GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF JANICE WRAY

I, JANICE WRAY WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS:-

1. I make this statement voluntarily to assist the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The events of the fire were completely devastating and my thoughts and sympathies go out to those who lost someone or were affected by the terrible events. Not a day goes by where I am not haunted by what happened that night.

2. I am expecting to give evidence at the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry and in doing so I am committed to supporting the Inquiry team in any way I can. I appreciate fully the importance of finding out how the fire at Grenfell Tower started and spread in the way it did, leading to such an unimaginable loss of life.

3. The matters in this statement cover the twenty-one years I worked for the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organization ("TMO"). While some of the matters discussed are within my direct recollection, I have been provided with documents which I have used to prompt my memory in respect of other matters. I have also not had access to my original documents given the passage of time however I have done my very best to provide a meaningful statement to the Inquiry.

4. I would like to start by giving my most sincere condolences to all those affected by the fire. The loss of life and the impact on the area is completely devastating.

Background and Role

5. At the time of the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017 I was employed by the TMO as the Health and Safety and Facilities Manager.

6. My career began in 1986 when I finished university and started working for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ("RBKC") as a Health and Safety Administrator in the Housing Department. During this time I studied towards and completed a Diploma and Certificate from the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH). The NEBOSH Diploma is the recognised safety qualification for persons holding the Occupational Health and Safety Advisor role in organisations like the KCTMO.

7. In 1990 I became a Health and Safety Advisor for the RBKC. In 1996, I left the RBKC to undertake the role of Health and Safety Advisor at the newly formed TMO. In 2011, my role changed to include responsibility for Facilities and my job title became Health, Safety and Facilities Manager. I held this position until 1 March 2018, when the TMO handed interim management of housing services back to the RBKC.

8. For most of my career, I have been a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health ("CMIOSH"). I also regularly attended meetings with the National Social Housing Fire Safety Group/London & the South East Fire Strategy Working Group and London & the South East Housing Health & Safety Group. These groups provided a forum for health and safety professionals from social housing organisations such as Arms-Length Management Organisations, Local Authorities and Housing Associations to discuss changes and developments in health and safety and fire safety legislation and best practice and to compare policies, procedures and approaches to compliance.

9. As of 1 March 2018 I have been employed by the RBKC, currently in the role of Head of Facilities Management.

Grenfell Tower's original design, construction and composition

10. I did not work for the TMO or the RBKC when Grenfell Tower was built in 1974 and therefore I have no knowledge of the design, construction and composition of the Tower at the time of its completion.

11. I have no knowledge of the building regulations, other legislation, guidance and industry practice that were in force when Grenfell Tower was built and it follows that I have no knowledge of whether the building complied with these requirements.

Subsequent modifications prior to the 2012-2016 refurbishment

12. The only significant modification to Grenfell Tower that I can recall occurring prior to the 2012-2016 refurbishment project was the flat entrance door programme that took place between 2011 and 2012.

13. The TMO assigned a Project Manager to oversee this programme of works, Abigail Acosta, who worked in the Asset, Investment and Engineering Department. While I was involved in the programme to the extent that I was consulted on matters arising relating to health and safety, I was not responsible for overseeing the procurement of the contractor or for overseeing the works. For this reason my knowledge of the programme is limited to the matters discussed below.

14. As discussed in more detail later in this statement, following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order in 2005, the TMO was required to carry out and document Fire Risk Assessments ("FRAs") for all communal areas across its stock. By January 2010, the FRAs undertaken had revealed that further assessment was required to determine whether the flat entrance doors to a number of blocks were sufficiently fire-rated.

15. Consequently, stock condition surveyors, Rand Associates, which the TMO had previously instructed were asked to carry out front door assessments across the stock in late 2010. Given that this required access to a percentage of flats, letters were sent to residents giving them notice and requesting their cooperation.

16. The results of these assessments revealed to the TMO that some flat entrance doors needed to be replaced. We therefore undertook a wide-ranging Fire Door Replacement Programme in a number of blocks across the stock.

17. The TMO procured its fire door contractor, Manse Masterdor Ltd, through the London Housing Consortium ("LHC") because the LHC had a dedicated framework of rigorously vetted specialist fire door contractors. The fact that Manse Masterdor was procured through the LHC increased our confidence that we were dealing with a reputable contractor whose operatives would be competent, trained and supervised to install the doorsets. Most importantly, it gave us confidence that the doorsets complied with all of the relevant fire safety standards, held all necessary certification and would be fit for purpose.

18. My understanding was that the new replacement doorsets installed by Manse Masterdor were self-closing "FD30" doors fitted with intumescent strips and cold smoke seals and were therefore fully comply with current legislation.

19. My involvement in the fire door replacement project had two aspects. I was first involved when the programme was initiated in that it was me who reviewed the FRAs and escalated the issue as identified by our Fire Risk Assessors, Salvus Consulting and Carl Stokes. It was at this point that the TMO assigned a Project Manager, Abigail Acosta, who took over the programme.

20. While I continued to attend progress meetings with the LHC, I was not involved in any technical decision making relating to the door composition. For this I relied on the LHC framework, supervision of the installations by the contractor and the LHC and the fact that Carl Stokes had been involved in reviewing the technical information relating to the pilot door.

21. I have been shown a report titled Flat Fire Door Replacement Programme that was placed by Abigail Acosta before the Operations Committee on 22 February 2011 (**JW/1, '22 February 2011 Operations Committee – Flat Fire Door Replacement Programme':**). This report reflects my understanding that the replacement doors needed to be fire resistant for 30 minutes, fitted with intumescent strips, cold smoke seals and self-closing devices and compliant with BS EN 1154.

22. I have also been shown a brief, specification and pricing document sent by Abigail Acosta to John Tapscott of Manse Masterdor Ltd on 5 January 2011 (**JW/2, '05**

February 2011 Letter to John Tapscott enclosing specification and pricing document':). This contract set out numerous requirements for the doors based on building standards, including requirements that the doors comply with BS 476 Part 22, which I understand records the methods for determining the fire resistance of non-load bearing elements of construction. My understanding was that compliance with BS 476 meant that a door could be considered fire resisting after construction. The contract also required independent test reports to be provided as evidence of this.

23. Manse Masterdor were both the manufacturer and the installer of the flat entrance doors and they were responsible for replacing both the door and the doorframe of those flats identified during the programme as having non-compliant entrance doors. My understanding is that doorsets installed in Grenfell Tower were Suredor composite fire doors FD30.

24. I have been shown the specification provided to the TMO by Manse Masterdor for the doorsets that confirms that the doors were tested and accredited as satisfying the criteria for integrity and stability set out in BS 476 Part 22 (**JW/3, 'Manse Masterdor – Suredor Design Specification':**). I also recall being assured that the door was compliant with the Metropolitan police Security standards known as "Secured by Design".

25. My recollection is that Manse Masterdor would contact residents directly to arrange a visit during which they would measure the door, as each door was to be made bespoke for the specific flat. During the fitting period the LHC carried out inspections which provided us with an additional level of assurance that the doors and the installation process met the standard required. The LHC were invited to programme progress meetings in which these inspection reports were discussed. I cannot recall anyone from the LHC ever raising concerns about the compliancy or composition of the doors during these meetings.

26. If the doors installed during this programme did not have the features I have described, or did not comply with the regulations referred to in the specifications provided by Manse Masterdor, I would have expected these omissions to be

picked up by Manse Masterdor when installing the doors or by the LHC when overseeing the installations or carrying out their inspections.

27. Leaseholder flats were never included in the fire door replacement programme as the RBKC lease demised responsibility for flat entrance door to the leaseholder. However, separately we asked leaseholders whose doors were identified as potentially non-compliant to provide evidence that their entrance doors were compliant (**JW/4 '17 October 2012 Letter to Residents – Fire Safety and your flat entrance door': TMO10011075**). To assist leaseholders in making this assessment we provided them with information about the standards that they needed to meet, in addition to more practical tips as to what they should be looking for.

28. If a leaseholder requested that their door be assessed and were willing to provide access, we would instruct Carl Stokes to attend, inspect and complete a report on the compliance of that particular flat's door and the leaseholder was provided with a copy.

29. I recall that some leaseholders would not accept that it was their responsibility to upgrade their flat entrance door. We nevertheless made significant efforts to reduce the number of non-compliant front entrance doors within the stock. In January 2012 we met with Carl Stokes, RBKC Officers and the LFB to discuss who was responsible for enforcement of the non-compliant leaseholder flat entrance doors (**JW/5, '22 March 2012 Minutes of the TMO Health & Safety Committee Meeting': TMO10001026**). While it was confirmed that the lessee was responsible for compliance, it remained unclear who was responsible for enforcing compliance. I recall that the LFB expressed a reluctance to take enforcement action under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order on the basis that it was their view that responsibility lay with the landlord.

30. By February 2013 the issue of enforcement of non-compliant leaseholder flat entrance doors had still not been resolved although the RBKC had acknowledged that the TMO had done everything it reasonably could to reduce the number of non-compliant doors in the stock (**JW/6, '07 February 2013 Minutes of Assets & Regeneration and Repairs Health and Safety Group meeting':**

TMO10002587). Years later the RBKC confirmed to us that in the absence of LFB Enforcement Action, the TMO had no legal grounds to insist that leaseholders upgrade or replace non-complaint doors.

31. Once the doors were installed, it was for the TMO to monitor the flat entrance doors and ensure they remained in good condition. For this reason, Carl Stokes continued to inspect a percentage of the front entrance doors as part of the ongoing FRA programme. This required Carl Stokes to gain access to a flat as the self-closing device was not visible when the door was shut. While we considered installing external self-closers, which could have been inspected without gaining access to the flat, we were concerned at the potential risk of vandalism to the self-closing devices.

32. The front entrance doors were also monitored to a degree by caretakers, also known as Estate Service Assistants, during their weekly and monthly communal area inspections. For example, our caretakers were trained to look for any obvious damage to the door, door furniture and the doorframe. They would not however access a flat to ensure that the self-closing device was fitted and operational.

33. Finally, we also expected tenants to let us know if there was any problem with their doors. Specifically, section 5.3.1 of The Tenancy Agreement required that "the tenant will report all repairs and defects in the premises to the landlord or its agent immediately."

Modifications to the building between 2012 and 2016

34. I will now set out my understanding of the modifications made to Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016.

35. I was obviously aware that a major refurbishment was being undertaken at Grenfell Tower. I wish to explain that I had no defined or designated role in the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower. I am not a design or construction expert and my involvement in the refurbishment was limited to occasions where I was asked questions on an ad hoc basis about discrete issues.

36. The refurbishment was overseen by a designated Refurbishment Project team within the Asset Management Team of the Operations department. I was not part of the TMO Refurbishment Project Team and I never attended any Building Control, Project Progress or Resident Compact meetings.

37. The refurbishment was treated as a separate capital project using consultants and contractors selected and managed by the Asset Management department. Those contractors were responsible for ensuring that their part of the refurbishment was conducted safely and therefore had their own health and safety advisers. The consequence of this is that I did not attend any meetings or sit on any of the project committees that dealt specifically with the refurbishment.

