
**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
JOHN BARRADELL**

1. I am employed by the City of London Corporation ("the Corporation") of Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ as its Town Clerk and Chief Executive. I have worked within local government since 2001 and have served as Community Safety Manager, Director of Community Protection and Deputy Chief Executive at Westminster City Council. I was appointed as Chief Executive of Brighton and Hove City Council in 2009 and as Town Clerk and Chief Executive of the City of London Corporation since September 2012.
2. I have been passed a request by the Inquiry Solicitor dated 14th December 2018 in relation to the request for evidence under rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 which addresses (a) the particular issues identified below and (b) any other issues in relation to which I consider to be relevant to the Inquiry's investigation, in particular, in my capacity as the lead of London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) during the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower Fire. I am authorised by the Corporation to make this statement.
3. My experience of involvement with civil emergencies started with responsibility for the creation and management of the mortuary for the victims of the 2005 London Bombings. I was also the lead officer for the management of the remediation following the 2006 poisoning

of Alexander Litvinenko in London. I have acted as Local Authority lead during several incidents in both London and Sussex.

4. In order to deal with the request and assist the Inquiry, I set out below my responses to the questions asked.
5. *13(a) What policies, procedures and plans were in place on the part of the Tenant Management Organisation, Central and Local government for dealing with a major emergency such as the Grenfell Tower fire?*
6. The Civil Contingency Act 2004 ("the Act") provides the legislative framework for emergency preparedness and it imposes roles and responsibilities on Local Authorities who have been defined as "Category 1" responders for the purposes of the Act alongside the emergency services. The duties under the Act include assessing the risk of emergencies and putting in place emergency plans, business continuity plans and arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public; sharing information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination; and co-operating with other local responders to enhance that efficiency and co-ordination.
7. Official guidance on the Act, Regulations and Statutory Guidance 'Emergency Preparedness', has been issued and states the need for a shared local understanding of the multi-agency framework for working at the local level, the roles and responsibilities for individual organisations and a shared understanding on how the different levels of local, sub-national and national work together in an emergency.
8. Under the Guidance the establishment of Local Resilience I is required. The Guidance also sets out specific arrangements for London and was refreshed in July 2012 following the Coroner's Report on the 7th July 2005 London bombings. It sets out the framework for the capital's statutory Local Resilience Forum which is known as the London Resilience Forum ("LRF"), of which I am Deputy Chair.
9. The LRF meets in support of the London Resilience Partnership ("LRP"), a collective of one hundred and seventy organisations, to ensure London's preparedness in the event of emergencies and coordinates the activities of a wide range of organisations to achieve this.

It also provides a link with the national level for emergency preparation and resilience. Strategic level representatives of the Partnership meet periodically three times a year as a Forum, with agreed work progressed on its behalf and its constituent organisations, by sector panels and specific groups which then, in turn, report to the LRF.

10. The LRF sets the strategy and objectives for the Partnership through its programme which includes making plans for London's preparedness in the event of emergencies affecting communities such as, water shortage, flooding to major incidents with significant loss of life. The Forum agrees a number of multi-agency plans directed at identified risks and sets out platforms for collaboration.
11. These plans are set out in London Resilience Partnership multi-agency plans, frameworks and protocols, which include the Strategic Co-ordination Protocol, Recovery Management Protocol, Humanitarian Assistance Framework, Communicating with the Public Framework and the Mass Fatalities Framework, Structural Collapse Framework and the Scientific and Technical Advice cell ("STAC") arrangements. Each of these protocols and plans were relevant to the actions undertaken during the relevant period from 14th June 2017 to 20th June 2017. These plans, frameworks and protocols are underpinned by the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel ("LESLP"), the Major Incident Procedure Manual, and the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles ("JESIP") and are published and available on the public website of the London Resilience website hosted by the Greater London Authority ("GLA").
12. My role as Deputy Chair of the LRF is directly attributable to the lead role on resilience I perform on behalf of all other London Chief Executives and by doing so, I Chair the Local Authorities' Panel ("LAP"). The role of the Panel is:
 - To provide a strategic overview to local authority civil resilience activity and assurance in London,
 - To develop strategy for local authority issues to ensure a fully integrated and coordinated approach to pan London working including:
 - Local authority participation in London Resilience Partnership activities.
 - The London Local Authority Gold) arrangements.

- To provide strategic direction to:

The LAP Implementation Group.

The local authority sub-regional resilience meetings.

- To act as the steering group for all support funded and provided centrally through the LRG and the local authority regional support team.
- Oversee the central resilience fund which will be allocated on a flexible basis, to compliment the needs of all chief executives and the delivery of the LAP Business Plan.
- To identify strategic issues requiring wider partnership consultation for presentation to the LRF.
- To consider reports and to communicate with other LRF Sub-Committees which have a bearing on local authority civil resilience activity.
- To promote a fully integrated and coordinated approach to cross agency working and to maintain effective inter agency communication.

