

GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF

PAUL WILLMETTE

I, PAUL WILLMETTE c/o Kensington Town Hall, Hornton St, Kensington, London W8 7NX, WILL SAY:

1. I make this Witness Statement further to receipt of the Rule 9 letter from the Public Inquiry dated 21 July 2020 and to provide assistance to the Public Inquiry. I am able to assist the Inquiry with questions 1 to 3 of the letter.
2. I did not work for RBKC before the fire at Grenfell Tower. I am a director though working in the current senior Adult Social Care management team and no other directors in the current team were working in Kensington and Chelsea at the time of the fire at Grenfell Tower. It follows that the matters contained in this statement are generally matters which I believe to be true having discussed the Inquiry's letter of 21 July 2020 with relevant officers from RBKC's Adult Social Care department, or are derived from records including computer records maintained by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ("the Borough," "the Council", "RBKC") and to which I have access and with which I am familiar and which I believe to be accurate. Where matters are within my personal knowledge, I have said so.
3. I attach to this witness statement an index of exhibits to which I refer within this statement.

Role

4. My current job title is Interim Director of Governance and Operations within the Adult Social Care ("ASC") department. I joined RBKC in January 2020. ASC is a bi-borough shared service between RBKC and Westminster Council. ASC used to be part of a tri-borough arrangement with Hammersmith & Fulham too

but this ended in 2018. I note that there are still some tri-borough services that exist.

5. Whilst I now have a management role within the bi-borough service, primarily responsible for the performance, strategy and transformation of the team, my professional background is as a social worker and I am familiar with the day-to-day work of social workers generally, although personally, I am not specifically aware of how social workers at RBKC worked before January 2020 and have relied on my conversations with others in answering questions from the Inquiry about that.

Questions from the Inquiry

6. By way of question 1 the Inquiry has asked:

“Stella Baillie, Director of Integrated Care for RBKC, Westminster City Council and London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, in her statement to the Inquiry refers to the Standard Operating Procedures at paragraph 19 [RBK00050417]. She states that RBKC’s Adult and Social Care (ASC) team would refer individuals who hoarded or neglected themselves and/or their environment to LFB for assessment as a high risk individual [RBK00054463]. Stella Baillie states that she does not have any knowledge of any such referrals as this would be dealt with by the ASC team. In view of the guidance in the Standard Operating Procedures:

- a. *As of 14 June 2017, how many residents of Grenfell Tower had been assessed and were subject to a care plan under the Care Act 2014;*
- b. *Did any such care plan involve an element of advice, information and/or planning as to what the individual resident should do in the case of a fire in their flat or elsewhere in the Tower; and*
- c. *Is it right that ASC did not in fact refer any Grenfell Tower residents to the LFB? If that is not the case then please provide details of the referrals.*

For the avoidance of doubt, we do not seek disclosure of individual care plans unless they contain advice, information and/or planning in relation to fire safety.

7. I have been shown a copy of the Tri-Borough ASC Standard Operating Procedures ("SOP") from May 2016 which I exhibit to this statement as PW/1.
8. I have specifically been shown paragraph 27.4 on page 205 in which the London Fire Brigade ("LFB") are mentioned in respect of hoarding. It is common for certain fire risks to be identified within the Standard Operating Procedures of an ASC function. It is my understanding that the Tri-Borough SOP would have set out the procedures of the department and there would not be any other documents setting out policies and procedures. The SOP would be the basis for referring residents to the LFB, or any other relevant agency.
9. In my experience, it is the case that certain types of fire risks may also be included in an individual's care plan, for instance if the individual was a heavy smoker or if they had oxygen canisters in their properties to assist breathing. A care plan is essentially a summary of the conversations and actions agreed between the social worker and the resident to ensure the necessary support arrangements are in place.
10. I have been informed that staff were encouraged to report anyone who lived alone, or who had an identified risk, for example smoking in bed.
11. For the purposes of answering the Inquiry's questions, I have been provided with a list of adults who were "known to" Adult Social Care that I understand RBKC provided to the Inquiry on 5 December 2018. Officers in my service have investigated how many of those on that list that were resident at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017 had a care plan and I can confirm that 16 adult residents of Grenfell Tower had a care plan at the time of the fire.
12. Of those 16, the care plans did not contain any element of advice, information and / or planning as to what the resident should do in the case of a fire in their flat or elsewhere in Grenfell Tower. Care plans would not normally be expected to contain this kind of information. I exhibit a spreadsheet showing this as PW/2.
13. There are two lines in the spreadsheet that are highlighted red. The first is line 4 because having checked the records, that individual moved to [REDACTED] in 2014 [REDACTED] so I understand that she was not a Grenfell resident in June 2017. Further, line 49 is highlighted red because having