38. I was never consulted on the design, construction or materials used during the refurbishment, nor was I consulted on their safety properties. As stated earlier, I am an occupational health and safety advisor and I would never have been formally asked nor would I offer technical advice on building design, constructions or materials. I was not kept up to date with construction progress or any issues that arose in respect of that work. I am not a construction expert and would not have been able to deal with these issues.

39. I learnt after the incident that the project team were working with Exova WarringtonFire who were tasked with producing a specific Grenfell Tower fire strategy in the context of the refurbishment. I was aware of Exova as a consultancy and knew them to be a highly specialist provider of fire consultancy services having engaged their services in respect of the Adair Tower fire which occurred in October 2015. However I had no dealings with Exova in respect of Grenfell Tower. I was not consulted on that exercise and I do not believe that any findings were shared with me. As I say, the refurbishment of the Tower was treated as a capital project in its own right.

40. I do recall being conscious during the refurbishment that construction work was being carried out while residents remained living in the Tower and therefore the risk of a fire caused by an ignition from the construction works was increased. As the point of contact with the LFB, I decided that they should be kept closely

informed of the refurbishment's progress and the measures being taken to mitigate a fire during construction work.

41. For this reason, I added the Grenfell Tower refurbishment as a standing item on the bi-monthly liaison meeting with LFB for the period of the refurbishment. I also invited Claire Williams, the TMO Project Manager, to attend those meetings to deal with this standing agenda item, provide progress updates, answer any questions and escalate and respond to any concerns raised by the LFB.

42. While the LFB had already been conducting regular familiarisation visits at Grenfell Tower prior to the refurbishment, these visits increased in frequency during the project. These visits would be facilitated by Claire Williams and the LFB would typically be accompanied on site by Rydon staff. For example, I recall that in a liaison meeting with the LFB in September 2014, Claire Williams confirmed that all of the watches from North Kensington Fire Station had attended the site and familiarised themselves with the altered layout at Grenfell Tower (**JW/7, '18 September 2014 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S': TMO10023364**).

43. I also recall the LFB attended Grenfell Tower to review arrangements in advance of the Christmas period in 2015 and in March 2016 Nick Davis, the LFB Station Manager at North Kensington, confirmed that he had attended Grenfell Tower whilst the recent works to the dry riser were being undertaken (**JW/8, '04 March 2016 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S': TMO10014736**). Finally, at the conclusion of the works on site at Grenfell Tower in late May 2016, LFB staff met on site with Rydon and were briefed on the new layout and systems (**JW/9, '06 May 2016 Email thread RE: FW: Grenfell Tower': TMO10013186**).

44. Occasionally general fire safety issues arose during the project that might be referred to me for comment. On these occasions, I would seek and obtain the advice of our specialist fire expert Carl Stokes, typically by instructing him to produce issue-specific reports that I would supply back to the Asset Management team. I have endeavoured to set out these fire issues below.

Smoke vents/lifts

45. A fire safety issue I recall emerging during the refurbishment arose from a site visit on 12 March 2014 when Claire Williams met with Daniel Hallisey and Matthew Ramsay of the LFB and Bruce Sounes of Studio E on site at Grenfell Tower (**JW/10, '12 March 2014 – 17 March 2014 Email thread RE: Grenfell and finger blocks – visit with fire brigade': TMO10005515**). I was not present at this meeting however I recall being advised by my colleague Claire Williams that the LFB were unhappy with the state of the smoke vents to each lobby. The LFB required confirmation from the TMO that the lifts were fireman or firefighters lifts. It was also discussed whether Premises Information Packs should be held at reception.

46. To address the questions raised by the LFB, Claire Williams asked Carl Stokes to visit Grenfell Tower which he did on 17 March 2014. In a report dated 18 March 2014 Carl advised that the smoke extract system was on a Planned Preventative Maintenance programme. It had last been serviced in September 2013 with the engineer recording the only fault as being the 19th floor relay (**JW/11, '18 March 2014 Letter from C S Stokes and Associates Limited': TMO10005572**). Carl commented that as the next quarterly service was imminent, he would recommend that the contractor be asked to service the system with any findings actioned.

47. In respect of the lifts, Carl advised that both lifts were Fire fighter evacuation lifts and that during a recent LFB exercise at Grenfell Tower, local fire crews were given instructions on how to use the lifts in firefighting mode. The crews were also advised that instructions for the AOV were contained in the ground floor level office and the lift motor room. Furthermore, copies of the instructions were emailed to the commander of the local LFB fire station.

48. In respect of the LFB's request for a premises information pack, Carl strongly recommended that these not be provided on the basis that the Fire Services Act required the LFB to undertake 7(2)(d) information gathering visits in relation to a premises to collate information relevant to firefighting.

Right of way

49. Another fire safety issue I recall arising during the refurbishment came from a resident in July 2014, Edward Daffarn. He raised concerns with the LFB regarding the recent closure of land and right of way to West and North sides of Grenfell Tower due to the construction work. He also had concerns about the lack of awareness regarding an assembly area (**JW/12, '08 July 2014 – 04 September 2014 Email thread RE: Grenfell Tower': TMO10007363**).

50. Mr Daffarn's concerns were forwarded to me by Ben Dewis of the LFB. I discussed the issue with Claire Williams and then wrote to Ben informing him of the numerous measures in place to mitigate the risks posed by the construction work. Specifically, I advised him of the advice in the residents' newsletter, the noticeboard containing fire safety information in the lobby, the bi-monthly liaison meetings with the LFB which Claire Williams attended and the regular familiarisation visits by the LFB to the Tower. Ben was also made aware that Carl Stokes had assisted Rydon in implementing further mitigating measures to keep the area outside the Tower as clear as possible so as to facilitate LFB access. I recall Ben replying that he trusted we had everything under control (**JW/12: TMO10007363**).

Heating Interface Units

51. A further fire safety issue that emerged from the refurbishment was that in late 2015 I was made aware that residents began raising concerns over the location of the new Heating Interface Units ("HIUs") at Grenfell Tower. My recollection is that some residents were not happy with the HIUs being located in their hallways and several wished that they be installed in the kitchen (**JW/13, '17 November 2015 Email from Fahed Barakat':**).

52. I was not involved in any decisions relating to the original positioning of the HIUs however when residents complained the issue was referred to me and I instructed Carl Stokes to investigate. I recall that Carl attended the Tower several times and was able to inspect these units in situ in several dwellings and confirmed that positioning the HIUs in the hallway complied with the Building Regulations and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (**JW/14, '16 December 2015 Letter from C S Stokes and Associates Limited':**).

Floor numbering

53. A further fire safety issue emerging from the refurbishment was that in October 2015 it was proposed that to take into account the new residential floors at the Tower, all floors be renumbered. TMO sought the LFB's opinion on this and, in a liaison meeting on 20 October 2015, Dan Hallissey indicated that from an operational point of view, the overriding issue was the need to ensure that there was signage at ground floor when the LFB entered the block which clearly highlighted which flat numbers were located on which level (**JW/15, '20 October 2015 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S': TMO10033146**).

54. I recall meeting with Carl Stokes on site to inspect the signage at Grenfell Tower and to get his comments on the proof copy of the permanent signs which had been submitted by the contractor for approval. By 18 December 2015 the temporary laminated signs at Grenfell Tower had been replaced with more robust temporary signs with clear instructions advising residents how to exit the building in the event of a fire or emergency (**JW/16, '01 December 2015 – 18 December 2015 Email thread RE: Health, Safety and Security at Grenfell Tower': TMO10027593**). Furthermore, a sign clarifying the flat numbering for the whole building was fixed in place beside the lifts at entry level (**JW/17, 'Email thread RE: Grenfell Tower – signage and responses to Cllr Blakeman: TMO10027592**).

55. In respect of exit signage within the building, I believe that we consulted the LFB and it was agreed that given there was only one exit from the building there was no need to put exit signage within the residents' flats or on every lobby floor. At the time of the fire there would have been a sign immediately in front of the lift on each floor which stated what floor you were on, which flat numbers resided on that floor and what direction they were in.

56. The number of the floor was also spray painted in the stairwell on the concrete wall. My recollection is that this was a temporary arrangement and there was an intention to put in place different floor numbering signage in the stairwell.

Premises Information Box

57. A further matter arising during the refurbishment was whether there was a need for a Premises Information Box which would contain instructions for various fire safety systems at the Tower and plans for the Tower.

58. In early May 2016 Nick Davis of the LFB confirmed that his colleagues had attended recent demonstration of the fire systems at Grenfell Tower which they considered to be helpful (**JW/9: TMO10013186**). Around this time the LFB requested that we install a Premises Information Box at Grenfell Tower. Prior to this request, I was aware of Premises Information Boxes as we had installed one at Trellick Tower, our highest and potentially most complex block, as well as at our sheltered housing blocks.

59. On 6 May 2016 Nick Davis clarified that the information that the LFB would like to be contained in the Box at Grenfell Tower included hazardous substances, construction hazards, facilities for fire-fighters, fire protection systems, contingency and/or business continuity planning information (**JW/9: TMO10013186**).

60. In the end we did not install a dedicated Premises Information Box at Grenfell Tower. My understanding, although I was not involved in this decision, was that arrangements were put in place for the documentation required to be available in an existing secure box in the lobby. The key to this box was to be held in a keysafe secured by an FB padlock in the bin room.

61. I feel confident in saying that there were no requests from the LFB for documentation which we did not provide. The LFB were in direct and regular contact with both Rydon and the TMO and we would willingly have provided them with any information they requested.

62. Except in relation to the matters discussed above, I have no knowledge of the modifications made to the inside of Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016. I was not part of the refurbishment project team and I did not attend their meetings. I was not required to check construction work, nor would I have had the expertise

to do. I would have expected the contractors, consultants and Building Control to monitor these matters.

63. I also have no detailed knowledge of the relevant regulations, legislation, British Standards, guidance and industry practice that applied to these modifications through the period from initial design to completion and approval and it follows that I would not be able to comment on whether the building complied with those requirements.

64. I am an occupational health and safety adviser and not a design or construction expert. I was not included in the detail of the refurbishment and so have no knowledge of whether specific consideration was given to the combination of the interior components and the fire safety, fire retardancy and compliance with safety standards of the same.

Modifications to the exterior of Grenfell Tower between 2012 and 2016 (including cladding and insulation)

65. I did not have anything to do with the selection, provision or installation of cladding or insulation during the refurbishment. It follows that I have no knowledge of the purpose of the cladding/insulation applied to the exterior of Grenfell Tower. I also have no knowledge of its design, manufacture or composition, or the method by which it was affixed to the Tower. As I have mentioned, the refurbishment was being dealt with as a bespoke project with specialist contractors employed to deal with such matters.

66. I have no knowledge and would not have the technical expertise to assess whether the exterior of Grenfell Tower was compliant with relevant building regulations, fire regulations, other legislation, British Standards, guidance and industry practice. Nor do I have any knowledge of what advice or information was available, and what assessments were made, about the components that comprised the exterior of Grenfell Tower, its fire safety, fire-resistance and compliance with safety standards (including information or advice from manufacturers of relevant components).

