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Sent: 30 June 2013 21:59
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Blakeman
Subject: GRENFELL TOWER IN W11 "IMPROVEMENT" MUST START NOW IN TANDEM
WITH KALC PROJECT AS PROMISED BY RBKC

The Rt.Hon.Sir Malcom Rifkind M.P

Thank you very much for your letter dated 14th May 2013.

As you said in your letter to me, to quote for the attention of the recipients in this email

"I am grateful to you for your time and certainly understand your concern. As discussed, I have today written to the incoming Leader of the Council, Councillor Paget-Brown, to raise these issues"

Please find forwarded the email from Councillor Judith Blakeman for your kind information. We, the residents of Grenfell Tower, are grateful to her and quote her email dated 17th June 2013:

"We also expect remedial action to be effective and sustainable, not for the same or similar problems to re-emerge several months down the line. Thus far this has not happened. Many of these problems have now escalated to the point where residents' health and safety is in danger of being

compromised, so the long-standing contention that there is no funding to address these problems is now neither valid nor acceptable."

Grenfell Tower Regeneration Project

Your continued involvement to protect the commitments made by the former Cabinet Member of Housing and property Cllr Tim Coleridge are very important to us. He said, "not only are we building a new academy and leisure centre for North Kensington but we are also making significant improvements to Grenfell Tower, its facilities and surrounding area."

As you will have also noticed, Councillor Judith Blakeman expressed her concerns about this. The residents, without a shadow of a doubt, share her genuine feelings. We are extremely sceptical that the project will ever now be realised.

The Grenfell Tower Leaseholder's Association worked tirelessly for the past four years to help secure the grant of £6m approved by the cabinet members of RBKC. To prove our point, we refer to your reply to GTLA's email dated 28th February 2012. The KCTMO as a tenant led organisation, made no contribution whatsoever towards this funding. The EMB, the local managing agents, who have been in existence for a few decades, have no track record of any contribution to the Grenfell Tower. Their handling of the recent catastrophic power surges in May 2013 is a prime example of this.

The residents of LWE and particularly the residents of Grenfell Tower, would be very grateful if you could look into this and get involved and enable the residents to realise the Regeneration Project in tandem with KALC project NOW not in 2015. We request you not to allow KCTMO to hijack the project and we are determined to do whatever is required from us to secure this project. The following should be encompassed within the project as stated previously:

1. A new efficient heating system
2. New double glazing windows
3. External cladding to improve energy efficiency
4. Improved external and internal repairs and communal spaces

Catastrophic Power surges in Grenfell Tower in May 2013

The serious power surges first reported on 11th May 2013 was not taken seriously initially by KCTMO/EMB. Mr. Peter Maddison of KCTMO and Estate Office of EMB based in Grenfell Tower under the nose of Director of Housing at the RBKC said the following:

"To date 7 residents have reported specific problems, apparently caused by power surges. RGE are visiting all of these properties today and we will establish whether there is a reason why these particular properties have experienced a problem. We will also advise these residents to contact their insurers if any damage to their property has occurred as a result"

This is from an email from Peter Maddison to Judith Blakeman dated 24th May 2013.

The residents of Grenfell Tower overwhelmingly believe that the moral and ethical reasoning of such a statement from Mr. Peter Maddison and the Estate Office of EMB has to be explained. We need to understand why our appointed Managing Agents failed to take appropriate action thinking it was worth sacrificing 7 residents wellbeing, when in fact it was 60+. We request you to look into this matter with due care.

We wait to hear from you as a matter of urgency.

Yours Sincerely

Tunde Awoderu

The Vice Chairman

The Grenfell Tower Leaseholder's Association

From: Cllr.Blakeman@rbkc.gov.uk

To: rblack@kctmo.org.uk; Laura.Johnson@rbkc.gov.uk; Cllr.Feilding-Mellen@rbkc.gov.uk

CC: CllrR.Atkinson@rbkc.gov.uk; Cllr.Foreman@rbkc.gov.uk;

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Subject: Grenfell Tower

Date: Mon, 17 Jun 2013 11:17:15 +0000

Dear Mr. Black, Ms. Johnson and Cllr. Feilding-Mellen

I am writing to focus objectively on some of the very valid matters raised by Mr. Awoderu, on behalf of the Grenfell Leaseholders' Association, in his e-mail below.

