildings are aware of evacuation routes if applicable • to engage older residents and those | Tower Hamlets Housing Forum / Tower Hamlets Homes / Andy Bate | March 2019 | As above. |

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| with a disability | | | |
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| Recommendation 6: | | | |
| The Council invites Registered and Private Providers to the Tower Hamlets Resilience Forum and monitors attendance to ensure housing providers are aware of emergency protocols. | | | |
| Comments from Service: | | | |
| Following the Fire Safety Scrutiny Review the Civil Protection Unit have delivered a presentation on emergency planning to the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, followed by Civil Contingencies training/exercising for Registered Providers who are members of the Forum. A representative from THHF is a regular member of the Tower Hamlets Resilience Forum. The CPU is also available to offer the same services to the Private Sector Landlords Forum and the Private Sector Housing Forum. | | | |
| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
| Presentation to the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum Executive | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | May 2018 | Took place on 23 rd May 2018. |
| Registered Providers to be invited to Civil Contingencies Training/Exercising: Exercise Heron – Nov'17 Exercise Safer City – Mar'18 Exercise Corvus – Apr'18 BRF Workshop – May'18 | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | May 2018 | On-going. Representation at all exercises listed, this is ongoing for future exercising which includes forthcoming Ex Safer City 2019 1 st & 2 nd May 2019. |
| The CPU to ensure the Council's website is updated with clear protocols and guidance. | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | July 2018 | Action complete, however, updating the website is an ongoing process |
| The Council invites the Chair of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum to the Tower Hamlets Borough Resilience Forum (BRF) so the Chair can feed back to other Registered Providers on the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | On going | Ongoing. Chair of THHF or a deputy attends BRF |
| Civil Protection Unit (CPU) to deliver a presentation to the Private Sector Landlords | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | March 2019 | CPU will now deliver a presentation to the re-scheduled Private Renters' Charter Forum on 10 September and at the |

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| Forum and to the Private Sector Housing Forum on emergency planning work that the unit delivers | | | next Landlords' Forum on 9 October. Training will be offered to landlords. |
| The CPU to offer Civil Contingencies Training on emergency Planning procedures to private landlords via the Private Sector Landlords Forum and the Private Sector Housing Forum | Andrea Stone / Ann Corbett | March 2019 | As per above action. |

Recommendation 7:

The Council develops and maintains an emergency contact database of Private Providers of dwellings in High Rises.

Comments from Service:

Due to limited access to general private providers, the Council will prioritise approaching large private rented sector providers in high rise buildings. Contact details for 300 of the +600 private blocks in the Borough are available, for those with some form of cladding. Cladding status updates is reported to the MHCLG monthly, however as at 8th August 18, there are approximately 8 buildings where contact details are available although cladding status is yet to be confirmed. Once confirmed this will be reported to MHCLG.

Emergency contact details should be visible and available on housing blocks; however can also range from managing agents (some off shore), lettings agents and various landlords. Building Owners are responsible for maintaining emergency contact details and to provide these details to their residents. The London Fire Brigade should pick up on emergency contact details as part of the Fire Risk Assessments. The Council already holds a comprehensive list of contact details for high rise blocks it's been involved with (300), but they are not emergency details – it is not the Council's responsibility to hold emergency contact details.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| N/A – See comments above. | | | N/A |

Recommendation 8:

The Council improves engagement with Private Providers by developing a forum to share best practice.

Comments from Service:

Due to limited access to general private providers, the Council will prioritise approaching large private rented sector providers in high rise buildings. Best practice will be shared via existing forums.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Share best practice of Fire Safety through the Private Sector Landlords Forum and the Private Sector Housing Forum. | Marc Lancaster | March 2019 | <p>A presentation on Fire Safety best practice will be delivered at the Landlords' Forum on 9 October. An extensive briefing on this topic was also delivered to the forum in 2017.</p> <p>Fire safety is covered in the accreditation training that landlords undertake through the Landlord License Accreditation Scheme. These sessions take place quarterly at the Town Hall and in 2018/19 77 Tower Hamlets landlords were accredited.</p> <p>Fire Safety is also promoted through the Private Renters' Charter.</p> |

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Recommendation 9:

The Council encourages Tower Hamlets Homes, Registered Providers and Private Providers in the borough to develop personalized emergency evacuation plans with residents who need assistance to evacuate and priorities any remedial works or adaptations that are required to facilitate safe evacuation

Comments from Service:

The responsibility of developing personalised evacuation plans rests with the landlord.