checked the records, that individual does not appear to have been resident in Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire.

14. In addition, there are two rows highlighted yellow, in respect of the resident at line 43 did not receive any service from ASC, the record was created by Children's Services and related to [REDACTED]. The resident at line 51 only received reablement services from ASC and did not have a Care and Support Plan assessment.
15. Further, there is no record of ASC referring any of the 16 individuals to the LFB.
16. From 28th February 2014, the following question became standard on the Core Assessment used by ASC in formulating Care and Support Plans:

"Would the service user be happy for the fire brigade to contact them with regard to a free fire safety check?"

A screenshot of the Core Assessment used by RBKC care workers is below:

Would the service user be happy for the fire brigade to contact them with regard to a free fire safety check?

<input type="radio"/> Yes - Please Notify	<input type="radio"/> No - Service User Declined	<input type="radio"/> No - No Capacity
<input type="radio"/> No - In Placement	<input type="radio"/> No - Previously Referred	<input type="radio"/> No - In Sheltered Housing
<input type="radio"/> No - In Supported Accommodation	<input type="radio"/> No - In Hostel / B and B	<input type="radio"/> No - No Fixed Abode
<input type="radio"/> No - Service User Not Present		

Workers in RBKC and WCC should go the London Fire Brigade website - <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/HomeFireSafety/visit.asp> - to request a fire safety check on behalf of the service user

17. I have reviewed the Care and Support Plan Reviews for the 16 residents and have set out the answer to the question regarding fire brigade referral and any further relevant information below.
18. For Maryam Adam, her Care and Support Plan Review on 10 July 2015 contained the following answer:
"Yes - please notify"
19. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/3. The case notes and documents have been reviewed and there is no evidence of a referral. The Occupational Therapist who undertook the assessment no longer works for the Council.

20. For Folora Neda, her Care and Support Plan Review on 22 April 2015 contained the following answer:

"No – previously referred"

21. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/4. I have checked and it is not possible to ascertain who made this referral.

22. For Maher Koudair, his Care and Support Plan Review on 29 April 2015 contained the following answer:

"No – previously referred"

23. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/5. I have checked and it is not possible to ascertain who made this referral.

24. For Sakineh Afrasehabi, her Care and Support Plan Review on 10 August 2015 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

25. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/6.

26. For Gitiara Pahlavani, her Care and Support Plan Review on 11 November 2015 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

27. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/7.

28. For Khadija Khalloufi, her Care and Support Plan Review on 5 June 2017 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

29. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/8.

30. For Mohamed Amid Neda, his Care and Support Plan Review on 27 April 2017 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

31. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/9.

32. For Samuel Daniels, his Care and Support Plan Review on 26 May 2016 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

33. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/10.

34. For Shahin Sadafi, his Care and Support Plan Review on 12 April 2017 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

35. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/11.

36. For Sharam Sadafi, his Care and Support Plan Review on 29 March 2017 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

37. I exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review as PW/12.

38. For Marie Del-Pilar Burton, the FACE Overview Assessment on 10 February 2017 contained the following answer:

"No - No risk Identified"

39. I exhibit the FACE Overview Assessment as PW/13.

40. For Mariko Toyoshima Lewis, the FACE Overview Assessment on 24 January 2017 contained the following answer:

"No – declined"

41. I exhibit the FACE Overview Assessment as PW/14.

42. For Ligaya Moore the Core Assessment on 8 September 2015 contained the following answer:

"No - previously referred"

43. I exhibit the Core Assessment as exhibit PW/15. I also exhibit the Care and Support Plan Review which took place on 14 September 2015 as PW/16, both of these documents highlight concerns of hoarding and the fire risk that

presented. Page 10 of exhibit PW/15, references decluttering that had commenced following the issue being identified on 9 May 2015. There was a referral to Clouds End decluttering service on 29 May (PW/17). Clouds End worked with Mrs Moore in August 2015 (PW/18) and a further referral was made to Age UK to support longer term decluttering.

