



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 20/11

MEETING	Finance & Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	5 March 2020
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Resourcing potential changes in building safety and fire safety regimes
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>As Members are aware, Sir Martin Moore-Bick's Phase 1 Grenfell report makes 46 recommendations. These have implications for building owners and responsible persons, fire and rescue services and multi-agency partners involved in emergency response operations.</p> <p>As Members are aware from papers to the Authority and the Finance seminar held in December, many of these recommendations will have significant financial and technical implications for the Service.</p> <p>This paper broadly outlines these recommendations, and in so doing, highlights an emerging strategic risk for Members to include within their wider risk monitoring arrangements.</p>
RISK ASSESSMENT	<p>Failure to strategically reflect upon and learn from this incident may adversely affect the high standing of the Authority. There is an emerging strategic risk in terms of the Service's ability to meet the likely increase in resourcing arising from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and forecasted changes to legislation outlined in the Queen's speech.</p>
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	Whilst the precise resourcing implications are still being considered, any required investments will need to be considered within the context of the wider financial challenges and an uncertain future as acknowledged in the Strategic Risk Register.
RECOMMENDATION	Members are asked to: 1. Note the content of the report.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry Update – paper to the Authority (Item 19/58) 19 December 2019 Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 Report – Report of the Public Inquiry into the Fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017. Sir Martin Moore-Bick (October 2019) https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/phase-1-report
APPENDICES	None
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017, the then Prime Minister announced that there would be a public inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the fire. On 28 June 2017, The Rt. Hon. Sir Martin Moore-Bick was appointed to act as Chairman.
- 1.2 The Inquiry was separated into two phases:
- Phase 1 – *‘to identify exactly how the fire started, how it escaped from the flat of origin and how fire and smoke was able to spread throughout the building in a manner and at a speed that prevented many people from escaping, despite the prompt attendance of the emergency services. Also, (to) examine the response of the emergency services so far as it bore on the decisions made and actions taken on the night of the fire’*
 - Phase 2 – *‘to ascertain the underlying causes of the disaster, including the decisions made in relation to critical aspects of the design and construction of the cladding system, the adequacy of the regulatory regime and the response of central and local government’.*
- 1.3 Upon the conclusion of phase 1, the ‘Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 report’ was published on 30 October 2019.

2. Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 report recommendations

- 2.1 Sir Martin Moore-Bick made 46 recommendations in his report, which can be broadly categorised as actions that must be taken by:
- building owners or responsible persons
 - fire and rescue services (N.B London Fire Brigade were singled out for specific actions, but these do equally apply to all fire and rescue services)
 - those agencies that would respond to a major incident of this nature where there is a requirement for them to work together to bring any incident to a safe and speedy conclusion.
- 2.2 Several actions that fall to building owners or responsible persons will require either changes to existing legislation or the creation of new legislation to ensure the recommendations are properly adhered to.
- 2.3 The Government, in its response to the Phase 1 report, also made it clear that fire and rescue services should not wait for changes in legislation to begin before addressing the recommendations.

- 2.4 This paper provides a flavour of the expectations and likely impact on the Service. Officers are intending to provide a fuller paper to Members at the Authority's meeting in June.

3. Actions that must be taken by building owners or responsible persons

- 3.1 These actions are to ensure that key risk information is available to fire and rescue services during any emergency or operational event that will aid their response activities, such as a requirement to:
- pass on information to fire and rescue services on external building construction and materials
 - pass on information to fire and rescue services, on up to date plans of every floor of the building as well as fire safety measures in place
 - carry out regular inspections and tests of firefighting lifts and to pass on the results to fire and rescue services monthly.
- 3.2 Whilst these actions apply to building owners, there will be a requirement for fire and rescue services to have the means to receive, store and manage the information provided. There will be capacity and process issues to address before this is achievable.

4. Actions that must be taken by fire and rescue services

- 4.1 These actions mostly relate to preparations for and actual response to emergencies and include the need:
- for fire and rescue personnel to understand the risk of external fire spread
 - to have a robust process for managing operational risk information, including the availability of such information to crews on scene
 - for effective communications throughout the chain of command e.g. from the service control centre to the incident commander and from operational crews to the command support teams etc
 - for robust arrangements to be in place that cater for a change in strategy e.g. from one of 'stay put' to a full evacuation plan, including the link with fire survival guidance
 - for fire and rescue services to maintain a store of 'smoke hoods' to assist with the evacuation of residents where a stay put policy is revoked.
- 4.2 Many of these key points have been addressed locally, however some are the subject of a national approach to procedure development e.g. evacuation procedures.