Comments from THH:

- a) Plans only developed for identified evacuation blocks. LFB advice on 'Stay Put' and 'know your escape plan' widely published by THH along with the LFB Fire Safety Visit offer which covers evacuation plans. LFB orchestrate evacuations during incidents. THH share

| <p>vulnerability and mobility data with LFB. Signage is displayed in blocks for escape routes and signage improvements plans in place where identified in FRAs)</p> <p>b) Continued publicity and discussion by Neighbourhoods Fire Safety Team who are visiting all residents (6-9 storey blocks 2018/19 with 10+ storey blocks already visited)</p> | | | |
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| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
| <p>Housing and Regeneration to discuss at the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum:</p> <p>a) THH and Registered Providers' existing services for developing personalised evacuation plans</p> <p>b) Current uptake</p> <p>c) How to improve outreach</p> | <p>Mark Baigent/ Sandra Fawcett / Susmita Sen</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>RPs specialising in supported housing have developed PEEPs. The majority of blocks managed by RPs (General Needs properties) have a 'Stay Put' Policy in place. Some General Needs RPs have provided information on vulnerable residents either directly or indirectly to the LFB.</p> <p>RPs have a variety of methods in place to communicate arrangements.</p> |
| <p>Presentation by the London Fire Brigade at the Private Sector Landlords Forum and the Private Sector Housing forum to raise awareness of fire safety and the need for evacuation plans including for those needing assistance.</p> | <p>Dave Tolley / Marc Lancaster / London Fire Brigade</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>Refer to recommendation 8.</p> |
| <p>Promote services available in the borough under communication initiatives referred to in Recommendation 5.</p> | <p>Andy Bate</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>Landlords are currently using existing resident engagement structures, working groups and communication mediums to discuss and raise fire safety concerns. However a joint communications strategy is yet to be developed, identifying a collective approach to communications and good practices.</p> |

Recommendation 10:

Within 6 months of the publication of the Government's response to the findings of the Independent Review of Building Regulations, the Director of Place submits a report to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee:

- detailing the legal, financial and resource implications on service areas

- advising how the Council proposes to implement the Review's recommendations
 - assessing the impact on residents and the provision of affordable housing
- Outlining how the Council will work with Registered Providers and private sector housing providers to engage residents in the implementation of the proposals.

Comments from Service:

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| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Produce a draft report on Independent Review of Building Regulations for Place DLT support | John McGeary | October 2018 | The government did not respond to the Independent Review of Building regs until January 2019 so this unfortunately built in delay to the process. The government has recently launched its consultation on what it sees as the approach to implementing recommendations from the Hackitt Review, so the practical implications for authorities will shortly be known in draft. It is now anticipated that a draft report will be targeted at a September 2019 completion. |
| Submit Report to Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee, to include resource implications, future actions and monitoring approaches | John McGeary/Mark Baigent | November 2018 | <p>As above the production of the final report is dependent on the issues mentioned above. The council is not in control of this stage of the process until it knows clearly what the government expects to be taken forward and how this is to be implemented. A final report will be completed by November 2019.</p> <p>An interim update was however provided to HSSC in November 18 which outlined the recommendations from the Hackitt review and work locally and nationally on implementation. The update highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns raised about the Joint Competence Authority (JCA) - Council disappointed with the rushed Part B consultations |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robust assessment of submitted fire strategy documents, providing guidance for developers. - The Councils Head of Building Control is a member of the London District Surveyors Association and in this capacity identifies and disseminates both national and international good practices. |
| Council services to work with THHF / Chairs of Sub Groups to support implementation of recommendations | John McGeary / Dave Tolley / Sandra Fawcett | December 2018 | As above. Once the final outcome from government consultations is understood then we will be able to work with THHF and work with chairs towards detailed implementation. This is anticipated to be around December 2019 but all is subject to government led timetable. |
| Deliver a presentation to the MHCLG on Tower Hamlets as a best practice model for the identification and remediation of ACM cladding on high rise blocks. | Mark Baigent | September 2018 | A presentation was delivered to the Secretary of State James Brokenshire MP at the Ministerial Taskforce. |
| Work with MHCLG to help set up a multi-disciplinary task force to enforce the removal of ACM cladding, providing advice | Mark Baigent | March 2019 | The multi-disciplinary team is known as the Joint Inspection Team and has been established through the Local Government Association with funding from MHCLG |

Recommendation 11:

The Planning and Building Control Teams develop clear guidance for developers on the distinct fire safety responsibilities in tall buildings throughout the building process, taking account of:

- requirements under the New London Plan
- international best practice; and
- the findings of and Government response to the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety

Comments from Service:

| Actions | Responsible | Deadline | Comments |
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| To produce draft guidance including best practice for Developers on Fire safety and Tall Buildings | John McGeary and Paul Buckenham | March 2019 | The overall position remains uncertain at a national and regional level. The guidance document cannot be committed to yet as the new London Plan policy has not been adopted. Until it is the need to consider fire safety matters at an earlier planning stage is not a policy requirement. Officers will continue to track this and is assembling best practice. Anticipate December 2019 for completion but dependent on London Plan timetable so maybe earlier or later. |
| To define and confirm a clear planning and building control application process for Fire safety for Tall buildings - publishing this information onto the Councils website. | Paul Buckenham and Umbreen Qureshi | March 2019 | It remains an ambition to provide this process document but until other things beyond our control are confirmed then this cannot yet be accurately finalised. Anticipate a Feb 2020 completion date but as above this may change. |