67. I also have no knowledge of whether specific consideration was given to the combination of the exterior components and the fire safety, fire retardancy and compliance with safety standards of the same. This would be beyond my technical level of expertise.

68. The only time I recall having to consider the nature of the cladding on Grenfell Tower was following the fire that occurred on 19 August 2016 at Shepherd's Court.

69. Eight months later, on 6 April 2017, the LFB sent a letter to Laura Johnson highlighting that testing of the panels had found that the combustibility of the composition of the panels at Shepherd's Court did not meet the levels expected for conformity with the building regulations (**JW/18, '06 April 2017 Letter from LFB – External Fire Spread': TMO10016603**). Laura Johnson forwarded this letter to Robert Black and myself. I then forwarded it to various TMO staff for their attention (**JW/19, '06 April 2017 -19 April 2017 Email thread RE: FW Letter from LFB – External Fire Spread': TMO10016600**).

70. Following receipt of this letter, I checked with Carl Stokes whether the new cladding panels fitted to Grenfell Tower complied with the requirements of the Building Regulations. This discussion is referred to in an email chain dated 27 April 2017 in which I advise Robert Black and Barbara Matthews that I had checked with Carl Stokes, who had advised that we did not have any blocks with cladding of the nature described in the LFB's letter. I further advised that Carl had investigated the details of the installation with Rydon when the works were on site and he confirmed that the installation complied with the current requirement of the Building Regulations (**JW/20, '06 April 2017 - 27 April 2017 Email thread RE: FW Letter from LFB – External Fire Spread': TMO10016666**).

The fire and safety measures within Grenfell Tower at 14 June 2017

71. The TMO instructed and relied on the specialist contractors and consultants who constructed and refurbished Grenfell Tower to ensure that building and its features complied with the relevant fire safety legislation and guidance. The TMO

also relied on Carl Stokes and the LFB, both of whom regularly attended the Tower, to advise of any fire safety issues observed during inspections.

72. My background is in occupational health and safety. I do not possess the technical knowledge or expertise that would be required to determine whether a particular building feature complied with the relevant legislation and guidance.

73. I have nevertheless set out my understanding of the fire safety measures in place at the time of the fire at Grenfell Tower in the following paragraphs.

Compartmentation:

74. My understanding has always been that fire strategy at Grenfell Tower was based on a design of compartmentation. I cannot recall ever receiving any information from any of the aforementioned contractors and consultants to suggest that Grenfell Tower might not have the appropriate fire separation and compartmentation.

75. I trusted that the construction and refurbishment of the Tower had gone through the Building Control Regulation process, a belief that was regularly affirmed by Carl Stokes in his FRAs. For example, in the last FRA completed before the fire on 20 June 2016, Carl advised that the building appeared to have the appropriate fire separation and compartmentation and a reasonable standard of fire loading in the means of escape routes. He also confirmed, as he had in every other FRA, that the "stay put" strategy was acceptable for Grenfell Tower **(JW/21, '20 June 2016 Fire Risk Assessment by Carl Stokes': TMO10017285)**.

Lobbies

76. All individual flats in Grenfell Tower were accessed from the communal lobby areas on each residential floor. There was a self-closing fire door separating the lobby area from the protected staircase. This arrangement was assessed by Carl Stokes in his final FRA on 20 June 2016 with no adverse comments raised **(JW/21: TMO10017285)**.

Fire-rated flat entrance doors

77. At the time of the fire my understanding was that all of the tenanted and leaseholder flats had compliant fire safety flat entrance doors. This understanding was reaffirmed by Carl Stokes in his last FRA on 20 June 2016, in which he wrote:

> "The new timber doors in this building are according to documents seen fire rated doors, the glazing in them is fire rated glass but some doors do not have cold smoke seals fitted to them and on others the intumescent strips have been painted over.
>
> Please see the significant findings sheets for more information on any of the newly fitted doors in this building.
>
> The tenanted apartments within this building had a few years ago their flat entrance doors replaced with new door sets. These door sets are self closing 30 minute certified fire rated doors which meet the requirements of the Building Regulations, if there is glazing in the new doors it is fire rated. The letter box on these new doors is fire rated and cold smoke seals are fitted as standard, there is a level threshold for compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations. A key is not needed to open these new flat entrance doors from the internal face of the door again complying with Building Regulation requirements. Information on these new doors which also have acoustic, safety and security properties (PAS 23 and 24) as well as fire along with the fire certification documentation is held at the Hub in the TMO offices.
>
> The other flat entrance doors which have not been replaced are 44mm thick, flush timber fire rated doors fitted with perko, concealed self closing devices on the ones looked at, these are the originally fitted doors. These are close fitting doors. Please see the significant findings sheets for more information on the locations of any non compliant doors in this building and the new door being fitted to flat 112.

TMO00000890_0017

If new flat entrance doors are fitted in the future to the original flat doors then these will conform to the requirements of the Building Regulations at the time of installation.

On the flat entrance doors that have not been replaced the standard letter box and flap is in the lower half of the door and in some cases these doors are fitted with multiple locks. It is assumed that the occupants of these flats can exit the flat in an emergency without any undue delay.

The original flat entrance doors in this building are flat numbers 56, 61, 86, 92, 105, 142, 154, 156, 165,166, 17 4.185, 195, and 206. It is TMO's policy that if flats are refurbished or when new tenants move into a flat then the self closing device fitted to the flat entrance door is assessed. If the self closing device does not close the door fully or one is not fitted to the door then a new appropriate self closing device is fitted. Some of the original flat entrance doors have more than one lock fitted to them, it is assumed that the occupants of these flats can exit the flat in an emergency without any undue delay." (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

78. In this FRA, Carl Stokes also wrote under the heading "Measures to Limit Fire Spread and Development":

"There is fire rated glazing in some of the fire doors in this building no piece of fire rated glazing was seen to be damaged or had cracks in them at the time of this assessment. The newly fitted doors have the glazing in them marked as fire rated glass." (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

79. I recall that an issue relating to the front entrance doors arose in 2017 when the TMO received correspondence from the RBKC that some residents were complaining that the flat entrance doors which had been installed in the newly constructed flats during the refurbishment were difficult for some less able-bodied residents to open (**JW/22, '14 February 2017 – 21 February 2017 Email thread RE: Update re doors; Flat 6 and Flat 7 Grenfell Tower':**

TMO10016111) (JW/24, '01 March 2017 Email from Janice Wray RE: 6&7 Grenfell Tower – flat entrance door issue':).

80. I have been shown documents which record that my colleagues consulted David Hughes of Rydon on 17 February 2017 and he explained that these doors were very heavy because of the thick material required to make them 60 minute fire resistant. He advised that he had detuned the door closers on the front doors of several flats as much as possible but then they did not have the power to pull fully past the smoke seals **(JW/23, '02 March 2017 - 14 February 2017 Email thread RE: Update re doors; Flat 6 and Flat 7 Grenfell Tower': TMO10016151)**.

81. I consulted Carl Stokes on this issue and on 21 February 2017 he advised me that the contractor had already loosened the self-closers so much that they were now not shutting the doors. He commented that even if the closers were removed, the doors would still probably be too heavy to open. His advice was that the only solution he could think of would be fitting automatic opening door devices. This matter was eventually resolved to the satisfaction of the Council's Occupational Therapist by Repairs Direct operatives undertaking a number of tasks including ensuring the smoke deal was further rebated into the door frame. This meant that there was no need to install automatic opening door devices **(JW/22: TMO10016111)**.

82. While self-closing devices were considered at the time to be a significant issue at Grenfell Tower due to the door replacement programme, it nevertheless became clear to me that self-closing devices on front entrance doors was a matter that needed our attention elsewhere in the stock.

83. On 16 March 2017 I produced a paper reviewing the Fire Strategy in respect of self-closers which suggested that the TMO adopt a five year installation programme for retrofitting self-closing devices across our stock **(JW/25, '16 March 2017 KCTMO Health & Safety Committee, Review of Fire Strategy – update om self-closers':**). Initially the TMO had suggested that this programme take place across three years however the RBKC required it take

five years. At the time of the fire we were in the process of incorporating this programme into the TMO Fire Safety Strategy.

84. On 17 November 2016 we received a Deficiency Notice from the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority which listed several fire safety audit observations that it wanted us to take action in respect of (**JW/26, '17 November 2016 letter from LFEPA: Deficiency Notice': TMO10017254**). One of these observations was that the flat entrance doors to Flats 44 and 153 did not self close.

85. Furthermore, at the time of the fire in June 2017, we were aware from Carl Stokes' FRA that the flat entrance door to Flat 112 was to be replaced and we were waiting on evidence from that leaseholder that the replacement door was FD30S as required by the regulations. This action had been recorded by us on our FRA Action Tracker as an action that had not yet been completed (**JW/27, 'FRA Tracker: Fire Risk Assessment by Block/Assessment':**). Flat 112 belonged to a leaseholder who had been emailed several times by us but who had not yet provided the required confirmation and documentation/certification.

The Smoke Extraction /AOV System

86. There was a smoke ventilation system at Grenfell Tower which utilized a system of automatic opening vents (AOVs).

87. I recall that the ventilation system was replaced during the refurbishment project. While I am not a technical expert, my understanding was that the old system had only one switch that enabled all the vents on every floor to be opened if it had not already done so automatically, whereas the new system had a switch on each lobby which enabled the manual override of the AOV operation for that particular floor.

88. To ensure that TMO and LFB staff were familiar with the operation of the new system, I am aware that a series of briefings were conducted by Rydon. One of these briefings was attended by Estate staff, other colleagues and myself and I am aware that another briefing on the AOV was attended by the LFB as Nick Davis

of the LFB confirmed in a Liaison Meeting on 5 May 2016 that his colleagues had found the briefing helpful (**JW/28, '05 May 2016 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMOS H&S': TMO10013185**).

89. I do not recall either the LFB or Carl Stokes making any adverse comments about the capability or compliance of the new AOV system following the refurbishment. I also do not recall the LFB asking for any further information on the system during any of their regular visits.

90. The AOV system was assessed by Carl Stokes as recently as 20 June 2016, with Carl observing that a Notification of Fire Safety Deficiency had been issued which required that a maintenance schedule be put in place to ensure that the new AOV system was maintained and kept in good working order (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

91. Carl incorporated this recommendation into the Record of Significant Findings and Action Plan that he produced for us on 26 April 2016 (**JW/29, '26 April 2016 Record of Significant Findings and Action Plan': TMO10013196**. Specifically, he recommended weekly occupier inspections of the ventilation system with the results recorded. Neither of these two documents contained any suggestion by Carl Stokes that the AOV system was of an inadequacy of non-compliance.

92. I am aware that the Estate Service Assistants were required to check as part of their monthly inspections whether the ventilation system was in good working order. I have been shown a checklist from these inspections which records that the most recent inspection of the ventilation system was carried out by Paul Steadman on 30 May 2017 during which the system was identified as being in good working order (**JW/30, 'ESA002i_Monthly H&S Checks': TMO10016212**).

93. At the time of the fire, an outstanding action on our FRA Action Tracker was an observation by Carl Stokes that the mains gas supply to the building was interfaced with the AOV system (**JW/27, 'FRA Tracker: Fire Risk Assessment**

by Block/Assessment':). His view was that this meant that the gas supply would shut off if the AOV system was operated. I would have referred this matter to Claire Williams who would have had the relevant documentation.

