



All Councillors

20 June 2017

Our reference: NH/ss/2006
Please ask for: Nicholas Holgate

Dear Councillors,

GRENFELL TOWER

This is an update from the Grenfell Fire Response Team. Officers intend to offer regular updates so that you can share this with your contacts and networks in order to provide information and reassurance.

Please see some answers to frequently asked questions.

What is the Grenfell Fire Response Team?

When a major London incident like the fire happens, London Local Government has an established resilience response that can be invoked. I agreed to this on Thursday evening; John Barradell (see below) came to Kensington Town Hall on Friday morning to assess the situation in some detail and was creating the team by Friday afternoon.

The purpose of this response team is to coordinate all activities across national, regional and local government, along with voluntary and other agencies to support all those affected by the fire.

The Gold lead is John Barradell, Chief Executive of the City of London Corporation, supported by colleagues from across London local government as well as significant resources from national government. It naturally includes officers from this borough too. The two main workstreams are operations and humanitarian assistance. This also includes coordinated community engagement to develop and sustain close contact and work with local groups and so they are able to access information and ask questions.

Gold is also leading on coordination of the incredible volume of donations that have flooded in to assist those affected. Coordinating volunteers is also part of this work.

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Under agreed protocols, all activity and communications relating to the work of the Grenfell Fire Response Team is coordinated and approved by Gold. This includes visits to the Westway and site.

There has been a high level of assistance provided by other London boroughs, particularly in relation to social workers and housing staff.

What is happening?

The community assistance centre at the Westway has been operation since the fire with lots of significant and welcome community support. In the next 24 to 36 hours, we will be opening the Friends and Family Centre. This is **not** a replacement for the Westway centre which will remain open.

The Friends and Family Centre is a dedicated support service that will provide a single point of contact and space for family and friends of those who have lost loved ones in the fire. It will offer a complete range of service in one place, including counselling, financial help, the voluntary sector as well as relevant public services.

Information regarding all the services that are available is being distributed through the media, community contacts and via leaflets and posters.

Whilst the focus is very much on supporting those affected by the fire, site management and recovery is also moving forward.

Operational update

What's the latest housing situation?

Work is continuing to secure emergency hotel accommodation for all households – to date 126 hotel placements for Grenfell Towers and Grenfell Walk

Work is taking place to assess the housing needs of all Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk families to identify suitable accommodation in K&C and neighbouring boroughs.

- 78 families have already been assessed for their housing need;
- All these identified properties are in the local or neighbouring borough and none will be in towers.

Are people in emergency housing being put in tower blocks?

No. People are being temporarily housed in hotel accommodation in or close to the Royal Borough.

How much money has been handed out and how many people have received it?

Around noon on 19th June, £202,000 of Government funding had been distributed to 180 families.

These comprise a £500 cash payment and £5,000 delivered through DWP into bank accounts or similar in a single payment where possible. The £5,000 payment is available and assigned by key workers will assist households in accessing this.

Are people moving a long way out of the borough?

No. We have endeavoured to keep accommodation as local as possible, and we completely accept residents' wishes to remain close to the community.

Additional information

- We have attached to this e-mail a leaflet that is being distributed at the scene that sets out all the support services available.
- 50 families, who wish to engage with the authorities, were allocated a key worker on 19 June
- An additional 43 social workers arrived from across London yesterday to assist with the assessment and support for affected families
- There have been 16 staff and volunteers from the British Red Cross supporting people at the centre.

Your sincerely



Nicholas Holgate
Town Clerk