44. There are some residents for whom no answer in respect of this question is recorded, those residents are:

a. Mahmud Munira (exhibit PW/19)

b. Luke Towner (exhibit PW/20)

45. For Nicholas Burton, his Mental Health – Carer Ax/Support Plan (CNWL) dated 24 February 2017 did not contain a question on referring the resident to the LFB. This is due to the assessment being undertaken by the mental health team who use different assessment documentation.

46. I exhibit the mental health assessment as PW/21.

47. By way of question 2, the Inquiry has asked:

"LFB Policy Number 743 "Home Fire Safety Visits – Individual Risk" defines a High Risk Individual as including 'any person who is referred to us by a specific partnership agency.' [LFB00032264]. LFB Policy "HFSV – Management and Planning" states that the LFB works with specific partnership agencies to identify those most at risk of fire [LFB00039157] paragraph 1.8.

a. *Is RBKC a specific partnership agency of the LFB?*

b. *Did RBKC maintain any policies, in addition to the ASC Standard Operating Procedures, for making a referral to the LFB for Home Fire Safety Visits for individuals who may be at risk as defined by the LFB policy?*

c. *Did RBKC make any referrals to the LFB for a Home Fire Safety Visit (outside the Adult and Social Care pathway for referrals)?"*

48. I have been shown LFB Policy Number 743 "Home Fire Safety Visits – Individual Risk" and specifically the reference to a "specific partnership agency". I have also been shown LFB Policy –"HFSV – Management and

Planning". I do not recall having seen these documents prior to receiving the Inquiry's letter. I am informed that RBKC's legal representatives have not located a copy of either of these documents on RBKC's document management platform.

49. It is common for local authority ASC functions to use terms such as "partnerships" to describe their relationships with associated community agency stakeholders such as the police and fire service, even if there isn't a formal partnership agreement in place. I would therefore say that RBKC ASC was in partnership with the LFB because there would naturally be a level of interaction between the two bodies. However, there was not, to the best of my knowledge, any policy in place formalising this arrangement or referring to RBKC as a "specific partnership agency" of the LFB.
50. In terms of referrals to the LFB, I have discussed by way of answer to question 1(c) above, the circumstances in which ASC may have considered referring a resident to the LFB. I do not believe there to have been any separate policy or procedure about this, over and above the SOP. I have no knowledge of whether other departments made referrals to the LFB.
51. From discussions with ASC officers, I am aware that the Tri-borough service had in place a safeguarding board before the fire at Grenfell Tower as every local authority must have one, governed by an Independent Chair. The remit of a Safeguarding Board is essentially to discuss how best to safeguard vulnerable adults in their community as a whole. Vulnerable adults would be interpreted quite widely and could include anyone who has known serious financial difficulties, is at risk of abuse, difficult family relationships, addicts etc. The Safeguarding Board sat quarterly and would have discussed progress, training, trends in serious issues and incidents or anything else arising. It would be very unusual for individual cases to be discussed unless there had been an extremely serious incident, such as a death or a serious sexual assault, from which learning could be taken in respect of interventions or other matters. In my experience, before the fire, it would also have been highly unusual and inappropriate for an individual's vulnerability to fire safety to have been discussed at Safeguarding Boards.

52. By way of question 3, the Inquiry has asked:

"The Inquiry has been provided with a Home Fire Safety Risk Referral Matrix prepared by the LFB [LFB00000072]. The Matrix identifies fire risk factors and measures that can be taken by the LFB to mitigate the risk and by Care Providers to mitigate the risk. The note at the end states "While designed for London Fire Brigade Staff, this matrix is available for use by all parties involved in the care and protection of vulnerable people as a guide to reducing the risk of death or injury from fire through consistent and appropriate risk control measures."