The matters raised with respect to the loss of the water supply, the problems with the defects in the communal heating and hot water system, the lift malfunctions and the electricity spikes all require an early response and swift remedial action.

The replies given to date have been less than satisfactory, as has been pointed out by Cllr Tony Holt, Mr. O'Connor, the Leaseholders' Association and myself on behalf of the ward councillors. Cllr. Holt, for example, points out that electrical spikes are usually caused by an irregularity in the system, such as a sudden change in load or malfunction of a circuit-breaker. Although Leadbitter say that their site is served from a different source, this will very likely be connected to the Grenfell Tower feeder not far away, so a methodical analysis of the various factors is required, plus monitoring of the supply non-stop, which only the electricity supplier can do.

The other problems with the heating and hot water system and drinking water are long-standing and have been drawn to the attention of the Council and the TMO over many years.

I do not understand the reasoning behind the suggestion that residents should first contact their home insurance company about any damaged

electrical equipment. The damage has been caused through no fault of the residents and therefore all claims should be lodged with the TMO. The small number of residents who can afford home insurance would no doubt lose any no claims bonuses if their own insurers are required to make good these losses. Can you therefore please provide residents with the details of the TMO insurers to whom they shall submit their claims? As Mr. Awoderu points out, it has been a month since residents lost essential daily appliances that are yet to be replaced.

Mr. Awoderu also refers to the need for a robust response from the "appointed managing agents". You are all well aware that the Lancaster West Estate Management Board was not been functioning since December 2012. I have referred this to the Council, since the Council itself manages the contract with the EMB. The absence of tenant management and oversight at Lancaster West has gone on for long enough and means that residents of the Estate do not have recourse to local advocacy on their behalf. I have already asked the Council to address this and it should now be prioritised.

Again, I have already asked the Council to provide the residents of Grenfell Tower with a comprehensive explanation as to why the Grenfell Tower regeneration project has been delayed. There is a meeting this evening to which the ward councillors were not invited. As none of us is able to attend at such short notice, we will expect a full report on the reasons for the delay to the project to be shared with residents and with ourselves. As I also already stated, residents are extremely sceptical that it will ever now be realised.

Finally, Mr. Awoderu states that I "as our local Councillor, with your team, bear heavy responsibility towards the residents of Grenfell Tower first and foremost in dealing with difficulties the residents are facing right now". He is correct that the ward councillors must be responsive to the needs of Grenfell Tower residents – but to do so, we depend on the TMO and the Council being competent to take effective action to deal with all the problems as and when they emerge – not several days or weeks later.

We also expect remedial action to be effective and sustainable, not for the same or similar problems to re-emerge several months down the line. Thus far this has not happened. Many of these problems have now escalated to the point where residents' health and safety is in danger of being compromised, so the long-standing contention that there is no funding to address these problems is now neither valid or acceptable.

Finally, can someone please explain why the ward councillors were not given the courtesy of being informed that Mr. Chiles had left Leadbitter and provided with the contact details of his successor?

We look forward to an early reply.

Cllr. Judith Blakeman, on behalf of the Notting Barns Ward councillors

We appreciate that this e-mail includes a vast array of recipients and we hope that in future these exchanges can be confined to those with a more immediate interest in these matters.

From: Grenfell Tower Leaseholder's Association [mailto:grenfellleaseholdersassociation@hotmail.co.uk]

Sent: 16 June 2013 22:30

To: Cllr, Blakeman, Judith

Subject: CATASTROPHIC POWER SURGES AT GRENFELL TOWER ON MAY 2013 AND THE SERIOUSLY DELAYED START TO THE REGENERATION PROJECT OF GT WHICH SHOULD BE IN TANDEM WITH KALC PROJECT.

Dear Cllr. Blakeman,

Please find attached the leaflet dropped through our letter box of Grenfell Tower residents and no date was given but we received it on 14th June 2013 from the Neighbourhood manager of EMB and income manager for the TMO.