13. To support the LAP in overseeing the status of local authority civil resilience activity and assurance in London, the Local Authority Panel Implementation Group (“LAP IG”) is tasked with the development and annual delivery of an assurance process to review.

14. At the time of the Grenfell Fire, this process was known as “Minimum Standards for London” and assessed boroughs against criteria relevant to operational response and delivery of capabilities (“MSL”). The MSL assessment process provided an important focus for local authority resilience for three reasons; firstly it provided a self-awareness for each borough of its own capability and areas for future work or improvement, secondly it provided a regional overview of local authority capabilities and where a centralised support could add the greatest benefit to the collective planning of London’s local authorities, and thirdly, it provided an assurance to all partners of the willingness to self-scrutinize capability by local authorities.

15. This process worked on a rotational basis with one year being a self-assessment followed by a peer challenge of their self-assessments, individual borough results were consolidated into a London assessment and presented to the LAP and in turn the Leaders' Committee of London Councils, which includes the Leaders or directly elected Mayors of each borough council and the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee of the City of London, and

sets policy and takes decisions on the latest developments affecting London local government. A review of the assessments informed the LAP's business planning and assisted with determining Regional Strategic Priorities. A new assurance framework has now been adopted by all London local authorities which included an enhanced assessment of operational preparedness in September 2018 and the development of new Resilience Standards for London for implementation during 2019.

16. Each Local Authority, as a Category 1 responder, is required to undertake and publish a risk assessment. As set out in Chapter 4 of the Civil Contingencies Act Guidance – Local Responder risk assessment duty. At a regional level the London Resilience Forum, supported by the London Resilience Group is required to maintain a risk register to inform the development of multi-agency capabilities to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from incidents. London Local Authorities are represented on the London Resilience Risk Assessment working group.
17. The LRG is a central team of staff which supports the London Resilience Partnership to deliver its strategic goals. This compliments partner organisation activities, each of whom have specific responsibilities for preparing and responding to emergencies. The Group is funded jointly by the London Fire Brigade, the Greater London Authority and all London Local Authorities, including the Corporation. The LRG is based and staffed by the London Fire Brigade and provides a secretariat to the various forums, co-ordinating the development of plans and capabilities. The LRG also provides a specific service in support of local authority emergency planning as set out in Chapter 9 London of Emergency Preparedness, of the guidance to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and includes:
- Local authority ‘Gold’: maintain these arrangements, keeping them updated through review and revision.
 - Control centre: In order to support local authority ‘Gold’, planning will have to be maintained to deliver an effective control centre (London Local Authority Coordination Centre).
 - Provision of training to support pan-London arrangements:
 - Provision of exercising of pan-London arrangements

18. The LRG meets its commitment to provide training and exercises to support local authority pan London arrangements through the development and delivery of an annual training and exercise programme. This includes an introduction to London Local Authority Gold Arrangements, London Local Authority Gold and Support Team Briefings at the Metropolitan Police Service Special operations Room and Exercise Safer City, a test of the entire Local Authority communication and coordination infrastructure and protocols. This training and exercise programme is designed to complement training and exercising delivered at the local borough level.
19. To make sure that local authorities can play an effective part in the pan-London response to emergencies (i.e. ones which transcend an individual local authority area), a resolution was passed by all thirty-three authorities in 2004. The Resolution empowers a nominated Chief Executive to commit resources and expenditure functions on behalf of the local authorities which are affected by an incident, when certain conditions are met. The resolution was revised in 2006 to take account of learning following the response to the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London. The Resolution then underwent a further review and amendment in 2010 following a period of severe weather and snow in 2009 and recognition of the value of a coordinated and collective approach to a broader range of emergencies.
20. The arrangements under the Resolution are initiated by the relevant, affected, local authority or authorities – especially where the incident is within the borough. A rota is in place to ensure that an on-duty Local Authority Chief Executive Gold, is available to act as the first point of contact and able to participate in a Strategic Coordination Group (“SCG”). The role includes formulating the high-level strategy for a collective and coordinated local authority response across London in support of affected boroughs, make strategic resource allocation decisions to ensure effective mutual aid to affected boroughs when requested, determine a Pan-London local authority communications strategy, and undertake necessary liaison within and across agencies in London and Central Government. A second local authority Chief Executive is also identified to act as a Secondary London Local Authority Gold to the Primary London Gold and to provide resilience should other events occur.
21. To support the mutual aid process, in 2010, all 32 local authorities and City of London Corporation agreed in principle to a Mutual Aid Memorandum of Understanding. To support the development and dissemination of effective communications to the public and partners,