5. Actions that must be taken by those agencies that would respond to a major incident

- 5.1 These actions apply mainly to the three blue light emergency services and include the need:
- for the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles and associated doctrine to be amended, to make clear the responsibilities on agencies to coordinate the declaration of any major incident
 - to have a process of sharing fire survival guidance with fire and rescue services, should such guidance be handled by either the police or ambulance controls; and for an open channel between the three blue light services to be maintained
 - for joint data sharing protocols that enable, for example, helicopter film footage to be viewed by fire and rescue services on the ground.
- 5.2 Both Dorset and Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forums (LRF) have tried and tested arrangements in place for dealing with all aspects of a major incident and are well placed against this set of recommendations. However, both LRFs have established working groups to more fully assure themselves, in light of the Grenfell Inquiry's findings.

6. Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service's response to the recommendations

- 6.1 Following the Grenfell Tower fire, a working group was established within the Service to monitor the public inquiry and to identify early lessons that would require changes in Service policy or procedure.
- 6.2 Upon publication of the Phase 1 report, this working group carried out a gap analysis against the 46 recommendations and has produced an action plan to bridge those gaps, where possible to do so.
- 6.3 The recommendations applicable to fire and rescue services have either been dealt with or are in hand. For example, our operational procedures have been amended to include the appointment of an external safety officer to monitor for signs of external fire spread. Similarly, guidance has been issued on the process of revoking any stay put policy and moving to full evacuation.
- 6.4 A number of the recommendations that apply to multiple partners have been addressed, for example, there is now a protocol in place for an open channel to be set up on the declaration of a major incident between the three blue light agencies. There is, however, more work needed to ensure critical fire survival guidance is collated from partners whether they be local blue light partners or other fire and rescue services outside of our Networked Fire Service Partnership.

- 6.5 The working group has also been monitoring ongoing work at the national level that will influence the future legislative environment. We have, for example, contributed to the 'call for evidence' in relation to the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order and its fitness for purpose.
- 6.6 Whilst there is some insight into the likely impact of legislative changes, this has yet to be finalised; and the detail will not be totally clear until the draft legislation is presented.

7. Legislative and oversight proposals

- 7.1 In the Queen's speech, two key pieces of legislation were referenced and are now under development. They are:
- **The Building Safety Bill:** This seeks to put in place new and enhanced regulatory regimes for building safety and construction products, and ensure residents have a stronger voice in the system. One of the main elements of the bill that will impact upon us is the development of a new system to oversee the whole built environment, with local enforcement agencies (*including fire and rescue services*) and national regulators working together to ensure that the safety of all buildings is improved
 - **The Fire Safety Bill:** The purpose of this bill is to deliver meaningful change to ensure a tragedy like Grenfell can never happen again. It will lead to changes in the Fire Safety Order that will impact on fire and rescue services, such as to bring into scope external cladding systems and fire doors in residential buildings of any height (not just high-rise residential buildings); which in turn will affect the scale of protection work requiring the inspection and policing of fire related legislation.
- 7.2 One of the key components of our approach to protection is our risk-based inspection programme, for which we have a corporate target to complete the inspection programme (of around 1800 premises) by the end of this financial year. We remain on target to achieve this.
- 7.3 However, we are currently developing the next iteration of our risk-based inspection programme and what is clear from the expected legislative changes and our own understanding of risk, is that the new programme will be bigger and more complex and will therefore have a significant bearing on capacity. It is also apparent that securing technical skills will be difficult, given that these will also be in greater demand across the public and private sectors.
- 7.4 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services, Sir Thomas Winsor, in his Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England, documented his concerns over risk-based inspection programmes in several services not being sufficiently resourced. This will be a focus area in the next round of inspections, and whilst our current programme was declared suitable and sufficient, we will need to ensure that any future programme is sufficiently resourced.

8. Summary and Key Points

- 8.1 The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report has now been published and Officers have, as far as possible, comprehensively considered the recommendations of this important report; and developed an action plan to address the outstanding issues. Government has already introduced two new bills that relate to building safety which, together with proposed changes to the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order, are indicating a significant change to the operating environment in this area of work.
- 8.2 Whilst the precise resourcing implications are not yet fully understood, what is clear is that more financial and technical resources will be needed. This comes at a time when the Authority is facing a challenging financial future. A more detailed paper will be presented to Members at their Authority meeting in June. However, at this stage it is felt prudent to present the need for additional resourcing and the difficulty of securing technical expertise against a competing public and private sector employment market as an emerging strategic risk to the Authority.

March 2020