

**GRENFELL TOWER  
PUBLIC INQUIRY**

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**Witness Statement of  
PETER WRIGHT**

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I, PETER WRIGHT, WILL SAY:

1. I make this Witness Statement further to receipt of the Rule 9 letter from the Public Inquiry dated 12 July 2018 and to provide assistance to the Public Inquiry.
2. The matters contained in this statement are either known to me or are ones which I believe (in which case I have specifically said so) or are derived from records including computer records maintained by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ('the Borough', 'RBKC'), and to which I have access and with which I am familiar and which I believe to be accurate.
3. I worked at RBKC from Spring/Summer of 2011 when I was contracted as a Senior Project Manager until the spring of 2013 when my contract with RBKC ended. During this period, I was a contractor employed under a personal services company and was therefore not an employee of RBKC. During my time as a contractor at RBKC, I was tasked with the project management side of the proposed academy and leisure centre and was involved in managing the procurement process and selecting suitable architects and contractors through a competitive tendering process.

4. I would like to express my condolences to all those who were affected by this terrible tragedy.

## **BACKGROUND**

5. Prior to my role at RBKC, I had worked as a project manager in the construction and public sector since 2001. I was involved in multiple school and health projects and worked with various Housing Associations. My main project management experience is in the planned maintenance and construction of buildings in the public sector. During the 3 to 4 years prior to my role at RBKC, I had been working mainly on school projects.
6. I am PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environments) qualified. PRINCE2 is a project management method and accredited practitioner programme. I am also a member of the Association for Project Management. I qualified in 2008. I also completed a master's degree in construction law and Dispute Resolution at Kings College University in 2013, whilst working at RBKC.

## **RBKC**

7. My involvement with RBKC commenced in spring/summer of 2011 when I was contracted as a Senior Project Manager. I remained in that role until the spring of 2013 when my contract with RBKC ended.
8. During my time as a contractor at RBKC, I was tasked with the project management side of the proposed Kensington academy and leisure centre ("KALC") project together with the surrounding public realm and the production of a site for residential development to the east of the scheme. The total value of the project was around £60m. This involved managing the procurement process and selecting suitable architects and contractors through a competitive tendering process.
9. The decision on which contractor to choose was based on whether they could meet the price and quality criteria required by RBKC. The quality of a given contractor is assessed via a series of questions on their experience and track record. The price is set by the Local Authority. The standard procurement process for contractors in the public sector, in my view, is not very robust and contracts are awarded predominantly (albeit not exclusively) on price.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

10. On large projects (such as these) it is usual for a Construction, Design and Management (“CDM”) coordinator to be appointed. This person would ensure that all construction, design and management regulations are adhered to throughout the project. He or she would work alongside the design team during the project.
11. On the KALC project, the CDM coordinator was a consultancy appointment by way of a subcontract under Studio E’s lead consultancy role. I do not recall who the CDM Coordinator was for the KALC project.
12. Part of the CDM coordinator’s responsibility is to ensure compliance with fire safety regulations although this would ultimately require ‘sign-off’ by a fire officer from the London Fire Brigade.
13. In respect of the KALC project the client was RBKC and it was RBKC which therefore had responsible for fire safety. As project manager, I was responsible, on behalf of RBKC, to ensure that a fire officer was consulted, and I did so, although I do not recall who this was.
14. The refurbishment of Grenfell Tower, with which I was not involved, was not part of the KALC project and was managed by the Tenancy Management Organisation (“TMO”).
15. The fire safety officer would specify what factors are needed in a building to ensure it meets all fire safety tests and regulations. The project manager is not an expert in all aspects of design and construction and acts more as a general coordinator for the various teams of contractors and client personnel involved in a project. As such, reliance would be placed on the advice of an expert, for example, a fire safety officer or other recognised authority in a given area, where required.

## **TEAM AND REPORTING STRUCTURE AT RBKC**

16. At RBKC, I was in the Capital Delivery team which was part of the Property team. The Director of the Property department was Michael Clarke. Reporting to him was Steve Bell, who brought me in as I had worked with him before.

17. The order of hierarchy from the top was Michael Clarke, Steve Bell, Paul Snoddy and then me. I worked alone and reported to Steve Bell and later Paul Snoddy. I did not delegate work to others employed by the Borough. I was at RBKC for two years and was only involved in the KALC project.
18. At no time was I ever involved with the Grenfell Tower refurbishment of 2012-2016.
19. I left RBKC in the summer of 2013 when my contract expired.

### **INVOLVEMENT WITH TMO**

20. I had little interaction with the TMO. The TMO dealt with the residential side of things, and I was dealing with the school and leisure centre.
21. I was told by RBKC management (I do not recall whom specifically) that I was not to be involved in anything to do with Grenfell Tower as the requirements of dealing with tenants and leaseholders would be better met by the TMO.
22. My only (indirect) involvement was that I had procured Studio E (who I believe were the architects for the Grenfell Tower refurbishment project) as I had hired them for the academy. That contract was varied or extended somehow to include Grenfell Tower. I do not know who made the decision to extend this contract.
23. Studio E are among the best architects that I have worked with.
24. I am unable to comment on any other issues in the Rule 9 letter.
25. I confirm that I have not been interviewed by the police in relation to the fire at Grenfell Tower.

### **Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

I am willing for my statement to the Public Inquiry to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and for it to be published on the Inquiry's web site. I am happy to attend the Public Inquiry and give oral evidence if required to do so.



Full name:

PETER SHERIDAN WRIGHT

Position or office held:

KALL PROJECT MANAGER

Signed:

P. Wright

Date:

3/12 2018