25. In support of the multi-agency coordinated response, the role of the voluntary sector is recognised, and local authority emergency plans will reflect the various regional and local organisations able to operate in their area and the support they can provide. At a Pan-London level, the value of the Red Cross has been specifically noted and the LAP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of all local authorities under which they are paid to deploy trained Emergency Centre Staff to any London Borough or the City when necessary and also to provide Emergency Centre Training to local authority personnel.
26. *13(b) What was the response of the Tenant Management Organisation, central and local government by way of the provision of emergency relief in the days immediately following the fire?*
27. The organisation and activities of the various agencies in response to the tragedy over the period from the outbreak of the fire through 20th June is clearly complex. In order to present a coherent and easy to follow timeline, the meetings of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group will be used as markers in the timeline as these meetings were where key decisions were formally communicated to partner agencies.
28. During the period from the 14th June 2016 until midnight on the 20th June 2017 there were eleven Strategic Co-ordinating Group's held – the first at 05:00 on the 14th June and the last in the period at 13:00 on the 20th June.
29. The on-duty London Local Authority Gold on the night of the fire was Andrew BLAKE-HERBERT, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Havering, and he handed over responsibility at 09:00 on the 14th June 2017 to Chris Naylor, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, who performed the role of London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) until the 20th June 2017. Supporting Mr Naylor as secondary London Local Authority Gold was Paul Martin, Chief Executive of the London Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond upon Thames.
30. In my capacity as Chair of the LAP I do not have a response role when not formally on call as London Local Authority Gold. However, given my role to lead on resilience issues within the Chief Executive of London Councils ("CELC") Group, I am often involved in senior

level conferences calls with chief executives of boroughs affected by emergency incidents to provide peer support and advice to CELC colleagues; this was particularly the case after the Westminster and London Bridge attacks.

31. On the evening of the 14th June 2017, I joined a conference call at 17:30 involving: Nicholas Holgate, former Chief Executive of the London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Chris Naylor, London Borough of Barking & Dagenham – Primary London Local Authority Gold, John O'Brien, Chief Executive, London Councils, John Hetherington London Resilience Group and Mark Sawyer, Chief Executive Support – Resilience. Following an extensive discussion of the various issues facing RBKC on this call, it was agreed that that both Eleanor Kelly, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Southwark, and I would provide peer support to Mr Holgate, given that at this stage London Local Authority Gold activation had not been requested by The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea ("RBKC"). In light of recent incidents that had taken place in London, namely the Westminster and London Bridges attacks and the decision by Government to increase the UK threat level from severe to critical between 23rd May 2017 and 27th May 2017 which required London Local Authorities and its partners to be in an enhanced state of readiness for further terrorist attacks, it was decided that the Primary and Secondary London Local Authority Gold's would remain as on call to any other major incident.
32. During the 17:30hrs Conference Call on 14th June 2017, Nicolas Holgate confirmed that he would accept the offer that Deborah Collins, Strategic Director for Environment and Leisure, and Gerri Scott, Head of Housing, both from London Borough of Southwark would attend Kensington Town Hall on the morning of 15th June 2017 to meet Mr Holgate in order to provide advice and assistance.
33. Immediately after the Conference Call I also agreed with Mr Holgate that Mark Sawyer (Chief Executive Support – Resilience) would also attend on the morning of the 15th June 2017, to liaise with RBKC Officers to provide initial support on the organisational structures and needs and to offer his experience of responding to previous incidents.
34. At 17:00 on the 15th June 2017 I joined a conference call with Mr Holgate Eleanor Kelly and Mark Sawyer (who was with Nicholas Holgate at Kensington Town Hall). I requested this

call due to the increasing concerns being aired through national media and information received from Deborah Collins, Ms Scott and Mark Sawyer.

35. It was during this call that it became clear to me that further support was needed.
36. I held a call shortly afterwards with John O'Brien (Chief Executive of London Councils) and Eleanor Kelly (Chief Executive of London Borough of Southwark) who was with me in the room, it was on this call that Eleanor Kelly and I set out our concerns to John O'Brien. Following a further series of calls, Nicholas Holgate requested my support and I therefore arranged to attend Kensington Town Hall on the morning of the 16th June 2017.
37. After the call I began requesting the assistance of a number of London Local Authority Chief Executives to support RBKC's response to the fire.
38. On the morning of the 16th June 2017 I attended Kensington Town Hall with Alex Woodman. During the morning I met with Mr Holgate to receive an up to date briefing and attended the 10:00hrs Council Gold Strategic Management Group Meeting, the 11:00hrs Strategic Coordination Group Meeting and 13:30hrs COBR, which was a teleconference call.
39. Following the request from Mr Holgate as RBKC's Chief Executive for strategic support due to the increasing complexity and severity of the Grenfell Tower fire, the London Local Authority Gold operations were activated as described in paragraph 19 of the London Local Authority Gold Resolution, as of 14:00hrs on 16th June 2017. On assuming the role of London Local Authority Gold (LLAG), I adopted RBKC's response structures and plans and conducted an immediate review and assessment. I then convened a RBKC Gold Group Meeting on 16th June 2017 at 16:30hrs.
40. The 16:30hrs Gold Group meeting, which I was chairing, held in the Chief Executive's Office in Kensington Town Hall was interrupted by concerned members of the public. Following Police advice, we left the building and relocated to Portland House in Westminster. From this point onwards, Portland House became the operational command centre of the Grenfell Tower Fire Recovery Team.