Recommendation 12:

The Council adopts a proactive approach to encourage residents to enter the Building Control and Planning professions and works with the Local Authority Building Control (LABC), other boroughs and key partners, to develop a joint strategy to attract and retain a skilled Building Control and Planning workforce. The Council should consider:

- Better use of shared resources
 - Apprenticeship schemes to support local residents and economic development
- Incentives to attract young people into university courses.

Comments from Service:

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Complete and launch the Graduate Planner programme | David Williams | October 2018 | This work progressed well and was advanced until June 18 when the lead member of staff left the organisation. This work was not subsequently re-allocated as we did not have a further graduate intake in 2018-19 so other casework was prioritised. The Division is shortly embarking on a fresh graduate intake and will restart the work. Estimated |

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| | | | completion will not be before end December 2019. |
| Develop an action plan with relevant partners for promoting Planning & Building Control as a career (to young people, schools, apprenticeships) | Vicky Clark / David Williams / Diane Lomas / Christine McInnes | March 2019 | This work has not progressed due to resource challenges. This work is being reviewed. |
| Building Control and Planning to consider market supplement approaches to address recruitment and retention issues at a more experienced level | John McGeary / Paul Buckenham | March 2019 | This process has delayed in implementation as it was awaiting the formal introduction of a new corporate policy on Recruitment and retention packages (market supplements). Work in Building control is underway as the existing original scheme has now expired after its initial 3 year lifespan. Recruitment has taken place and this was without success at senior roles. This will now start to form the evidence needed to make a case for a new recruitment and retention package in Building Control. Planning is shortly to start its next round of targeted recruitment to fill some of its experienced role vacancies so once this concludes it will start to give us a clearer view of the recruitment picture. |
| Careers education programme pilot to be developed in the Autumn to identify current hard to fill vacancies in the Council, converting these to apprenticeships - Planners to attend and speak at the event. | Vicky Clark / John McGeary / Paul Buckenham | December 2018 | This work has not progressed due to resource challenges. This work is being reviewed. |

Recommendation 13:

The Council continues to advocate for Government funding to fit automatic fire suppression systems in local authority housing in the borough

Comments from Service:

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
|---|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Housing and Regeneration discusses with the Cabinet Member for Housing, the Mayor, Tower Hamlets Homes and Registered Providers to agree an approach to advocating for funding. | Mark Baigent | October 2018 | The Council is supporting the Local Government Association and London Councils to advocate for funding. Whilst some RPs advise that they are actively considering the retrofitting fire suppressant systems to selected blocks others indicate that they are prioritising passive fire protection measures and or waiting for further direction or developments. |

Recommendation 14:

The Council considers fitting automatic fire suppression systems in High Rises in the borough, prioritizing Vulnerable Residents (including residents with hoarding issues or who require assistance in evacuating) and high risk buildings by carrying out a feasibility study by March

on:

- the anticipated cost of work; and
- the impact of the works on other housing services provided by the Council

Comments from Service:

The Council can only consider the implementation of this recommendation in relation to its own housing stock, managed by Tower Hamlets Homes.

| Actions | Responsible Officer | Deadline | Comments |
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| Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with Tower Hamlets Homes and Registered Providers, conduct a review on: 1. The number of High Rise flats in the borough, according to tenure, known Vulnerable Residents and high risk flats | Mark Baigent / Dave Tolley / Susmita Sen / Sandra / Sandra Fawcett | December 2018 | THHF has commenced initial work to identify procedures in place for the evacuation of vulnerable households during a fire. One approach identified as good practice is a secure box with details of vulnerable households accessible to the fire brigade and updated annually. The THHF Asset Management sub group will further discuss this along with other approaches of good practice for wider roll out. |

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| <p>2. Lease terms in mixed tenure to clarify whether the Council can gain access for the works to be carried out</p> <p>3. Whether the Council can recharge the costs of works to leaseholders</p> | | | |
| <p>THH stock - Finance prepares a feasibility report with different models of costings for works on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its housing stock • the number of flats with known Vulnerable Residents | <p>Mark Baigent / Paul Leeson</p> | <p>January 2019</p> | <p>The Council is awaiting the outcome of Hackitt recommendations and legislative changes before commencing this piece of work.</p> |
| <p>Housing and Regeneration presents the feasibility report to MAB, suggesting a preferred option.</p> | <p>Mark Baigent</p> | <p>March 2019</p> | <p>As above.</p> |

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