

Bi-monthly meeting – LFB Fire Safety & KCTMO H&S

4th March 2016 at 9.30am at Network Hub, Kensal Road.

Present:

LFB – Nick Davis – LFB Station Manager – Kensington & North Kensington

LFB – Rebecca Burton – LFB Fire Safety Team Leader

KCTMO – Janice Wray – Health, Safety & Facilities Manager

Notes of meeting

1. Attendance & apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Claire Williams. Janice advised that Janine Fitzgerald, TMO Senior Sheltered Housing Officer, and Alex Vaughan, TMO Community Alarm Centre Manager would be attending future meetings.

2. Matters Arising from previous minutes

- **Information Plates on high-rise buildings** – Nick and Janice had discussed the possibility of an information plate for Trellick Tower. However, it was agreed that this was not required as there is already a Premises Information Box which contains 2 sets of plans etc. as per a request from Nick's operational crews following the most recent familiarisation visit. (Janice added that this block has listed building status and so changes generally need approval from the Conversation Officer / English Heritage.)

3. Adair Tower – Enforcement Notice

Janice advised of progress with meeting the requirements of the Enforcement Notice. She confirmed that Exova Warringtonfire had been appointed to undertake the required investigation into the ventilation at both Adair and Hazlewood Towers. Their senior consultant had spoken with Rebecca to clarify LFB requirements and concerns and had also completed an inspection at each block. Exova were producing a report which would be presented to the LFB. Rebecca advised that she would need to consult the LFB's Fire Engineering Team on this report and any recommendations it makes.

Additionally, Janice advised that, following consultation with RBKC's Legal Services, an access procedure was being finalised in advance of the programme to retrofit self closing devices to flat entrance doors. (This should enable us to take legal action in cases where access is repeatedly withheld.) It is anticipated that this programme will start on site imminently.

The wording has been agreed for a Fire Action Notice but all signage would be installed once the outcome of the Exova report was clear - as potentially this could impact on directional signs etc.

The issue about ventilation in the means of escape staircase was being addressed by Exova.

Finally, the issues of dry riser inlet access and storage at roof level had been addressed immediately following the fire.

Nick asked if this would all be achieved within the timescale of the notices. Janice advised that we were unable to confirm the timeframe until we receive the Exova report, see what it requires and agree how it can best be procured. However, it was still the TMO's objective to work towards meeting the timescale if possible.

4. Fires in KCTMO Properties

Janice had been made aware of two fires within the stock since the previous meeting –

- On 11th Jan there had been a fire in a leasehold dwelling at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which was caused by the elderly resident smoking in bed. Unfortunately, she had not installed any smoke detectors in the flat. However, her carer was present when the fire broke out and alerted the TMO Porter who had entered the flat and rescued the resident. The resident has returned to the other flat she owns in this block and we have fitted some battery-operated alarms throughout this flat with her agreement. Other leaseholders at this block had raised a number of issues about the lack of an alarm in the common parts and had been reluctant to accept that this is not required in a stay put strategy block. Additionally, they were challenging the LFB about only having one appliance now based at Kings Road.

Janice had now received the LFB Fire Report but, unfortunately, this referred to the wrong flat number [REDACTED] and, to date, all attempts to get this corrected had been fruitless.

- On the 22nd January LFB had attended [REDACTED]. There was a very minor fire here caused by careless disposal of smokers materials by the sheltered tenant's carer. Janice confirmed that this had been raised with the carer.

This gentleman had been provided with flameproof bedding by the LFB and Nick queried whether this was still in use or whether additional sets were now required (as Borough Commander had approved these) – Janice agreed to investigate and report back.

5. AFD False Alarms & Lift Shut-ins

Rebecca had circulated information on LFB attendance at false automatic fire alarm activations (AFAs) at our sheltered housing schemes and temporary accommodation blocks since the previous meeting. There had been a total of 12 attendances across 5 of these blocks. Janice has now circulated this info to the local managers for further information on the cause of the activations and it was agreed that these will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting when Janine Fitzgerald TMO Senior Sheltered Housing Officer would be attending.

Nick had provided a breakdown of the LFB's attendance at lift shut-ins since the last meeting. Attention was drawn to the attendance at Trellick Tower where the TMO had a permanently manned concierge who could initiate attendance by the lift contractors. Janice agreed to ensure that people in the lift cars had an effective means of alerting the concierge.

6. Enforcement Action / Deficiency Notices & Correspondence with LFB

The sheltered blocks Jean Darling, Chelsea Farm House and Cremorne Clubroom had been audited recently by Michele from Rebecca's team. Maintenance records had all now been provided as per Michele's request. There was a further request to have these records available locally at each of the sheltered schemes however, Janice advised that currently this was not possible but it is something we are working towards. This info can be made available in advance of an audit if the LFB Inspecting Officer requests it. Michele had requested that a fire exit sign be placed on the external gate from the rear garden to the public highway. This is the only way out of a relatively small garden and can be readily seen so Rebecca suggested that a line in the FRA would suffice.

7. Managed use policy

Following recent discussions in relation to Balfour House Janice proposed to draft a new TMO Policy on storage in communal areas. This would be based on the requirements set out in the LGA's "purpose built flat guide" and would endeavour to clarify what is acceptable and what is not. However, Janice would welcome sight of any guidance the LFB produces for its Inspecting Officers to ensure that standards are consistent.

8. Stable Way

No issues currently. Nick is aware of the need to find another unofficial liaison officer from within his team in the event that Rob North retires or moves on.

Nick queried whether there were to be additional travellers sites opening up in the borough but Janice was unaware of any. Nick agreed to share any information he receives on this.

9. LFB fire safety familiarisation exercises across the stock

Nick confirmed that he had attended Grenfell Tower for the recent work to the dry riser.

Nick advised that this year's programme of familiarisation visits is being drafted.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 Grenfell Tower

Claire Williams had been unable to attend the meeting but had subsequently provided an update on progress with the works at Grenfell Tower as follows –

- dry riser done and certificated – installation of outlet doors due
- 2 March FB visited site
- AOVs working to the existing residential floors (floors 4-23) and AOV commissioning for the lower floors due w/c 7 March

10.2 Mobility Scooters

Janice queried whether there were any exceptional circumstances where charging of these within a communal area would be considered acceptable by the LFB. Rebecca advised there were none.

10.3 Fitting of self closers on the outside of flat entrance doors

Janice advised that she had recently become aware that Nottinghill Housing Trust fitted these externally across their stock. Janice asked if the LFB had a view on this and Rebecca confirmed that they were acceptable internally and externally.

10.4 LFB lifting people who have fallen ?

Janice had been asked to query whether this was a service that the LFB offered as a colleague had been advised that this was the case in Westminster. Nick advised that this was exclusively the domain of the London Ambulance Service.

10.5 Date of next meeting

Suggested date of next meeting - Thursday 5th May at 9.30am in Network Hub. Janice will send out invitations

Distribution:

Those Attending

Claire Williams

Alex Vaughan

Janine Fitzgerald