Fire Action Notices

94. In December 2016 Fire Action Notices were installed in Grenfell Tower (**JW/31, 'December 2016 Fire Safety – Board Update': TMO10015719**). At this time, the installation of Fire Action Notices was an issue that was already on our radar and in November 2016 it had been agreed between the TMO Health and Safety Committee and the RBKC that the TMO Fire Safety Strategy needed to be amended to include a requirement for Fire Action Notices in the communal entrance lobbies of all blocks (**JW/32, '24 November 2016 Board Meeting': TMO10015595**).

95. By 16 March 2017 a supply of Fire Action Notices for fitting elsewhere throughout the stock had been ordered and a risk based approach was to be taken to installation, with blocks of six or more stories completed in the first phase (**JW/33, '16 March 2017 Minutes of Health & Safety Committee': TMO10016738**). Estate staff were to fit these adhesive signs as part of the regular block inspections and the LFB would be advised of the approach and indicative time frame for completion.

Smoke detection system:

96. There was a smoke detection system in the communal areas of Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire. This system had been installed during the refurbishment and was remotely monitored by an external company called Tunstall Telecom. Once triggered by smoke, the system alerted Tunstall Telecom who were responsible for immediately notifying the LFB.

97. This smoke detection system did not sound in the way of a classic fire alarm however the system was linked to the AOV vents in the lobbies and initiated their opening on the floor where the fire alarm had been activated. The "Fire Safety in

Purpose Built Blocks of Flats" best practice guide considered it to be "unnecessary and undesirable" for an audible fire alarm system to be installed in a general needs block designed to support a stay put policy (**JW/34, 'Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats' Guidance':**). The rationale in the guide being that this would be unsuccessful as it would inevitably lead to false alarms, a burden on the LFB and residents then ignoring warnings of genuine fires.

98. For this reason, we did not carry out fire drills in any of our properties with the "stay put" policy in place, including Grenfell Tower. The best practice guide indicates that this was "neither practical nor necessary" as even in blocks with a communal alarm system this is considered to be unrealistic (**JW/34:**).

99. I am aware that the previous communal smoke detection system at Grenfell Tower did sound in the way of a classic fire alarm. I was not involved in the decision to change the system to one that was non-audible however it was never raised as a concern by Carl Stokes in a Fire Risk Assessment or by the LFB during their familiarisation visits. Had it been an issue I would have expected that that Carl Stokes and the LFB would have been raised it.

100. In addition to the smoke detection system in the communal areas, residents had one or more audible alarms fitted within their individual flats.

101. The fire detection system at Grenfell Tower was assessed by Carl Stokes in his 20 June 2016 FRA (**JW/21: TMO10017285**). At the time of the fire, one of the outstanding items on our FRA Action Tracker was a query raised by Carl Stokes as to whether the fire detection systems for the roof area and the basement boiler room were in working order (**JW/27:** . However, my understanding was that fire detection systems were not required for these areas as they were high security areas accessible only to authorised personnel. At the time of the fire, it had been our intention to discuss this further with Carl Stokes.

The dry riser

102. As at June 2017 there was a dry rising fire fighting main at Grenfell Tower. This dry riser was installed at the time the Tower was constructed and to the best of my knowledge this installation had been in accordance with necessary standards.

103. The LFB were aware that there was a dry rising main in place at Grenfell Tower. My recollection is that the LFB requested to be in attendance when alterations were being made to the dry riser during the 2012-2016 refurbishment project and this was accommodated.

104. I am aware that the alternative to a dry riser is a wet riser. In my experience wet risers are rare and only one of the RBKC's nineteen high rise blocks, Trellick Tower, has a wet riser. It was never suggested to me by the LFB, Carl Stokes, Exova WarringtonFire or Building Control that Grenfell Tower required a wet riser and it follows that we never considered retrofitting one. Furthermore, while I have no technical knowledge in this area, my understanding is that to retrofit a wet riser could be extremely challenging.

105. The dry riser at Grenfell Tower was assessed by Carl Stokes in his June 2016 FRA (**JW/19: TMO10017285**). Under the heading "fixed fire systems and fire equipment" Carl recorded that the TMO used a third party contractor to maintain and service the dry rising main and all the fittings attached to it. Carl made no suggestion in this FRA or any other that the dry riser was inadequate or non-compliant.

Fire extinguishers

106. As at June 2017, there were no fire extinguishers in the main communal areas of Grenfell Tower. This was an intentional decision because there were no permanent resident staff to operate the extinguishers and residents were not trained to use them so they would be of limited value. This approach was in line with the LFB approach for a purpose built residential block of self-contained units with a stay put strategy and had been discussed with them in relation to the stock generally (**JW/34, 'Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats' Guidance':**).

It is my understanding that fire extinguishers were installed in the plant areas of Grenfell Tower for use by the trained personnel who had access to those areas. Allied Protection were the planned preventative maintenance contractors responsible for the annual inspection and servicing of extinguishers from April 2017. Prior to that Chubb was the contractor responsible for inspecting and servicing fire extinguishers.

Stairwell and stairwell doors

107. The means of escape from fire at Grenfell Tower has always been the single protected staircase. To the best of my knowledge, the stairwell doors to the staircase had been in place since the construction of the Tower in 1974.

108. In November 2016 a Deficiency Notice was received in respect of Grenfell Tower (**JW/26: TMO10017254**). This Notice raised several matters but we were particularly concerned with the finding that there were a number of fire doors protecting this escape staircase that did not fit fully into their frames and a number of fire doors that appeared to not be self-closing during the audit.

109. My understanding had been that the fire doors from the staircase to the lobbies on each floor were fully compliant. This had been confirmed by Carl Stokes in his 20 June 2016 FRA where he recorded that the doors protecting the escape route were suitably fire rated and in good condition (**JW/21: TMO10017285**). My experience is that doors that are subject to heavy use will occasionally require attention to ensure that they remain operational and fully self-closing and therefore the doors observed to be faulty in the Deficiency Notice may simply have fallen into this category.

110. It was never suggested to me by the LFB or by Carl Stokes that this means of escape was unsatisfactory or posed a risk. The appropriateness of the single stairway as a means of escape was confirmed by Carl Stokes as recently as 20 June 2016 in an FRA for Grenfell Tower, in which he commented:

"The original parts of this building appear to have been constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations at the time of construction with the layout of this

building, the travel distances, the escape routes, the width of the escape routes and the exit appropriate for the present use. The means of escape routes in this building, the protected staircase leads directly to a final exit at its base. The exit route has been approved by the RBKC Building Control department and is a protected route to open air. The ground floor level entrance hall/lobby area and lift lobby area are two separate areas, again this arrangement has been acceptable by the Building Control Officer" (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

Emergency Lighting

111. As at June 2017, there was emergency lighting in the enclosed staircase at Grenfell Tower, as well as in the lobbies and plant areas. No concerns in relation to the emergency lighting were ever raised to me by the LFB or by Carl Stokes.

112. The emergency lighting was one of several matters relating to fire safety within Grenfell Tower that was managed through contractors and the Operations Team. Although it was not my area of responsibility, it was my understanding that there was electrical testing for the communal areas and flats every five years in accordance with legislation and best practice and that there was a three hour battery back-up for this emergency lighting if the power went down.

113. Furthermore, I am aware that that Estate Service Assistants were required to inspect whether the staircase lights were in working order as part of their weekly inspections. I have been shown a document which records that the emergency lighting was checked by Paul Steadman on 9 June 2017 and confirmed to be in working order (**JW/35, 'ESA002g_Weekly H&S Checks': TMO10016213**).

Lifts

114. There were two lifts at Grenfell Tower which were fire risk assessed by Carl Stokes as recently as 20 June 2016. In this FRA Carl described the two lifts as evacuation/firefighting lifts which could be used for disabled evacuation if need be and which had standard fire fighter over ride controls fitted so that the Fire and Rescue Service could take control of the lifts and use them as they saw fit in the event of an emergency (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

115. This FRA also recorded that the TMO used a third party contractor, who I believe to be Express Lifts Limited, to maintain and service the lifts and that this company was under a contractual obligation to notify the TMO of any defects.

116. Carl also confirmed that the power supply to each lift was as required for a fire fighter/evacuation lift along with all other requirements for weight and size. He did not raise any concerns with the lifts.

117. I understand that Carl believed the lifts were both firefighting lifts as he was confident that they met all the criteria which enabled them to be described in this way. My understanding is that the lifts were firefighter lifts in the sense that the LFB were able to override them taking control of them in an emergency situation. However, at no time was it ever our intention to use any of our lifts to evacuate residents and so there was never any communication on fire procedures that suggested they should be used in this way. Therefore, providing they could safely operate as fireman's lifts we did not challenge Carl Stokes on his assessment.

Sprinklers

118. As at June 2017 there were no sprinklers at Grenfell Tower.

119. I cannot recall the matter of sprinklers ever being discussed specifically in relation to Grenfell Tower. I do recall that in 2012 the LFB commenced a sprinkler initiative which I understand was prompted by the recommendations of the Coroner following the Lakanal House fire. We had regular discussions with the LFB about whether sprinklers were required for our properties however the focus and priority of the local LFB inspecting team was for sprinklers to be considered in sheltered schemes of accommodation as opposed to in tower blocks such as Grenfell Tower.

120. On 1 April 2014, I attended a liaison meeting with the LFB in which I advised Daniel Hallissey, the Station Manager at North Kensington, and Suhail Dadabhoy, an Inspecting Officer, that, the LFB had carried out assessments of each of our sheltered housing properties and had found them not to present a high risk **(JW/36, '01 April 2014 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety &**

KCTMO H&S': TMO10005679). I stated that we would consider installation of sprinklers within an individual flat if the degree of fire risk was considered to be very high such as in the case of a vulnerable resident with restricted mobility and excessive cigarette use. This approach was discussed with the RBKC, who considered it to be sensible.

121. We also had general discussions with the LFB about sprinklers in other blocks however again their focus appeared to be on complex buildings and at no time did they request we consider installation at Grenfell Tower, which was relatively straightforward in design.

122. Obtaining funding for sprinklers would in all likelihood have presented a challenge given that we had nineteen buildings of more than 10 floors and limited resources. Nevertheless, we did not adopt a blanket approach to sprinklers across the stock and were committed to assessing each flat where a high risk was presented on a case by case basis.

123. To my recollection, we never had a case where we felt that installing a sprinkler was appropriate and other effective measures to mitigate the risk were usually adopted.

124. I have been asked for the purposes of this statement whether any consideration was given to the evacuation of disabled or vulnerable residents. The allocation of properties to residents was the responsibility of the RBKC. To the best of my knowledge, the RBKC did not have a policy restricting the floor height of properties allocated to vulnerable residents.

125. However, Grenfell Tower had a "stay put" policy which was based on the concept of compartmentalisation. It was not therefore anticipated that residents would have to evacuate their flat unless the fire was in their flat, in which case they were advised to leave the flat, close the front door and call the LFB.