- a. Was this matrix available to members of the Adult Social Care team in RBKC?*
- b. If so, how was it made available and how was it referred to?*
- c. Was this matrix made available to or referred to by any other RBKC teams?*
- d. If so, please specify."*

53. I am unable to answer questions 3(c) and (d).

54. In respect of question 3(a) and (b), I have been shown a copy of the LFB Homes Fire Safety Matrix (LFB00000072) exhibited at PW/22. This is not something that officers who are currently in the department are familiar with although the Core Assessment used by RBKC officers, referred to in paragraph 13 above, includes many of the same considerations as this LFB Matrix.

55. I understand from speaking to officers that further to the Self Neglect and Hoarding Conference on 2 March 2017 at which the LFB were present, RBKC launched the Self Neglect and Hoarding Policy. The LFB gave a presentation at this event and I exhibit the presentation as PW/23. The Self Neglect and Hoarding Policy was then re-launched on 16 May 2018 at an event at Kensington Town Hall. The LFB were also present as a partner organisation for the Council's hoarding protocol. They presented on "Why is hoarding important to the LFB?". Whilst the department are not familiar with LFB00000072 therefore, the concepts within have influenced RBKC's own policy.

56. I have also been referred to correspondence between the Community Safety Team ("CST") and LFB in late 2016 which suggests that an agreement was to be signed by LFB and ASC in respect of the LFB's Community Safety Investment Fund. I exhibit the relevant email chain and draft agreement as PW/24 and PW/25. I note that none of the properties listed on the draft agreement were in Grenfell Tower. Unfortunately, I am unable to assist with whether or not this document was signed by ASC because officers who were here at the time are unable to recall or retrieve documents in respect of this agreement.

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 website.

Signed...



Dated.....23rd October 2020.....

Index of documents to the statement of Paul Willmette

Exhibit	Description	URN
PW1	Tri-Borough ASC Standard Operating Procedures, May 2016	RBK00054463
PW/2	Spreadsheet summary of care plans for residents of Grenfell Tower	Egress
PW/3	Care and Support Plan Review of Maryam Adam	Egress
PW/4	Care and Support Plan Review of Folora Neda	Egress
PW/5	Care and Support Plan Review of Maher Koudair	Egress
PW/6	Care and Support Plan Review of Sakineh Afrasehabi	Egress
PW/7	Care and Support Plan Review of Gitiara Pahlavani	Egress
PW/8	Care and Support Plan Review of Khadija Khalloufi	Egress
PW/9	Care and Support Plan Review of Mohamed Amid Neda	Egress
PW/10	Care and Support Plan Review of Samuel Daniels	Egress
PW/11	Care and Support Plan Review of Shahin Sadafi	Egress
PW/12	Care and Support Plan Review of Sharam Sadafi	Egress
PW/13	FACE Overview Assessment of Marie Del-Pilar Burton	Egress
PW/14	FACE Overview Assessment of Mariko Toyoshima Lewis	Egress
PW/15	Core Assessment of Ligaya Moore	Egress
PW/16	Care and Support Plan Review of Ligaya Moore	Egress
PW/17	Ligaya Moore referral to Clouds End decluttering service 29 May 2015	Egress
PW/18	Email from Clouds End regarding support provided to Ligaya Moore	Egress

PW/19	Care and Support Plan Review of Mahmud Munira	Egress
PW/20	Care and Support Plan Review of Luke Towner	Egress
PW/21	Mental Health Assessment of Nicholas Burton	Egress
PW/22	LFB Homes Fire Safety Matrix	LFB0000072
PW/23	LFB presentation at the Self Neglect and Hoarding Conference on 2 March 2017	Egress
PW/24	Email chain between Lorna Platt and Rob Davies regarding the sign off of the community fire safety investment fund agreement	Egress
PW/25	Community Fire Safety Investment – Fund Agreement	Egress