

**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA TENANT  
MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION LIMITED (the “Company”)**

**Confidential**

**Board Report**

**31 March 2016**

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Board note the contents of the report and agree to the following:

- (i) The names and addresses of all those attending public meetings should be recorded and minutes taken of each meeting for future reference where applicable.
- (ii) Where projects span over 12 months' in duration the initial resident profile survey information is repeated on a six monthly basis. This would help to ensure that any additional needs that have not been identified at the beginning of the project are identified.
- (iii) Where residents have language requirements and have chosen to use family members to help translate then this information should be recorded and signed off in order to help ensure that if the family member is not available then translation services can be provided.
- (iv) A procedure is drafted to outline the different stages involved in gaining access. In future projects this procedure could then be sent to only those residents that were not cooperating to avoid any misunderstanding and to ensure that due processes are always followed.
- (v) That the full report be shared with RBKC.

**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with information and recommendations from the Board Member review of the Grenfell Tower regeneration project.

**Background**

2.1 In association with the development of the Kensington Academy and Leisure Centre projects, which completed in summer 2015, it was decided that money should be invested into Grenfell Tower. Stock condition information highlighted that Grenfell Tower was in poor condition and therefore it was agreed to invest £10.3m on improvements. The money invested came from the sale of basements at Elm Park Gardens and was not part of the HRA capital programme. The works commenced on site in June 2014 and are due to be completed at the end of March 2016. Final landscaping works will then be undertaken during April and May typically the planting season.

2.2 The scope of works included the following:

- New heating and hot water
- New double glazed windows
- Thermal cladding of the building
- Smoke/safety and ventilation works
- Improved foyer and door entry
- Associated environmental works
- 9 x new hidden homes
- New nursery
- New boxing club
- Landscaping improvements

2.3 The contractor Rydon was selected to undertake the work supported by consultants, Artelia, for contract administration and Max Fordham as specialist mechanical and electrical consultants. Rydon were responsible for design, construction and resident liaison work. The Company worked with all partners and were responsible for the overall project management.

2.4 Resident consultation indicated their preferred approaches to resident engagement were: letters & newsletters, informal “drop-in” sessions and one to one consultation. These approaches were adopted throughout the project.

2.5 A group of residents living in Grenfell Tower formed a resident compact halfway through the project in June 2015. The Company worked with the compact to address issues that were raised relating to the regeneration project. At full council on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 a petition signed by 51 residents was tabled at the meeting. The matter was referred to the Housing and Property Scrutiny committee and a speech from one of the compact members was presented to the meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016. At the Board meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> January the Board members were made aware of the petition and agreed that a delegated group of board members would review the issues raised. The Scrutiny committee was then informed that the Board would review the project and respond to the matters raised in the speech by the compact. The Board has previously been emailed a full copy of this speech.

2.6 All members of the Board were invited on the 19<sup>th</sup> January to express an interest in joining the review group. The following members put themselves forward:

Paula Fance – Chair  
Kush Kanodia  
Mary Benjamin  
Councillor Condon-Simmonds  
Deborah Price  
Anne Duru

2.7 An initial scoping meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> February for the Group to define the scope of the review. It was agreed that the review would be undertaken over one full day and would cover the following areas:

- Resident consultation and engagement
- The position of the HIU in the hallways
- Allegations of threats, lies and intimidation
- Response to complaints
- Quality of work and site management
- Compensation

2.8 The review day held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March commenced with a presentation covering background information to the project and detailed information on each area of the review as set out in 2.7 above. The Group was then taken on a tour of Grenfell Tower to view; the construction works, the show flat, the boxing club and the hidden homes. Each member was provided with a full pack for the day which included the detailed information covering each area of the scope. The following sections of the report cover each area of the scope and set out the group's conclusions together with any recommendations to be adopted for future projects of a similar nature.

### **3. Resident Consultation and Engagement**

3.1. Residents were consulted and engaged through a number of different methods throughout the project which included:

- Public meetings (7 in total to date)
- Drop in sessions
- Rydon coffee mornings
- Monthly newsletters
- One to one resident consultation
- Complaints procedure
- Resident satisfaction survey
- Grenfell tower community arts project
- Home visits from Rydin's Resident Liaison Officer (RLO)

3.2 The Group concluded that resident engagement and consultation during the project has been very comprehensive and it was noted that a variety of different methods were utilised.

3.3 At the beginning of the project, Rydon's RLO collected profile information on each resident. This was then used to identify any specific additional needs or requirements that each resident may have. A number of residents asked for translation help and used family members to help where required. If family members were not available then information would have been translated before it was sent out. If an interpreter was required for one to one meetings then this would have been arranged by Rydon's RLO. In this particular project residents used their family members.

3.4 It was recommended that:

- The names and addresses of all those attending public meetings should be recorded and minutes taken of each meeting for future reference should this

be required.

- Where projects span over 12 months in duration the initial resident profile survey information is repeated on a six monthly basis. This would help to ensure that any additional needs that have not been identified at the beginning of the project are identified.
- Where residents have language requirements and have chosen to use family members to help translate then this information should be recorded and signed off in order to help ensure that if the family member is not available then translation services can be provided.