126. Nevertheless, if a resident had raised fire safety concerns, we would have investigated the issue and where necessary advised Carl Stokes and Associates.

We also would have encouraged that resident to take up a Home Fire Safety Visit by the LFB.

Conclusion:

127. Aside from the information I have provided above, I have no further knowledge of whether the fire safety measures at Grenfell Tower were compliant with the relevant building regulations, fire regulations, British Standards and other legislation, guidance and industry practice. Furthermore, I have no further knowledge of the ways in which Grenfell Tower was intended to be resistant to fire spread as this would be outside of my technical expertise. What I can say is that no one told me that there were other non-compliances or issues with fire spread.

Inspections

128. A fundamental change that came with the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 was that it abandoned the need for fire certificates in favour of a risk-based approach to fire safety. This meant that FRAs needed to be conducted by "Responsible Persons," normally building owners and those in control of premises.

129. Therefore, following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the TMO was required as part of its management function to ensure FRAs were undertaken and documented for all communal areas across its stock.

130. I will now explain what fire inspections were carried out at Grenfell Tower following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

131. In late 2008 / early 2009 the TMO, RBKC and LFEPA entered into discussions about the suitability and sufficiency of the TMO's FRA programme (**JW/37, 'TMO: Health and Safety Annual Report 2011/12': TMO10031072**). These discussions resulted in a joint decision to procure specialist consultants to undertake FRAs across the stock and adopt a risk-based approach to the FRA programme. Properties were designated into different potential risk categories,

being high, medium or low. The LFB and the RBKC were consulted on the criteria applied to identify the potential risk presented by each block.

132. Initially Salvus Consulting held the contract with the TMO for carrying out the High Risk Premises Assessment Programme. I recall that representatives from Salvus were introduced to the LFB and the LFB approved their approach and proposed proforma.

133. It was agreed that the LFB would accompany Salvus' assessors on selected FRA visits. My recollection is that Collette O'Hara and other LFB colleagues attended when the first assessment in the programme was undertaken. I also recall that these LFB Inspecting Team Officers attended a number of the initial regular progress meetings with the fire consultants so they were able to monitor progress, identify issues, make recommendations for actions and ensure that agreed standards were being applied consistently.

134. We would have begun receiving completed FRAs by late 2009 and would have started to complete outstanding actions from the high risk FRA programme immediately. Around this time we were focussing on training estate staff, neighbourhood officers and community officers to recognise issues that were emerging out of the FRAs and to take action to proactively address these and where possible prevent a recurrence and to escalate issues as necessary.

135. At the commencement of the High Risk FRA programme one of the commitments we gave to the LFB was that we would evaluate the performance of our Fire Risk Consultant. This was jointly undertaken by the TMO and RBKC at the conclusion of the programme in February 2010 and it was decided that we would undertake a procurement exercise to appoint a Fire Risk Assessor for the medium and low risk phases of the programme.

136. Salvus and a number of other qualified companies submitted tenders and all interviews were conducted jointly with RBKC, who had requested to be involved in the appointment process. I recall that we interviewed about five to six organisations and in August 2010 Carl Stokes & Associates ("CSA") was identified by TMO and RBKC as the preferred consultant and appointed.

137. Carl Stokes was an ex-fire officer with awareness of the legislation and LFB requirements. My understanding was that he also had experience in undertaking FRAs on the full range of residential buildings including high-rise, sheltered and temporary accommodation and street properties. It was agreed that Carl had the right knowledge, competence, experience and enthusiasm to be a good partner for the TMO. He was also known to us as he had been a sub-consultant of Salvus and had already completed FRAs on many of the potentially high-risk blocks. I recall that the TMO's Quantity Surveyor, Janet Rhymes, drafted the paperwork for the procurement and appointment.

138. Whilst the LFB were not directly involved in the procurement of CSA, they were aware of who we were appointing and had seen the FRAs that Carl had completed for Salvus and I do not recall any concerns being raised.

139. Throughout the entirety of our working relationship I never had any concerns regarding Carl Stokes' competence. I was aware that he elected not to be on many of the professional registers, however when I raised this with him he assured me that he did not feel he would gain anything from these memberships. He nevertheless assured me that he proactively arranged his own continuing professional development. I was aware that Carl regularly attended seminars, legal updates and briefings in fire safety as he would often provide me with feedback and a summary of the information presented and outline any potential impact it might have on the TMO.

140. Initially it was intended that Carl Stokes would carry out all of the FRAs for the medium risk properties and a further procurement for the low risk programme would then be undertaken. However, his role changed over time and the default position became that if we had an issue that might be classified as a fire safety risk, more often than not we consulted CSA. Carl's remit was the common areas of properties only, however he had a helpful nature and would often make comments on matters outside of this remit.

141. Because the FRA programme was ongoing, there were FRA actions outstanding at any given time. Nevertheless, as an organisation we endeavoured to complete the actions required as quickly as possible. We kept track of outstanding items

arising from the FRA programme by producing and monitoring an FRA Action Tracker (**JW/27:**). This was an excel spreadsheet outlining the risk identified, the action to be taken, the team and individual responsible for completing that action, the due date for action completion, what action had been taken and the actual completion date. All actions were marked as either partially complete or fully completed.

142. I recall occasionally thinking that some of the fire safety arrangements identified as being issues by Carl Stokes in his Significant Findings and Action Plan were in place for a reason (**JW/29: TMO10013196**). For example, the absence of smoke seals in the lift lobby doors at Grenfell Tower was a decision made by Building Control. My understanding was that due to the need for the powered lobby ventilation system to draw inlet air from the stairway, it was recommended that "smoke seals" were not included in the doors between the stairway and lobby to enable the system to operate at full efficiency. Consequently, Rydon fitted intumescent strips in lieu of the smoke seals.

143. I had no reason or expertise to doubt any of the findings in the FRAs produced by Carl Stokes. There was an assumption made by Carl and myself that arrangements at our premises which were not negatively commented on by the LFB following audit were deemed by them to be satisfactory. The LFB knew of this as they requested and received copies of Carl Stokes' Fire Risk Assessments, which explicitly recorded this assumption. By way of example, in the 20 June 2016 FRA Carl Stokes commented:

"The fire officers did not comment either at the time of the audit or in any correspondence after the audit about the building layout, the means of escape routes, compartmentation etc. Nor were there any comments about the positioning or sitting of the fixed systems within the building, only about the maintenance of the systems. No adverse comments were received either about the management policies, procedures and arrangements in place within this building at the time of the audit. Therefore it has been assumed that the Fire Authority were completely satisfied with these arrangements at the time of the audit and there have been no changes to the residential part of this premises or the TMO's management policies

or procedures since the above Fire Safety audit was undertaken" (**JW/21: TMO10017285**).

144. Additionally, we reached an agreement with the LFB that where they audited one of our blocks and found no issues or concerns that they would write us a letter stating that what they had found was "broadly compliant" / that there was "no significant failure to comply with the Regulations" . We have received a number of these letters for a variety of blocks over the years.

145. I recall that significantly fewer recommendations were made in respect of the properties falling into the medium risk FRA category. By September 2011 the low risk FRA programme had commenced and by July 2012 only two properties in the programme had not yet been assessed and in both cases there had been difficulties obtaining access which were being addressed.

146. Ultimately this extensive FRA programme highlighted a number of fire risks within our stock which we were determined to address. One example that I recall is that residents in some blocks were propping open communal fire doors and removing the self-closing devices from their front doors. We requested a letter from the LFB on their headed paper because we were confident that if residents could clearly see that our requests were supported by the LFB they might be more likely to comply. However I recall that the LFB were not keen to get involved in matters they considered to be resident management issues

147. Once this initial FRA programme was completed, I continued to manage the ongoing permanent FRA programme on behalf of the TMO. CSA produced comprehensive FRAs for all of the properties that he visited.

148. The process was that I would identify a property and Carl would attend and send to me an FRA report and a Significant Findings and Action Sheet. I would then extract the relevant information and log them as actions on "W2", our Civica Electronic Document and Record Management System. Each action would be assigned to the appropriate team, who would be advised of the recommended timeframe for completion. That team would then undertake the work and update the system by describing the action as partially or fully complete and by adding

any relevant notes or evidence and returning to the Health and Safety team. We would then close down the action.

149. In recent years we replaced the document management system and introduced a workflow in Microsoft's Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).

150. I monitored progress of the actions and only my colleague and I had the ability to shut an action down when fully completed. However, as described earlier in this statement, I was employed by the TMO as a safety adviser to the organisation. The organisation was structured so that most actions arising out of FRAs were carried out by the Operations Department. I rarely carried out any of the actions myself.

151. The number of actions to be completed arising from the FRAs fluctuated and inevitably at times there was a high level of outstanding actions. I found this could be challenging to resolve because, as mentioned earlier, in most cases the actions had not been assigned to me for completion. I often queried why actions had not been completed with the responsible team and was given a variety of explanations as to why they could not be completed more quickly.

152. Despite this challenge, I feel confident in saying that Adrian and I were always committed to improving the FRA programme and fire safety more generally across the stock. I have endeavoured to provide some examples of this below.

153. In July 2015 I produced a Health and Safety High Level Exception Report for the Operations Health and Safety meeting in which I recorded that a more meaningful breakdown of outstanding FRA actions was required so that we were better able to see the detail of what work programme would be required to clear those actions (**JW/38, '31 July 2015 Minutes of Health & Safety Committee meeting': TMO10010039**).

154. Also in July 2015 I produced a Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Report in which I reported that a substantial amount of work had been undertaken to ensure fire safety in the stock (**JW/39, '08 July 2015 Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Report': TMO10009539**). This work included the ongoing FRA

programme, works to address non-compliant lessee flat entrance doors, regular inspections of communal areas to ensure they were hazard free, substantial increases in the percentage of dwellings with hard-wired automatic fire detection, investigation of all fires, close liaison with the LFB, works to address hoarding and an increase in the availability of fire safety information and guidance to residents. The consequence of these efforts was that by April 2016 I was able to advise the Health and Safety Committee that there had been a significant drop in the number of outstanding FRA Actions (**JW/40, '12 April 2016 Minutes of Health & Safety Committee': TMO10012811**).

155. Around this time it was also agreed by us that it was time to review our fire strategy to ensure that it remained compliant with legislation and best practice. As part of this we agreed to increase the frequency of our FRAs and FRA reviews. In particular, consideration was given to undertaking the comprehensive reviews of potentially high risk blocks on a two yearly rather than three yearly basis.

156. From my perspective, I gave support to those responsible for closing out actions. I also escalated the issue of outstanding FRA actions to my Line Managers at the relevant times. I specifically raised this as a concern with Barbara Matthews and other senior officers. I felt that Barbara was very proactive in supporting my concerns. I recall she asked for a report on what was being done to close out actions at one of her first Health and Safety Committee meetings. This became a standing agenda item with a report detailing progress with completing FRA actions submitted to each meeting, which helped to focus where the difficulties were and resulted in the number of actions reducing significantly.

