

**The Grenfell Tower Inquiry**  
**Position Paper on behalf of the Mayor of London**  
**26 October 2018**

1. Following a procedural hearing on 3 September 2018, on 24 September 2018 the Inquiry wrote to the Mayor of London (and a number of other public body Core Participants) requesting that he serve on the Inquiry a position paper. The paper is required to describe in reasonable detail the actions already taken to address questions of public safety raised by the fire, the rationale behind them and any further steps which the Mayor currently plans to take. As directed, this position paper sets out on behalf of the Mayor information on these matters. It is supported by documentary evidence. If this position paper raises any issues on which the Inquiry would like clarification or further information, the Mayor will of course assist. There are various exhibits referred to in this position paper. These documents are referenced in the format [ML/N] where “N” is the document number.
2. The GLA’s response (on behalf of the Mayor) to the Grenfell Tower fire has covered a wide variety of areas including but not limited to: housing and land - supporting rehousing efforts and administering funding for cladding remediation; planning - introducing new fire safety policies; regeneration - providing small grants to local businesses; and community engagement - developing relationships with the families and local residents most affected. The table below provides the names of GLA officers who lead on the policy areas covered in this paper.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Officer responsible</b>
Draft New London Plan	Jennifer Peters, Head of London Plan and Growth Strategies
London Housing Strategy	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Requests for additional resources post-Grenfell	David Bellamy, Chief of Staff

Response to MHCLG consultation on desktop studies	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Response to Hackitt report on building regulations and fire safety	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Response to consultation on banning combustibles	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Response to consultations on social housing	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Action in relation to the removal of ACM cladding	Jamie Ratcliff, AD Housing
Estate regeneration and resident ballot requirements	James Clark, Head of Housing Strategy
Asbestos screening	Vicky Hobart, Head of Health
Concerns about potential land contamination	Vicky Hobart, Head of Health
London Councils' peer review into London local government's collective resilience arrangements	David Bellamy, Chief of Staff
Further support	Debbie Jackson, AD Regeneration  Nick Taylor, Head of Area North West  Tim Steer, Head of Transport

3. As set out above and further in the witness statement of David Bellamy dated 28 September 2018 (see paragraphs 98 to 109) submitted to the Inquiry on behalf of the Mayor, a substantial number of GLA officers have been involved in the response to the fire, both during the immediate aftermath and since. In order to ensure continued focus and internal coordination, it was decided to bring together a number of the responsibilities into a new role of Grenfell Response Policy and Programme Manager, with the intention that this officer would contact to lead the Grenfell response. This

officer has been in post since February 2018 and the role is jointly funded across multiple directorates at the GLA. In addition, officers from the Government Relations and Community Engagement teams have responsibility for Grenfell related issues as part of their wider roles.

4. In direct response to the issues raised by the Grenfell Tower fire, the Mayor has acted to ensure that his statutory policies on planning and housing incorporate fire safety and related measures. This paper will begin by setting this strategic context before detailing some further specific actions taken to address the questions of public safety raised by the fire.

### **London Plan – Fire safety measures**

5. Planning in London is the joint responsibility of the Mayor and the 32 London boroughs, the City of London Corporation and the Mayoral Development Corporations, along with neighbourhood forums designated by London's local planning authorities.
6. The Mayor has a statutory duty (section 334 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended ("GLA Act")) to prepare and publish a Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. The strategy must include the Mayor's general policies in respect of the development and use of land in Greater London, to the extent that such matters are of strategic importance. The Mayor complies with this duty by producing the London Plan.
7. The London Plan is legally part of each London local planning authority's development plan and must be taken into account when planning decisions are taken in any part of Greater London. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with it, unless there are sound planning reasons to depart from it. The London Plan therefore provides the strategic, London-wide policy context for borough local development plan documents; all local development plan documents and neighbourhood plans have to be 'in general conformity' with the London Plan.

8. A draft new London Plan was published by the Mayor for consultation in December 2017. The consultation period ended on 2 March 2018. Before it can be adopted, it must be considered by a formal Examination in Public (EiP). This is led by independent inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State. The EiP for the Mayor's proposed London Plan will open on 15 January 2019. Once adopted, it will replace all previous versions.
9. For the first time, the proposed London Plan introduces specific measures to ensure that development proposals incorporate features which reduce fire risk. The Mayor considered it to be imperative to ensure that the planning application process includes provisions aimed at improving fire safety at the earliest opportunity.
10. The proposed London Plan is set out in 12 chapters, each of which focuses on a specific aspect of spatial development. The latest version (published in August 2018) shows some changes from the consultation draft and is available at [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft\\_london\\_plan\\_-\\_showing\\_minor\\_suggested\\_changes\\_july\\_2018.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_-_showing_minor_suggested_changes_july_2018.pdf). Chapter 3, which focuses on "Design", contains a number of policies, some of which make provision on aspects of fire safety [Exhibit ML/1]. Further detail on the most relevant policies is set out below.
  - *Policy D3 – Inclusive design*