The loss of running water has been going back many years. This year, the first severe interruption was reported on **3rd February 2013**. Only recently after **29th May 2013**, the communal hot water pipe were making exceptionally loud noises for **24/7** it was quite chilling for the residents of GT. These noises occurred from the **8th to 9th June 2013** and reported by the residents TMO out of our services accordingly. The residents felt as if the pipes would blow, the noise was so severe.

In the letter dated **21st September 2010**, which was almost three years ago, the Finance Director of the TMO Mr Anthony Parkes wrote to the Grenfell Tower Leaseholder's Association, "There was a separate leak to a heating pipe in the duct where the alarm panel was fitted and this damaged the old panel and required us to replace the panel with a new one.

A fault was noted on the panel. This was traced to a water leak above the panel. When replacing the water damaged panel the new panel was bigger so it was better to re-locate the panel than to move all the pipe work."

In a recent leaflet from Siobhan Rumble suggested that there was clear indication that the loss of water supply, communal heating and hot water and are linked to the interference with the electricity. We suspect the lift also malfunction due to this as well.

Below is an extract from the minutes of the meeting at **29th November 2011** with stakeholder's and KCTMO and Council officials including Cllr. Tim Coleridge. You chaired the meeting and that was almost two years ago:

3.0 Heating & Hot Water System

- 3.1 Residents were angry that the heating system is the original system and is over 30 years old; they feel it is inadequate and dangerous.
- 3.2 MA confirmed that the heating system is being looked at to see if we can offer a joint solution to all residents.
- 3.3 RB stated that loads of money has been spent on the heating system, new pumps/valves but it seems to have had little affect or no effect. He stated that there needs to be some genuine work done to rebalance the heating and it controls.
- 3.5 Cllr Coleridge wanted to know if the system is inadequate or is repairable. MA stated that the system is the original heating and hot water system, if the boilers are turned off then, there will be no hot water. This is a design problem of the original system.
- 3.12 Residents wanted officers to consider the impact of the heat on people's lives and fact that heat can kill. They want a timescale set to addressing the heating issue.

4.0 Drinking Water

4.3 AD confirmed there should be no further problems with the drinking water as the pumps had been changed in **September 2011**.

You know as well as many councillors of RBKC and TMO/EMB officials, the dangerous situation of the heating and hot water system of GT. The irony of all of this is that the cabinet approved funding of improvement to upgrade the system a year ago. However, the residents have slowly realised these were empty promises and we have intentionally been kept in dark to prolong our suffering. The GTLA would not have to raise so many issues and concerns if matters were correctly handled by our local managing agents. As you correctly suggested to Mr Robert Black and Siobhan Rumble dated **29th May 2013**, most of the residents of Grenfell Tower are on very low incomes and replacing lost goods themselves in advance of any successful insurance claim will be impossible.

An extract from the recent leaflet:

“Affected residents will also be contacted by their Lancaster West Estate officer with details about how to make a claim. In the first instance residents should contact their home insurance company and report any damaged electrical equipment.

“The TMO is liaising with its insurance company and will submit the reports on each of the reported damaged goods for consideration. We will notify residents of their final decision”.

We cannot make sense of the two paragraphs. In one instance they say we should make a claim. Then they say they are making a claim for us. We, the residents, are very confused in a difficult moment and so many of us have lost their valuable items. Replacing them is not an easy task. Regardless, could you please ask the TMO to provide us with the name, number and reference number of the insurance company, so the residents can make an inquiry as well?

It is a classic example of bureaucratic games the tenant led organisation love playing with the residents of Grenfell Tower in difficult moments. Let me reconfirm, it is **not** 7 residents affected by the catastrophic power surges and it is **60+**. In every correspondence we received so far, TMO/EMB repeatedly mentioned small number of the residents affected by this power surges. It has been a month since residents have lost essential daily appliances which are yet to be replaced. The Estate officer of EMB/TMO took photographic evidences and contacted residents on individual basis over two weeks ago, but there is no update on that. We the residents of GT want your serious involvement along with other local councillors to come to the aid of the residents of Grenfell Tower. For the past four years, you have been recipients every emails correspondences of all the issues we have raised.

We expect you to seek robust response from our appointed managing agents without further delay and request to provide a detailed report on this incident in **May 2013**. This should not be isolated to the incident of **29th May 2013**. We the resident could not understand and comprehend how on earth the TMO allowed themselves to ignore the serious issues and concerns for so long.