157. The FRAs themselves were shared as required within the organisation. The RBKC did not receive copies as routine although the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meetings were copied to the Corporate Health & Safety Manager. Furthermore, progress in relation to outstanding FRAs and FRA actions was included in the mid-year and year-end reports on the TMO's performance, which were presented to the RBKC Scrutiny Committee and in the annual TMO Health and Safety Report which was shared with the corporate Health and Safety Manager. Extracts were also included in his Annual Report which was sent to the RBKC's Health and Safety Committee.

158. In more recent years the LFB requested copies of FRAs, particularly if they were planning an audit. After the fire at Adair Tower in October 2015, I recall observing that the LFB's approach seemed to be stricter in terms of their willingness to use enforcement techniques. However, I do not recall the LFB ever making any comments of such significance that we had any reason to doubt the suitability and competency of Carl Stokes or the FRAs prepared by him. I am confident that if any issues were raised about the FRAs we discussed these with Carl Stokes and the recommendations made were always taken on board.

159. I have considered whether there were any specific issues that occurred at Grenfell that may have created risks that were not covered in the FRAs. There were occasions where we would have anti-social behaviour within the staircase and sometimes items were left that were potentially obstructive however these issues would always be addressed as a priority by the Neighbourhood Team who would contact us if they needed any advice and if necessary we would consult Carl Stokes.

160. In respect of fire hydrants and water pressure around the Tower, it was my understanding that monitoring these factors was the responsibility of the LFB. I therefore would have assumed that any issues that arose would have been addressed within the relationship between the LFB and Thames Water and then fed back to us by the LFB at our liaison meetings. I cannot recall any concerns being conveyed.

161. Other than the matters discussed above, I have no further knowledge of any inspections carried out during and after the 2012-2016 renovations.

Governance/Management

162. Below I have endeavoured to explain how the relationships between the different persons and organizations responsible for fire safety in the properties managed by the TMO worked in practice.

163. The RBKC is the freeholder for all of its tenanted stock, which includes over 9,500 dwellings and in excess of 600 blocks, including 19 high rise tower blocks.

164. In April 1995 the TMO was incorporated by the RBKC with the objective of managing its housing stock. Through a contract referred to as the 'Modular Management Agreement' ("the MMA") the RBKC agreed for the TMO to exercise several of its management functions. It was always my understanding that the RBKC retained a monitoring obligation under the MMA, which was exercised by its Corporate Health and Safety Advisor and its main Health and Safety Coordinating Committee, which was succeeded by the Bi-Borough Health and Safety Committee.

165. My understanding is that under the MMA the TMO was responsible for all major works, planned maintenance and repairs within the RBKC's tenanted stock. This included repairs necessary for compliance with fire safety legislation.

166. Since 2005, the relevant fire safety legislation has been the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO). I recall receiving training on this legislation from one of the fire authorities and via professional journals when it was introduced. My understanding has always been that the 'Responsible Person' for the RBKC's tenanted stock, as defined in that Order, was both RBKC and the TMO.

167. As at 14 June 2017, there was one other Assistant Safety Advisor, Adrian Bowman, who had been with the TMO for many years. Adrian also held a NEBOSH Certificate and membership to the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. I reported to Barbara Matthews, who was the TMO Director with ultimate executive responsibility for health and safety, and Adrian Bowman reported to me. Prior to Barbara joining the TMO in 2015, I reported to Anthony Parkes, who was Barbara's predecessor. The Facilities Coordinator, Cyril Morris, also reported to me and had done so since joining the TMO in 2011.

168. I have never been a member of the TMO Executive or Senior Management Teams. The reports I prepared on safety performance described below would usually be presented at Executive and Board meetings by members of the Executive Team.

169. As explained above, Adrian and my roles were advisory in nature. We did not hold operational line management responsibility. In practice, the day-to-day handling of health and safety issues, such as undertaking communal area inspections, were completed by the Estate Services Teams which fell under Neighbourhood Management, although Adrian did undertake a programme of communal area inspections. In addition to this, the regular maintenance and inspection of matters such as fire safety equipment, fire safety systems and lifts was undertaken by specialist contractors under the direction of the Contracts Management Team. Both Neighbourhood Management and Contract Management were part of the Operations Department.

170. By way of example, if a Fire Risk Assessment ("FRA") identified that a new door needed to be fitted to a property, Adrian and I would not be responsible for obtaining and fitting a new door. This would be done through the Operations department. It was also not our role to capture where disabled and vulnerable people might be living in the Tower. This type of information, where available, was kept by the Neighbourhood Management Teams, which were part of the Operations department.

171. Occasionally, in extreme cases, issues were escalated to Adrian and myself by the Neighbourhood and Estate Teams. Where we were unable to resolve issues, we would escalate fire safety concerns to our Fire Risk Assessor and request that he investigate and make recommendations. We would also, where appropriate, seek the view of the LFB or request that they make a Home Fire Safety Visit. Additionally, the TMO employed two Neighbourhood Support Officers who would periodically report "real time" fire safety issues to Adrian and me.

172. Like most safety advisers in organisations of this nature and size, Adrian and my role was to have a general understanding of all aspects of occupational health and safety. The potential hazards that we might be asked to advise on were so wide ranging that we would not be expected, nor would it be practicable for us, to be specialists in all complex areas like asbestos, legionella or fire. We were, therefore, responsible for providing advice and guidance, and for seeking the views of experts and enforcement bodies when complex matters arose.

173. For any area of health and safety where a greater level of specialist expertise was required, the TMO instructed experts to highlight and advise on any emerging issues. As discussed earlier in this statement, from 2010 onwards and at the time of the fire, the TMO contracted with CSA to undertake FRAs and to provide expert advice on fire risks.

174. As Health and Safety Advisors, Adrian and I monitored the health and safety performance of the TMO through various means. I gathered relevant information from sources such as the LFB, reports of fires, accidents, dangerous occurrences and changes in legislation and presented this at regular meetings with the TMO Health and Safety Committee. I also attended bi-monthly meetings with the London Fire Brigade ("LFB") and quarterly meetings with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea ("RBKC") where information was shared.

175. The TMO Health and Safety Committee met every two months and was chaired by Barbara Matthews, the Executive Team Member with responsibility for health and safety. Prior to 2015 the meetings were chaired by Anthony Parkes. In order to give that Committee profile, the Director of Operations, Sacha Jevans, was also a member as were several senior managers and employee Safety Representatives. This Health and Safety Committee reported to the Executive Team.

176. Every two months, the LFB Fire Safety Team Leader for Kensington and Chelsea, a local LFB Station Manager and myself took part in LFB and TMO Liaison meetings. Sometimes these meetings would also be attended by Claire Williams or colleagues from our Supported Housing Team. These meetings were a formal arrangement with an Agenda and formal minutes produced. I recall using these meetings to push for familiarisation visits by the LFB, particularly for our tower blocks.

177. Matters discussed in these meetings included recent fires, LFB audits, familiarisation visits, FRA issues, statistics on attendance at lift shut-ins, false fire alarm activations, LFB initiatives and any other issues or concerns. The draft minutes of these meetings were sent to the LFB for comment and occasionally they would ask us to reword points prior to circulation.

178. Once the refurbishment project commenced in 2012, Grenfell Tower became a regular agenda item at these bi-monthly liaison meetings. Having reviewed our records I am advised that the LFB made at least 15 familiarisation visits to Grenfell Tower in the few years before the fire.

179. The members of the Health and Safety Committee assisted me in preparing and updating the TMO's Health and Safety Policy. This Policy was presented to the Executive Officers and TMO Board for review every two years. The policy was signed on behalf of the TMO by the Chief Executive Officer, Robert Black, following review and scrutiny by the TMO Board. The Committee also assisted me in maintaining the TMO Fire Safety Policy, the Health and Safety sections of the TMO Staff Handbook and many health and safety policies and procedures.

180. I also produced an Annual Health and Safety Report and Action Plan, which outlined the current strategy for the TMO, its performance over the last year and its initiatives for managing and improving safety (**JW/41, '14 June 2016 Health & Safety Action Plan 16/17': TMO10007728**). This Plan was discussed with the Health and Safety Committee, the Executive Team and the TMO Board before the full report and an Executive Summary was presented to the RBKC Corporate Health and Safety Manager. The feedback we received from the RBKC's Advisor was then used to help identify any additional priorities for the upcoming year.

181. Another way in which we monitored the health and safety performance of the TMO was through several meaningful Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators ("KPIs"). Relevant KPIs included the number of inspections undertaken, the number of accidents including RIDDOR-reported accidents, the number of incidents of violence or abuse against staff and contractors, the numbers of fires, the number of Fire Risk Assessments ("FRAs") and FRA reviews and the number of enforcement actions taken against the TMO.

182. I also produced information to be included in the Chief Executive's report to the TMO Board. This report included a section on safety, the first draft of which I would prepare for Robert Black. He would often discuss the detail of what I had written with me prior to his presentation to the Board. I found that he was

interested in what I was doing, would ask questions and make suggestions in respect of what I was reporting to him.

183. The health and safety performance of the TMO was monitored primarily by the RBKC. We welcomed this scrutiny and were always looking to improve health and safety for the sake of the residents and the staff.

184. Under the MMA the RBKC was required to monitor the TMO through a performance management framework. This framework looked at the activities and achievements of the TMO through a suite of performance indicators and a programme of audits. My understanding is that the RBKC also had an overview of projects and initiatives to ensure that both of the organizations' corporate priorities, the government policy and the wishes of residents were met.

185. The programme of audits were supplemented by mid and end-of-year reviews of the TMO's housing management performance across several Key Performance Indicators, including fire safety. These audits and reviews were examinations of our health and safety systems and performance and would be based more on management systems rather than actual inspections. The reviews offered an opportunity to reflect on main areas of work and progress and to highlight these and the reports were presented to the Council's Scrutiny Committee.

186. At the time of the fire the TMO had in place a Fire Safety Strategy, which was an overarching strategy document outlining how fire safety was to be approached by the organization **(JW/42, 'June 2017 TMO Fire Safety Strategy': TMO10017036)**. I produced the first draft which was reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee before it went to the Executive Team. I am aware that there are many draft versions of this Strategy as it was often reviewed and discussed however a version was always in force at any given time.

187. The Fire Safety Strategy enshrined the "Stay Put" policy for those properties designed with fire compartmentation in place. I have always understood that buildings designed with sufficient fire compartmentation in place, such as Grenfell Tower, were designed and built in a way such that if a fire broke out within a particular compartment within that building, that compartment should

contain the fire for sufficient time to allow the LFB to attend and fight the fire, making an assessment of what action is required and where necessary initiating a partial or total evacuation. For this reason, it would generally be safe for residents outside of the compartment where the fire broke out to initially stay put. However, residents who preferred to evacuate should do so.

188. All high rise properties in the RBKC's stock had the "stay put" policy in place. Although, it was the TMO that informed residents that this was the policy for a particular premises, the "stay put" policy had been accepted practice for many years and has been endorsed by Fire and Rescue Services including the LFB, the National Fire Chiefs Council and British Standards. It was also considered to represent best practice in the "Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats guide" produced by the Local Government Association **(JW/34:)**.

189. The appropriate fire strategy for a building was determined by the Fire Risk Assessment process. It was not something that the TMO would have come up with of its own accord as we did not have in-house fire risk assessors or fire consultants. None of our properties with the "Stay Put" policy had in place an alternative fire strategy.