This provides that development proposals are required to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design. Specifically, by D3 A(3) development proposals must be *"designed to incorporate safe and dignified emergency evacuation for all building users. In all developments where lifts are installed, as a minimum at least one lift per core (or more subject to capacity assessments) should be a suitably sized fire evacuation lift suitable to be used to evacuate people who require level access from the building."*
  - In addition, paragraph 3.3.5 notes that *"fire evacuation lifts and associated provisions should be appropriately designed, constructed and include the necessary controls suitable for the purposes intended."*

- *Policy D8 – Tall buildings*

The proposed Plan recognises that tall buildings have a part to play in helping to meet London’s housing needs whilst noting that safety considerations must be central to their design and operation. At D8 C(2)(a) it is provided that “*the internal and external design, including construction detailing, the building’s materials and its emergency exit routes must ensure the safety of all occupants.*” Further, the policy emphasises the need for tall buildings to be serviced, maintained and managed so as to preserve their safety and quality.

- *Policy D10 – Safety, security and resilience to emergency*

Policy D10 notes the role of the London Resilience Partnership in maintaining the London Risk Register, which provides a summary of the main risks affecting London and identifies the existing risk management arrangements for the risks. D10B provides that “*Development proposals should maximise building resilience and minimise potential physical risks, including those arising as a result of fire, flood and related hazards.*”

- Paragraph 3.10.2 provides that “*New developments, including building refurbishments, should be constructed with resilience at the heart of their design. In particular they should incorporate appropriate fire safety solutions and represent best practice in fire safety planning in both design and management. The London Fire Commissioner should be consulted early in the design process to ensure major developments have fire safety solutions built-in.*”

- *Policy D11 – Fire safety*

Given its significance, Policy D11 is reproduced in full below.

*A. In the interests of fire safety and to ensure the safety of all building users, development proposals must achieve the highest standards of fire safety and ensure that they:*

*1A) identify suitably positioned unobstructed outside space:*

*(a) for fire appliances to be positioned on*

*(b) appropriate for use as an evacuation assembly point*

*(1) are designed to incorporate appropriate features which reduce the risk to life and of serious injury in the event of a fire; including appropriate fire alarm systems, passive and active fire safety measures*

*2) are constructed in an appropriate way to minimise the risk of fire spread*

*3) provide suitable and convenient means of escape and associated evacuation strategy for all building users*

*4) develop a robust strategy for evacuation which can be periodically updated and published, and which all building users can have confidence in*

*5) provide suitable access and equipment for firefighting which is appropriate for the size and use of the development.*

*B. All major development proposals should be submitted with a Fire Statement, which is an independent fire strategy, produced by a third party suitably qualified assessor.*

*The statement should detail how the development proposal will function in terms of:*

*1) the building's construction: methods, products and materials used, including manufacturers' details*

*2) the means of escape for all building users: suitably designed stair cores, escape for building users who are disabled or require level access, and associated evacuation strategy approach*

*2A) features which reduce the risk to life: fire alarm systems, passive and active fire safety measures and associated management and maintenance plans*

*3) access for fire service personnel and equipment: how this will be achieved in an evacuation situation, water supplies, provision and positioning of equipment, firefighting lifts, stairs and lobbies, any fire suppression and smoke ventilation systems proposed, and the ongoing maintenance and monitoring of these*

*4) how provision will be made within the curtilage of the site to enable fire appliances to gain access to the building*

*4A) ensuring that any potential future modifications to the building will take into account and not compromise the base build fire safety/protection measures.*

- Paragraph 3.11.2 notes that whilst fire safety compliance is covered by Part B of the Building Regulations, to ensure that development proposals achieve the

highest standards of fire safety, applicants should also consider issues of fire safety before the building control application stage, taking into account the diversity and likely behaviour of the population as a whole.

