

Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S

13th November 2014 at 9.30am at Network Hub, Kensal Road.

Present:

LFB - Suhail Dadabhoy

LFB – Rebecca Burton

LFB – Terry Chaplin (covering for Dan Hallissey)

KCTMO – Janice Wray

Notes of meeting

1. Apologies

Claire Williams.

2. Matters Arising from previous minutes

- On the issue of whether the TMO is required by the fire safety legislation to take any additional action in relation to self-closers on leaseholders doors, Rebecca advised that it was Andy Jack's view that there was always more that the landlord could do to ensure self-closers are fitted and operational. However, it was accepted that our existing procedures already address and there were no specific recommendations to amend these in any way.
- Suhail advised that, as per his request, he had now received confirmation from the Principal Contractor that all of the installed smoke alarms in the four high rise blocks at Cremorne Estate had now been recalibrated.
- There was some discussion about the information that could be stored by the LFB Call Centre. Janice was anxious that the TMO's Repairs Freephone number be stored as this would facilitate a quicker response in the event of a fire than contacting RBKC. However, it was felt unlikely that this could be stored and so Terry suggested that all TMO buildings have signage to indicate who the landlord is. Janice advised that signs are present in the ground floor of high rise blocks and blocks served by passenger lifts, however, this was not feasible in the smaller street properties etc.
- Suhail requested an update on progress with the proposed "Good Fairy Development". Janice advised that the TMO had objected to the proposal to have a fire exit open onto the Longlands Estate and so the developers are now required to agree alternative arrangements with Building Control. The TMO and RBKC had had a further meeting with the Residents Association where it was reiterated that our intention is to enter into a licence agreement with the developer clearly setting out our expectations – if this is breached we can take legal action against the developer.

- Grenfell Tower – Janice advised that our fire consultant had now completed a review of the FRA for this block. This had been undertaken in close liaison with the Principal Contractor, Rydons, and can be made available to the LFB. Janice advised that Rydons were finding the local LFB crews' regular familiarisation visits to the Tower to be really helpful.

3. Fires in TMO Properties since last meeting

Janice advised that the TMO were aware of three fires in the stock since the previous meeting. The first was a very minor fire in a dwelling on the 10th floor of Grenfell Tower, the second was also very minor and was started deliberately in the bathroom of 1B Kenley Walk but was extinguished before the LFB attended (Police are involved in this) and the third involved a fire in the kitchen at a leasehold dwelling at 522 Barandon Walk. Janice confirmed that she had met with Ben Dewis on site at 522 Barandon the day after the fire as he was carrying out his post-fire audit. Concern had been raised by the LFB crew who attended this incident that the automatic openable vents in the glazed atria covering the communal areas of the block had not opened during this fire to vent the smoke. (Carl Stokes has since reminded of the manual override switches for these.) Janice confirmed that these are maintained by specialist contractors (Colts) who have been instructed to attend, investigate and rectify any defects so that the AOVs are fully reinstated. Colts had attended on 11th November but Janice had not yet been provided with a copy of the report.

4. AFD false alarms & lift shut-ins

Suhail had provided a breakdown of the LFB attendance at false afd activations at TMO sheltered blocks and temporary accommodation since 15th September. Janice had circulated to her colleagues and advised follows –

- The incident at Cremorne had been due to a faulty toaster and the local TMO Manager has confirmed this has now been disposed of
- 36C Oxford Gardens is "Rolfe's Nursery" and not a TMO property
- Without the flat number the investigating the incident at 36 Oxford Gdns is not straightforward

The group considered that only three incidents in TMO stock in this period was a low incidence. Janice confirmed that local managers are very aware of fire safety and regularly remind residents of procedure etc. (Further, annual fire training refresher training for staff had also been completed in this period.)

As Dan was still away from work no lift shut-in stats had been circulated, however, Terry advised since the previous meeting the LFB had attended Treverton Tower on six occasions and Raymede Tower on three occasions. Janice advised that the TMO now made use of the services of a lift consultant who could investigate locations which displayed repeated problems and she would request that the these lifts be referred for further investigations.