#### **4. Position of the HIU in the Hallway**

4.1 Some residents had objected to the new HIU being located in the hallway of their flats. It was originally proposed that the HIU would be located in the kitchen; however, when Rydon were appointed it became apparent that there were technical restrictions that meant the original kitchen location was not the most practical. The Board discussed these technical complications in detail and were satisfied that it was the right decision to encourage residents to locate the HIU in their hallway.

4.2 The Group further concluded that there was sufficient communication and consultation with residents over the positioning of the HIU and that due consideration was given to the requests of some residents to locate the HIU in the kitchen and that the Company responded positively in accommodating these requests.

#### **5. Allegations of Threats, Lies and Intimidation by the contractor and the TMO**

5.1 At a compact meeting in June 2015 residents first raised the allegation that the Company have 'harassed, lied and intimidated' residents over the duration of the works. The Company gave a commitment that any specific allegations would be investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure and appropriate action taken to resolve the matter. The group concluded that the only specific detail had been in relation to a stage 3 complaint which had not been upheld. The Group reviewed the procedure for gaining access to residents' homes for the undertaking of internal works.

5.2 It was recommended that:

- A procedure is drafted to outline the different stages involved in gaining access on future projects this procedure could then be sent to only those residents that were not cooperating to avoid any misunderstanding and to ensure that due processes are always followed.

#### **6. Response to Complaints**

6.1. The first point of contact for all complaints is Rydon's RLO who aims to resolve any issues quickly and efficiently in the first instance. The RLO details are communicated in each newsletter and RLO Officers are on site at Grenfell Tower Monday to Friday during the hours of 8am to 4pm. If residents remain unhappy with

the response from Rydon they are able to go through the Company's complaints process.

6.2. Throughout the project to date, the Company has received seven formal complaints from four residents which included one resident making four complaints. In addition to this there were a number of enquiries received from Ward Councillors on behalf of residents.

6.3. The Group reviewed all of the complaints and enquiries and were satisfied that the Company had responded adequately. The Board could find no evidence that substantiated the allegations of 'threats, lies and intimidation' by either Rydon or the Company's staff.

6.4. The Group had also requested details of any complaints and issues that had been reported to Rydon and how these were communicated to the Company. The Group were provided with details of Rydon's complaints logs and evidence of liaison meetings where any issues not resolved could be picked up.

6.5. The Group considered whether a 'group' complaint could be raised when there was a common issue that affected a number of residents. It was explained that the Company's current complaints procedure would be able to respond to a group complaint where it related to a communal area affecting a number of residents. In this instance the complaint response would be sent to all residents of the block or estate concerned. The Group felt that this was sufficient.

## **7. Quality of Work and Site Management**

7.1. The Group were advised of different methods for quality control/site management by the Rydon surveyors, clerk of works and site agent. It was concluded that controls were sufficient to manage a construction project of this size and nature.

7.2. It was found that the example of poor workmanship cited in the speech presented to the Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee was work in progress and that this was misleading.

7.3. The Group visited the show flat to review the example of the works that were undertaken in each home. Some residents had complained that the surface mounted pipework was unsightly. The concrete construction of the building is limiting and the Group concluded that it was necessary for the pipes to be installed above the floor and that this was not considered to be unsightly.

## **8. Compensation**

8.1. The Group reviewed the compensation procedure for decorations allowance, curtains and blinds, and specific loss or expense.

8.2. The Group concluded that the compensation offered was adequate for this type of project and that the process also accounted for individual circumstances.

## 9. Conclusions

9.1. The Group recognised that there were significant challenges with the project and acknowledged that residents would have experienced inconvenience due to the nature of this type of construction work and the constraints of the particular design of Grenfell Tower. This disruption included:

- Noisy work: Demolition and drilling
- Access: Use of lifts by contractors to transport materials
- Pipework: Retrofit of pipes
- Additional floors for lifts
- Wet Trades (e.g. plastering)
- Sub-contractors that went into administration during the project
- Maintaining services (heating and hot water) whilst residents are in situ

10.2 The Group were satisfied with the following mitigating actions that were undertaken to limit the disruption caused by the above:

- Limiting noisy work hours: 9am to 3pm
- Lifts: one for passengers and only one used for materials.
- Two flats were made available for respite facilities for residents to use
- Rydon's RLO was based on site to deal with all specific issues on a day to day basis

10.3 It was further acknowledged that residents had experienced disruption from both the KALC project and the Grenfell Tower works over an extended period of time since December 2012.

10.4 The Group commended the contractor Rydon on their performance and ability to deliver a complex construction project. They considered that a number of high quality hidden homes had been delivered together with excellent new facilities for the boxing club and community room. A door knocking exercise was undertaken in December 2015 to ask residents if they were satisfied with the works. 77 of the 120 households responded and of these 90% of residents confirmed that the improvements to heating and hot water were working effectively. 83% of residents were happy with their new windows.

10.5 Rydon's are an experienced contractor that has a good reputation for delivering this type of construction work where residents are in occupation. The combination of all partners involved in this project has contributed to very successful improvements to the building and residents homes. Their generation works have provided individual control over their own utility usage and residents will benefit from increased thermal insulation.

10.6 The Group commended the excellent work of the Director of Assets and Regeneration and the team involved in high quality management of the project over 22 months.

10.7 The Group noted that a full project review and resident satisfaction survey would be undertaken six months after the project is completed. The results of this

review will be presented to a future Board meeting.