190. In November 2016 it was agreed between the TMO Health and Safety Committee and the RBKC that the TMO Fire Safety Strategy would be revised **(JW/32: TMO10015595)**. The main changes we intended to implement were a more proactive approach to the installation of self-closing devices to flat doors across the stock, an increase in the frequency of FRAs and a requirement for Fire Action Notices in the communal entrance lobbies of all blocks. I provide the history behind these changes later in this statement.

191. At the time of the fire in June 2017, the updated TMO Fire Safety Strategy was in its final draft stage and I recall that we had a final review meeting the day before the fire **(JW/42: TMO10017036)**. The updated Strategy took longer to implement than expected due to lengthy discussions that took place between Barbara Mathews and the RBKC in respect of the process and programme for retrofitting self-closing devices to every flat entrance door in the stock. I was not involved in these discussions however my understanding is that the TMO

recommended completing the retrofitting programme within three years whereas the RBKC required the programme to be completed over five years.

192. The Fire Safety Strategy was widely distributed within the organization and identified the management actions in place for fire safety management. As I have explained, it was my role to identify the actions however the actions were typically discharged elsewhere in the organization.

193. Below I discuss my knowledge and understanding of any other major fires that occurred in Grenfell Tower or any other buildings under the authority of the RBKC. Every significant fire that occurred in the RBKC's tenanted stock was investigated by the TMO and reported to the LFB. We would then liaise closely with the LFB about the probable cause of the fire to enable us to identify and instigate any actions necessary to prevent a recurrence.

194. The details of any fires within our stock, and serious fires outside of our stock, were also discussed regularly in Health and Safety Committee meetings and with the LFB in the bi-monthly liaison meetings. Furthermore, a summary of fires within the stock was included in the TMO's Annual Health and Safety Report.

Grenfell Tower fire in 2010

195. In April 2010, a fire broke out at Grenfell Tower as a result of someone setting fire to recycling /rubbish which had been left in a lift lobby for collection. The LFB attended and extinguished this fire and nobody was injured.

196. I recall that during the fire, smoke in the common lobby had not been extracted as it should have been due to a problem with several of the seals around vents in the Automatic Opening Vent (AOV) system. The AOV system was serviced under a Planned Preventative Maintenance contract and I recall being advised by the TMO Contract Manager that an issue with the smoke seals around the vents had been identified prior to this fire and a repair had been scheduled for the Monday following the 2010 fire.

197. The AOV system in place at the time of this fire was subsequently replaced during the 2012-2016 refurbishment and was not therefore the system in place in June 2017.

198. Following this 2010 fire, I recall it being suggested by the LFB that the lifts at Grenfell Tower did not work during their attendance. Specifically, the LFB suggested that the override switch which allowed the firefighters to take exclusive control of the lift had failed. We found this very alarming and immediately instructed our specialist lift contractors to attend and investigate. They found no fault with the operation of the lift or the fire control arrangements which worked as they should when tested and so we arranged to meet the LFB at the Tower to investigate further the concerns they had raised.

199. During this visit it was agreed that the firefighters would demonstrate to us how they had attempted to take control of the lift on the night. From this exercise we learnt that not only had the firefighters understood incorrectly how to operate the override switch but there was a possibility that they had overloaded the lift during the fire by exceeding the safe working load with the number of firefighters combined with the volume of heavy equipment.

200. Following this visit with the LFB we were comforted to know that the lifts had in fact been operational at the time of the fire and that they were now clear about how attending crews should operate the lift.

201. We subsequently received correspondence from a resident, Tunde Awoderu, requesting a copy of a report he alleged had been produced by the LFB in respect of this fire (**JW/43, '14 November 2012 Email from Grenfell Tower Leasehold Association RE: Fire Safety and Leasehold flat entrance doors':**). My understanding is that we never received such a report from the LFB and one does not exist. I am aware that it is possible to request a fire investigation report from the LFB following an incident however these reports are often delayed and provide limited information due to them being standard format and heavily redacted. I have learnt through experience that more comprehensive information can generally be obtained through email requests to the relevant LFB Station Manager.

202. We did investigate this fire internally and the information collated was sent to Collette O'Hara of the LFB. We then provided Mr Awoderu with the information we had on the fire in a letter from our Project Manager, Paul Dunkerton, in response to his email in November 2012 (**JW/44, '20 November 2012 Letter from Paul Dunkerton (TMO) to Tunde Awoderu':**).

Power surges at Grenfell Tower in 2013

203. In April 2013 there were a series of power surges at Grenfell Tower. This issue was largely handled by Peter Maddison and his team and I had no input in this.

Adair Tower fire in 2015

204. The only other notable high-rise fire I am aware of in the RBKC's tenanted stock was a non-accidental fire that occurred on 31 October 2015 at Adair Tower.

205. Earlier that month I had attended an inspection of Adair Tower conducted by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority ("LFEPA") (**JW/15: TMO10033146**). This inspection resulted in a Deficiency Notice being received by the TMO on 22 October 2015 (**JW/45, '12 October 2015 Letter from LFEPA: Deficiency Notice':**).

206. If the TMO received a Deficiency Notice, we would set out the details of each identified deficiency and circulate the required actions to the relevant Senior Managers. We would also discuss the deficiencies in Health and Safety Committee and LFB liaison meetings. I would then check the system periodically to track the progress of outstanding matters. From experience, I know that while Deficiency Notices include recommended dates for compliance, the LFB specifically do not monitor an organization's progress and there is no formal process for completing or closing down Deficiency Notices with the LFB.

207. The Deficiency Notice received in respect of Adair Tower recorded that certain conditions in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 were being contravened at Adair Tower. Specifically, the protected route had been compromised by the fitting of doors that did not provide 30 minutes fire resistance

and the flat entrance doors were not all fitted with self-closing devices. The Notice recommended that the remedial steps outlined be completed by 28 March 2016 (**JW/45:**).

208. The door replacement programme of 2012 had focused primarily on the composition of flat entrance doors. If a door was deemed non-compliant then we would replace it and the new doors made by Manse Masterdor would incorporate a self-closer. However, there had been no programme to retrofit self-closers unless this was highlighted by the FRA. It was therefore clear to us following receipt of this Deficiency Notice that the self-closing devices were becoming a new focus of the LFB and would therefore likely become a wider industry issue.

209. Following receipt of this Deficiency Notice, Barbara Matthews agreed to discuss the matters raised with the RBKC however I assume this did not happen before the non-accidental fire that occurred at Adair Tower on 31 October 2015 nine days later. The LFB attended the fire, which had broken out in flat 15. Sixteen residents were treated for smoke inhalation and all were released from hospital that same day.

210. The fire strategy for Adair Tower was "stay put." Unfortunately, smoke had been able to enter in the internal communal areas of the building due to the affected flat door being left open upon evacuation. This caused some residents to panic and open their doors and/or evacuate. Two residents were rescued from a private balcony by the LFB. At a certain point during the fire response the LFB decided to change the strategy and evacuate the entire block.

211. On 24 November 2015, I circulated a paper to the Health and Safety Committee on this fire (**JW/46, '24 November 2015 Minutes of Health & Safety Committee meeting': TMO10011452**).

212. . Around the same time Barbara Mathews confirmed that the FRA for the Tower had been reviewed and work was being done to remedy significant findings, which had been put into an action plan. An article was also included in Link, the residents' magazine produced by the TMO, to remind residents about the "Stay

Put" strategy (**JW/47, 'Winter 2015 Edition of 'LINK' magazine – Article on 'Stay Put' strategy': TMO10031099**).

213. In December 2015, the LFB issued an Enforcement Notice in respect of Adair Tower (**JW/48, '23 December 2015 Letter from LFEPA: Deficiency Notice':**). Then, in January 2016 an Enforcement Notice was issued in respect of Hazlewood Tower on the basis that it was of identical design to Adair Tower (**JW/49, '18 January 2016 Letter from LFEPA: Deficiency Notice': TMO10011891**). The two blocks had been audited at the same time.

214. Following receipt of these Notices, the TMO appointed fire specialists Exova Warrington Fire to investigate the ventilation arrangements at both Adair and Hazlewood Towers and to make recommendations for how the specified requirements could be met. Exova produced a report which contained specific recommendations in respect of dry riser, staircase and flat entrance doors, the ground floor door surrounds, compartmentation, ventilation, fire action notices and signage. Exova presented this report to the TMO Executive Team and it was agreed that all of their recommendations would be progressed (**JW/50, '12 April 2016 Minutes of Health & Safety Committee': TMO10012811**).

215. As a result of the ensuing flat entrance door inspection programme, it became clear that most of the flat entrance doors at Adair and Hazlewood were not sufficiently robust and therefore it was agreed that all would be replaced. The front entrance doors at Adair and Hazlewood Towers had not been installed as part of the Manse Masterdor replacement programme.

216. In August 2016 Rebecca Burton, the LFB Inspecting Team Leader, emailed me confirming that the LFB Fire Engineer was content with the proposals for Adair Tower and for the ventilation works outlined by Exova to be completed as detailed (**JW/51, '05 August 2016 Email thread RE: Adair Tower - approval from LFB engineer': TMO10014078**).

217. In respect of the ventilation system at the Towers, Rebecca Burton advised that the LFB considered the ventilation to the lobby to be below that which would normally be expected however as the TMO was providing a second protected

staircase by enclosing the accommodation staircase, it was to be presumed that at least one would remain passable in the event of a fire. She noted that without fire modelling this could not be guaranteed and suggested we investigate further with our fire engineer and risk assessor. We did investigate further but the fire engineer remained of a view that this modelling would be of limited value.

218. By September 2016 the works required by the Enforcement Notice in respect of Adair Tower had been successfully completed. The block was audited on 29 September 2016 by the LFB's Rebecca Burton and John Simmons with the result that the reviewed FRA was approved (**JW/52, '25 October 2016 Health, Safety & Facilities – Team Update': TMO10015098**). A subsequent on site audit was conducted at Hazlewood Tower and letters were then received from the LFB for each block confirming that the Enforcement Notices had been complied with.

Lakanal House fire in 2009

219. Though not a property within the RBKC's Housing stock, a high rise fire that I recall as being of huge importance to the housing world was the fire that broke out at Lakanal House on 3 July 2009.

220. Lakanal House was a 14 storey high rise residential building with a "stay put" policy in place. My understanding is that the fire on 3 July 2009 originated from a faulty television and devastatingly six people died as a result.

221. Despite the fire occurring in 2009, the Coroner's recommendations to the London Borough of Southwark were not released until 28 March 2013. We subsequently hosted a series of briefings from fire experts on the findings of the Coroner. I recall that the Coroner did not question the appropriateness of the "stay put" policy but recommended that it be more clearly communicated to residents.

222. A further risk identified by the Coroner was the scissor construction in high rise buildings. To ensure that this was not a problem for us we reviewed all of the RBKC high rise premises in our portfolio and found that none of our buildings possessed this type of construction. In doing this exercise we focussed particularly on Trellick Tower, which was our tallest and most complex building

in that it contained maisonettes and there is quite a variation in layout of different floors. No issues with Grenfell Tower were identified as part of this review.