On a separate note, with regards to the Grenfell Tower Regeneration Project, no matter how sincere and committed Councillor Tim Coleridge was, it appears to be somewhat in vain. In the **winter of 2012** in the Royal Borough newspaper, **issue no. 175** he stated, “not only are we building a new academy and leisure centre for North Kensington but we are also making significant improvements to Grenfell Tower, its facilities and the surrounding area.”

The Council are surely building an Academy and Leisure centre. But it now appears that they have buttered up so that the work can commence on that project, with no sign of work commencing of GT. The project is almost nine months old and KALC project should as promised have been in tandem with GTRP.

At the moment, not a single resident of GT believes the words have been carried forward with the KCTMO being allowed to hijack the whole project for their corporate interests. The so called Drop in Session or consultation by the TMO is a mockery of the GTRP project. Planning application has been submitted six times and cancelled six times, when GTRP should be in tandem with KALC project. This is a joke. How you expect to open the school with the eyesore 60s concrete structure surrounding it, is beyond us.

It is quite outrageous that planning application has not been approved at least by NOW given funding was approved last summer. Cllr. Tim Coleridge shared the good news with us as well as yourself with the residents of GT. We believe he and you are deservedly admire by the residents of GT. We also believe that Cllr Coleridge and you were the main architect of the GTRP and KALC project despite serious opposition to the KALC project. Unfortunately there is much uncertainty created by the appointed managing agents KCTMO. Leadbitter were the approved contractor by the RBKC for GTRP and KALC project, but sadly

Cllr Tim Coleridge has not intervened to stop their delaying tactics for corporate financial interest of the TMO.

We congratulate Councillor Rock Feilding Mellen on his new positions as deputy leader as well as cabinet members of Housing and Property. In every correspondence which took place between GTLA and Councillor Tim Coleridge, he was one of the main recipients. Nothing should surprise Councillor Rock Feilding Mellen and we intend to forward recent email correspondences in due course again as remainder and commitment made by his predecessor. We want tangible evidence through actions, not just words.

You as our local councillor with your team must get firsthand experiences and visit more than 60+ residents who were affected by the catastrophic power surges. Some of the residents are close to tears and do not have insurance. But these damages were not of our control, but were under the control of the TMO. It is very important that you intervene to stop this unacceptable and unreasonable behaviour by the TMO before it leaves a permanent scar on the residents of GT.

We believe that you as our local Councillor with your team bear heavy responsibility towards the residents of Grenfell Tower first and foremost in dealing with difficulties the residents are facing right now. Please do not allow the appalling incident which affected so many residents to be solely dealt with the Estate Officer and Estate Manager of Estate Management Board and the TMO.

We fully endorse the email response provided by Francis O'Conner of Grenfell Action group to the RBKC briefing by the KCTMO in relation to the catastrophic power surges. Now we would like to know whether you are happy with this initial briefing and what steps you are taking and how you intend to obtain a detailed report of the severe power surges in **May 2013**. We need to obtain this report as early as possible. EMB (Estate management Board of Lancaster West Estate) existed long before the KCTMO and it has its own staffs, budgets etc. Where are they in a crucial moment? They are in complete silent during these recent catastrophic incidents in GT and have been for many years. But they still impose a hefty cost.

We request you to obtain the list of the tenants affected from Neighbourhood Area Manager and the TMO Income Manager Ms Siobhan Rumble and visit them to get first hand experiences with them face to face without further delay. It would be a grave mistake to leave everything to the KCTMO/EMB.

The KCTMO and the other managing agents usually intent to shoot messenger because they may not like the message but at the moment and always has been our wellbeing and health and safety are utmost priority. We expect you with your team do everything in your capacity to secure and make the KCTMO accept the liability without further delay. So far, for the last four years it seems that everybody is hearing our issues and concerns we raised, but not is the time for more concrete action to be taken by the decision makers. We leave it in your capable hands to ensure that our genuine concerns are addressed with an open and sincere mind.

We wait to hear from you as a matter of urgency.

Best wishes

Tunde Awoderu

The Vice Chairman

The Grenfell Tower Leaseholder's Association

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

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