41. I was supported by nine Local Authority Chief Executives between the 16th June 2018 and 20th June 2018, to lead on areas of activity including; Eleanor Kelly(Chief Executive of London Borough of Southwark)who acted as ‘Shadow Gold’ and who led on community engagement and media, Michael Lockwood (Chief Executive London Borough of Harrow) who led on the Grenfell Tower Site Management and Mary Harpley (Chief Executive London Borough Hounslow) joined by Carolyn DOWNS (Chief Executive, London Borough of Brent), who collectively led the work of the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group, which had first been established in Kensington and Chelsea on 15th June 2017 at the point of activating the Humanitarian Assistance Framework, to ensure a coordinated approach to providing humanitarian support.
42. In addition to the Chief Executive support I oversaw the scaling up of the Gold communications team response and establishment of a large-scale multi-agency Recovery Coordination Centre. Through support from local authorities and use of mutual aid, enhanced support was provided to the recovery effort in areas including humanitarian assistance expertise, key workers, housing officers, rest/community centre management, support to Officers from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to develop policies and procedures for the handling and distribution of donations and further offers of support. Tim Shields (Chief Executive London Borough of Hackney) led in establishing the Family and Friends Assistance Centre. In addition, I established a Trusts and Foundations Sub-Group led by David Farnsworth, Chief Grants Officer and Director of City Bridge Trust at the City of London Corporation. Support was also provided by National Government in housing and community engagement.
43. Joint agency work was also facilitated between HM Forces and City West Homes who designed and installed a temporary hot water and heating system for the Lancaster West Estate following the loss of the district heating system located in the basement of Grenfell Tower.
44. These external resources were integrated into the organisation of the efforts evolving as the scale of the requirement became clearer.

45. From the point of moving into Portland House and accepting London Local Authority Gold responsibilities, I represented the Grenfell Tower Fire recovery effort on all Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) Meetings, COBR Officials Meetings and COBR Ministerial Meetings. Through this means, I shared regular updates to ensure the status of the recovery effort was understood by Local Government, Central Government and partner agencies and to ensure all strategic decisions made by others complimented the approach being developed to support the bereaved, survivors and local community.

46. *Was the response adequate and if not, in what respects was it inadequate?*

47. Through London Councils Leaders Committee, supported by the Local Authority Panel, an independent peer challenge review was commissioned in October 2017. The peer challenge team was led by Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, and Mary Ney, Former Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, supported by Mariana Pexton, Chief Officer Strategy and Improvement, Leeds City Council.

48. The purpose was to provide an independent view about the arrangements that underpin London Local Government's collaborative resilience work and was commissioned as result of the unprecedented series of incidents which occurred in London between March 2017 and September 2017. The focus of the work was fitness of the collective response, not individual borough arrangements.

49. A Multi-Agency debrief process, structured by way of thematic strategic areas activated as a result of the fire, was commissioned through the London Resilience Forum in June of 2018. The terms of reference for the multi-agency debrief alongside of the debrief report that was agreed at the London Resilience Forum on the 18th October 2018. The focus of the debriefs was on how actions were taken in accordance with the relevant multi-agency plan, with a view to identifying whether changes to the plans were required.

50. The debrief was led by two independent facilitators from Public Health England and the subsequent multi agency debrief set out the recommendations and learning for London's multi agency response arrangements to the fire.

51. Relevance Review – I have supplied all records as set out within the Inquiry's request and as such I have not withheld nor redacted any parts of the documents. The disclosure is such that it relates to complete records or published documentation and has not required me to search for selected parts or elements of documentation.

52. I have disclosed all documentation in my possession within the terms of the request of the Inquiry Solicitor and I am not currently searching for or proposing to search for any further documents as I believe that I have been able to provide, in full, without any redactions, all documentation and information requested. I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and published on the Inquiry's web site.

The contents of this my witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Signed John Barra dell
Dated 18 February 2019