223. In July 2013 I produced a briefing note on the fire at Lakanal House which specifically outlined our response to the recommendations made by the Coroner. I emailed this note to Robert Black with the idea that he would discuss it in his meeting with the Council's Chief Housing Officer and the Cabinet Member for Housing (**JW/53, '22 July 2013 Email from Janice Wray RE: FW: Copy of email sent to Cllr.F-M re possible fire issue at Longlands':**).

224. In December 2013 I attended a liaison meeting with the LFB in which I advised them of the results of our stock review (**JW/54, '17 December 2013 – Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S': TMO10023367**). I also provided Nick Comery of the LFB with a copy of our Fire Safety Strategy for his information and comment.

Shepherd's Court fire in 2016:

225. Another fire which was not within the RBKC's Housing stock but which was notable to the housing world occurred at Shepherd's Court Tower Block on 19 August 2016. This block was owned and managed by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

226. I understand that in April 2017, almost a year later, Laura Johnson of the RBKC forwarded to Robert Black a letter from the LFB in respect of external fire spread through external cladding and glazing (**JW/19: TMO10016600**). Robert forwarded this letter to me and I forwarded in to various TMO team members.

227. To address our concerns about the contents of this letter, I contacted our Fire Risk Assessor Carl Stokes and sought confirmation that we did not have any blocks with cladding of the nature described in the LFB's letter (**JW/20: TMO10016666**). In particular I was concerned about Grenfell Tower which had recently some external cladding panels fitted during the refurbishment. Carl advised me that he had investigated thoroughly the details of the installation at Grenfell Tower with Rydon on site and had been advised that these complied with

the requirements of the Building Regulations. Robert then sent this information to Laura Johnson stating that it might be useful to update the scrutiny committee.

Trellick Tower in 2017:

228. On 19 April 2017 there was a fire at Trellick Tower. I did not attend this fire as Adrian Bowman was the Duty Technical Manager that evening. I recall that Adrian contacted me and informed me that our Duty Estate Caretaker, Pat Coughlin, was liaising with the LFB and the RBKC's Duty Officer on site. I therefore passed this information onto Robert Black and the other senior managers. I then wrote a report on the outlining the events of the fire and action on the days following the fire which was presented to the TMO Board and the RBKC's Scrutiny Committee.

Communication with residents

229. The TMO had a formal complaints process however I was not involved in this as the TMO had a designated Complaints Team. My involvement with residents was limited to the matters outlined below.

230. Throughout my employment at the TMO, I have visited Grenfell Tower on many occasions. As stated, my remit was far broader than just fire safety and these visits could be for a number of reasons.

231. It was not my role to undertake day-to-day inspections of properties, which fell to the Estate team. However, occasionally resident concerns or complaints that related to matters of health and safety would be escalated to me, usually by the Complaints or Estate Management teams.

Access to the roof:

232. I recall that the TMO once received reports of people overcoming the lock on a security gate that provided access to the steps up to the roof level. I visited the Tower with the local Housing Manager to investigate what might be done to implement a change to prevent people getting unauthorized access. It has always been necessary for the roof to be secure to protect the plant stored there and to

protect residents and the public from risk. To resolve the issue we altered the design of the outer gate and ensured it was secured by two Gerda locks. I then post-inspected the work on completion to satisfy myself that the issue had been resolved effectively.

Access to the Tower:

233. Another complaint I recall receiving from the residents of Grenfell Tower arose both prior to and during the refurbishment. Residents were concerned that contractors were parking their vehicles where they should not be, which could have caused problems for emergency vehicles should they have needed to access the Tower.

234. I raised the issue with one of the then LFB Station Managers and I recall him saying he would have no problem obtaining access because if necessary he would "bounce any vehicles out of the way". Despite this reassurance, I had anxiety about access and I raised this with the Estates Team who I know tried to make sure that the area was kept clear through regular inspections.

National Grid works:

235. A further issue I recall being referred to me for comment was the works that began at Grenfell Tower in late 2016 by the gas utility provider, National Grid Gas, which several residents raised concern about creating a fire risk in the stairwell at the Tower.

236. By way of background, in November 2016 I was made aware of a gas leak at Grenfell Tower, which required that one of the gas risers be replaced by National Grid Gas (**JW/55, '15 November 2016 – 29 November 2016 Email tread RE: FW: Grenfell Tower – Gas Reinstatement': TMO10015352**). I was advised that National Grid had difficulties finding a compliant route for the gas riser as the ventilation system restricted where the gas pipes could be run. National Grid's solution was to run the riser through the communal stairwell from the basement to the top floor.

237. While the management of this issue was dealt with by the TMO's Operations Department, they asked me to advise on whether the works created a fire risk. As an occupational health and safety advisor, this fell outside of my expertise and so my response was to instruct Carl Stokes to carry out an inspection of the works and highlight any concerns.

238. I recall that Carl advised us to ensure that Building Control were involved in and had approved any works (**JW/55: TMO10015352**). My colleagues in the Operations department raised this with National Grid who informed us that they were not required to consult with Building Control or adhere to the Building Regulations because of their status as a utility company (**JW/56, '08 March 2017 Email RE: Seriously exposed newly installed gas pipe line throughout the entire staircase of Grenfell Tower poses extremely serious health and safety risk':**).

239. I recall finding this response very alarming and so I contacted Building Control to clarify their position. They advised that they would generally not be involved in these projects unless there was impact on the means of escape. I advised that the work was impacting the means of escape because the new riser was being installed in the single communal staircase. I requested they visit Grenfell Tower and investigate however Building Control appeared to feel that on balance they still did not need to be involved.

240. I recall that Carl Stokes had no specific concerns with the location of the riser provided that the pipework was located within a suitably fire-rated enclosure and all compartmentation breaches were made good to fire resisting standard. On 31 January 2017 Carl's report was sent to Harvey Smith of National Grid (**JW/57, '30 January 2017 Letter from C S Stokes and Associates Limited': TMO10016182**) (**JW/58, '31 January 2017 – 21 March 2017 Email thread RE: Grenfell Tower – Reinstatement Works':**) and I recall attending a meeting on 27 March 2017 in which National Grid confirmed that their intention was to install two hour fire rated boxing to enclose the gas riser (**JW/59, '24 March 2017 – 27 March 2017 Email thread RE: EXT || National Grid Works - KCTMO - Grenfell Tower / Chesterton Square': TMO10016455**) (**JW/60, '30 March 2017 Agenda item 8 Chief Executive's Report': TMO10016531**).

241. Understandably, the works continued to cause residents concern. However we were in a difficult position as National Grid were slow to respond to us, we had no contractual relationship with them and Building Control would not get involved. I recall residents raised a request for an independent assessment of the works however we had already instructed Carl to investigate and we had approached Building Control. This information was conveyed to residents on 28 March 2017 by Sacha Jevans (**JW/61, '28 March 2017 – Email RE: Grenfell Tower': TMO10016496**).

242. In a liaison meeting with the LFB on 29 March 2017, we discussed the National Grid works with the LFB and sought their opinion (**JW/62, 'TMO_E_00033143 29 March 2017 Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S':**). It was agreed that Robert McTague, Assistant Team Leader in the LFB's Fire Safety Team, would speak to the LFB engineers and report back to me. However I do not recall receiving any feedback from the LFB on this issue.

243. The National Grid works were still ongoing at the time of the fire on 20 June 2017.

244. In conclusion, I do not believe that I ever ignored a fire safety concern that was referred to me. I believe I always dealt with matters conscientiously and in a timely manner and provided a comprehensive response that could be forwarded to the complainant. That is not to say that sometimes there were limitations to what we could do, as is evidenced by the works carried out by National Grid.

Fire advice given to residents between 2012 and 14 June 2017

245. Fire risk assessments were available to residents on request however requests of this nature were uncommon. This could have been because we had a number of other systems in place for keeping residents informed on fire safety matters, which I have endeavoured to outline below.

246. Each new tenant received a letter from TMO, signed by myself and issued by either the Voids Officer or the Neighbourhood Team, advising them of the fire procedure and encouraging them to raise any concerns they had with us. Included

in this letter was a copy of an LFB leaflet on Home Fire Safety Visits, which encouraged them to take up a free independent Home Fire Safety Visit from the LFB.

247. We provided fire safety information to new and existing tenants and leaseholders on our website and through letters. Furthermore, regular fire safety information was included in the TMO's quarterly magazine "Link," which was hand delivered to all properties by a third party company. Fire Safety articles were also frequently included in "Home Ownership News" which was a regular newsletter for leaseholders.

248. Historically all of our written communications with residents about fire safety advice were provided only in English however we would always have had a communication translated if a resident requested this of us. We expected residents to read the information provided and alert us if they were unable to.

249. In December 2016 we installed Fire Action Notices at Grenfell Tower. These Notices were located in the communal areas of the block and provided information on fire procedure (**JW/29: TMO10015719**).

250. Finally, fire safety information was provided to residents through roadshows which were arranged by the TMO Resident Engagement Team. I can remember there being a roadshow on the Lancaster West Green in May 2016 which the LFB attended.

Conclusion

251. Following the fire the RBKC commissioned Turner and Townsend Project Management, a renowned professional services company, to undertake a new programme of Fire Risk Assessments across our stock. This programme confirmed that the appropriate fire strategy for all of the TMO's high rise properties and most of its medium rise properties was "stay put."

252. My understanding is that there have not been significant changes in the way in which the LFB familiarize themselves with properties, however they are now requesting more information about the types of lifts contained in high rise

buildings. Furthermore, the LFB continues to place a significant emphasis on self-closing devices on flat entrance doors.

253. As I explained at the start of this statement, I was employed as one of two safety advisers by the TMO. I am a qualified safety professional. I chose safety as my profession as I wanted to make a difference and help people be safe. However it is important to understand what my role required. I was never a part of the refurbishment project team.

254. The RBKC had nineteen high-rise buildings. All nineteen of these buildings would be designated on the Fire Risk Assessment programme as potential high risk. It would not have been practicable for me to be an expert on every single one of our towers, hence why we used a specialist fire consultant as well as specialists for all other health and safety risks.

255. The last FRA received by the TMO for Grenfell Tower said there was only a risk of "slight harm" with the control measures. I had no information to think any different and I did not and could not have ever foreseen the way the fire progressed on 14 June 2017. I have been shown accounts of firefighters who describe the fire as "unprecedented" and this does seem to have been the case.

256. I am truly devastated by what happened at Grenfell Tower and I am so sorry for those who have lost loved ones. I am a hard-working conscientious person and was always dedicated to my work. I investigated all concerns raised with my consulting experts and LFB as necessary and responded in detail, escalating concerns to senior colleagues as necessary.

257. We were always engaging with the LFB. Where changes and improvements were required I liaised with the relevant operational manager and requested that works be completed to the requisite standard and with the necessary degree of urgency. I always tried to ensure that works were completed and where there were delays, I escalated these.

258. I hope that those affected by this fire get some closure and answers they need from the Inquiry. I am committed to helping achieve this in any way I can.

I confirm this statement to be true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I confirm that I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed: [signature]

Dated: 7th February 2019

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