Further, Janice requested that the LFB reinstate the e-mail notification following attendance at lift shut-ins that Dan had instigated. Terry agreed to look into this. **Action: Terry**

5. Enforcement Action / Deficiency Notices & Correspondence with LFB

5.1 9 Colville Square

Janice confirmed receipt of a broadly compliant letter and a copy of the audit on this block and thanked Rebecca for these.

5.2 Burgessfield Audit

Ben Dewis has undertaken an audit at this block with the Manager, Sandra Ofori, and Janice in attendance and had confirmed that he was happy with the arrangements and had only very minor suggestions to make. Further, he had no objections to the evacuation strategy reverting to the original “stay put” one and removing the need to incorporate progressive horizontal evacuation. Ben had confirmed he would put this in writing as Janice was anxious that it be incorporated into the FRA.

6.1 27 Gillray House – flat entrance door

Rebecca had asked for an update on this issue. Janice advised that following discussions with the LFB’s Nick Coombe the TMO had advised the tenant that, as per her request, we would replace the existing door with a widened fire-rated one. However, we require an Occupational Therapist’s assessment of the tenant’s disabled daughter to ensure that the door specification is appropriate for her needs. This has been reiterated to the tenant repeatedly. Janice provided Rebecca with a copy of two recent e-mails where the TMO had outlined this requirement – so tenant is fully aware. Unfortunately, this can only be progressed with the tenant’s consent.

Rebecca advised that Nick Coombe would be handing over responsibility for liaising with this tenant to her and as part of this handover they would be meeting with this tenant.

6.2 Fire stopping works at Cremorne high-rise

Again, Rebecca had requested an update on progress with this. Janice confirmed that a specification had been prepared and Carl Stokes had been consulted on this. However, at that stage the Contract Manager became aware of the presence of asbestos materials in the airing cupboard (these had been removed from the dwellings surveyed when the spec was being drafted) and this has made the proposed works significantly more extensive, time-consuming and costly. The new specification is now available and the Contract Manager is eager to use our new framework consultant to supervise the programme as this will ensure better liaison with residents etc. which is likely to reduce the level of non-access we will face. This will mean works starting on site in April. Whilst this seems quite a delay, procurement will mean that we would not be in a position to start on site much before then. Further, since this issue was first highlighted all dwellings have been fitted

with stand alone hard-wired with battery back-up automatic detection and we consider that this has significantly mitigated the fire risk faced by the residents.

7. FRA Issues

Janice advised that work continues with the lessees of the remaining two non-compliant flat doors. Specifically, we are attempting to get agreement from one that we can replace her door and recharge her and discussions with the second are ongoing. We are hopeful these will be resolved before our next meeting.

Further to the TMO and RBKC's request that the LFB assist with enforcement in cases where leaseholders had not responded to our repeated efforts to persuade them to address their non-compliant door, Rebecca had now responded. Unfortunately, the LFB Enforcement Team have reiterated that any enforcement would be taken against the TMO / RBKC who are expected to ensure compliance by enforcing the terms of the lease. However, Rebecca advised that, currently, an Enforcement Notice is being appealed by a private company in the Borough. The Notice was served in September and is being heard in the Magistrate's Court next Tuesday (18h November). Specifically, the Notice requires all flat doors to be replaced / upgraded but as these are demised to the lessees the company do not believe they are able to replace them. We await the outcome.

8. LFB familiarisation / fire safety exercises

Janice confirmed that one of the North Kensington crews had been in touch to request an exercise at Trellick Tower on 20th November. The TMO had given approval for this to proceed and they would be placing notices in the communal areas to appraise the residents.

9. Any Other Business

Janice enquired about the firefighters strike

10. Date of next meeting

Suggested date of Thursday January 2015 at 9.30am at TMO offices at Network Hub – Janice to send out invitations.

Distribution:

Those Attending

Dan Hallissey

Claire Williams