- Paragraphs 3.11.2A and B require applicants to show on site plans that spaces have been identified for the appropriate positioning of fire appliances and to indicate appropriate evacuation assembly points.
- Paragraph 3.11.2C provides that *“Developments, their floor layouts and cores need to be planned around issues of fire safety and a robust strategy for evacuation from the outset, embedding and integrating a suitable strategy and relevant design features at the earliest possible stage, rather than features or products being applied to pre-determined developments which could result in less successful schemes which fail to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. This is of particular importance in blocks of flats, as building users and residents may be less familiar with evacuation procedures.”*
- At paragraph 3.11.3 it is noted that suitable suppression systems (such as sprinklers) installed in buildings can reduce the risk to life and significantly reduce the degree of damage caused by fire, and should be explored at an early stage of building design.
- Paragraph 3.11.3A provides that *“The provision of stair cores which are suitably sized, provided in sufficient numbers and designed with appropriate features to allow simultaneous evacuation should also be explored at an early stage and provided wherever possible.”*

11. It should be noted that the Mayor is required by statute to keep the London Plan under review. As and when the Inquiry makes recommendations and findings which have a bearing on matters covered by the Plan, these will be reflected in subsequent versions.

## **Housing Strategy**

12. Section 333A of GLA Act provides that the Mayor must prepare and publish a Housing Strategy which covers the following elements: the Mayor’s assessment of

housing conditions in Greater London and of the needs of Greater London with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation; any proposals or policies of the Mayor to promote the improvement of those conditions and the meeting of those needs; a statement of the measures which other persons or bodies are to be encouraged by the Mayor to take for the purpose of improving those conditions and meeting those needs; and a statement of the Mayor's spending proposals for the relevant period. Relevant extracts of the Strategy referred to in this paper are at **[Exhibit ML/2]** with the whole document being available at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018\\_lhs\\_london\\_housing\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf).

13. The Mayor's current Housing Strategy (the Strategy), published for consultation between 6 September and 7 December 2017 and formally adopted in August 2018, sets out the Mayor's vision to address London's housing crisis and provide all Londoners with a good quality home they can afford. The Strategy includes provisions specifically aimed at addressing the urgent concerns about the safety and design of some older high-rise residential buildings raised as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire. Whilst noting the Mayor's lack of formal powers over existing housing in London, the Strategy recognises the urgent need to improve quality and standards for all Londoners and particularly for those living in social housing whose voices have not been heard.
14. The Strategy identifies five priorities: building homes for Londoners; delivering genuinely affordable homes; high quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods; a fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders; and tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers.
15. Policy 5.1, entitled "*Well-Designed, Safe and Good Quality Homes*" includes a commitment to call on Government to ensure that the Building Regulations system has an uncompromising focus on quality and safety (A(i)); it also includes a commitment to work with councils, Government and others to improve the quality and standards of London's existing homes, including by working to strengthen fire safety in existing homes, calling on Government where necessary to make sufficient resources available to make homes safe (B(i)).



16. Paragraph 5.4 specifically recognises the need, in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire, to ensure that existing high-rise buildings, and particularly those built in the 1960s and 70s that have been refurbished, are made safe. It is noted that further refurbishment may be needed, requiring significant investment, and that where buildings cannot be made safe or otherwise improved while guaranteeing their safety, funding may be required to demolish and replace any social housing they provide.
17. At paragraph 5.15 the Strategy notes the concern around the way in which building regulations are written, interpreted, applied and enforced. It notes the Mayor's support for the Government review of the system of building regulations and fire safety and his belief that this should not shy away from radical reform of regulations and building control if that is what is required. Reference is made in this context to the fire safety provisions included in the proposed London Plan and set out above.
18. Paragraphs 5.25 to 5.28 acknowledge the Mayor's lack of formal powers over London's existing homes (fire safety regulations being the responsibility of Government) while recognising the urgent need to improve quality and standards, particularly given reports following the Grenfell Tower fire indicating large numbers of high-rise buildings containing unsafe materials.
19. The Strategy recognises the need for urgent action to ensure that residents in some high-rise blocks are not at increased risk from fire where their blocks have been fitted with inappropriate materials, have been poorly constructed or are compromised through inadequate management and disrepair. The Mayor has welcomed in his Strategy, the commitment given by Government to fully fund the removal and replacement of dangerous cladding by councils and housing associations, noting that if it is not possible safely to retrofit existing buildings, Government should ensure that resources are made available to demolish them and replace the social housing at least like for like. Further information as to the Mayor's involvement in the administration of Government funding for the replacement of dangerous cladding on social housing blocks is dealt with below in this paper.
20. The Strategy equally notes the need for action in relation to privately owned blocks. Whatever the strict legal position as to liability may be, the Mayor strongly believes

that it is morally wrong that leaseholders of individual flats within affected blocks should be forced to pay substantial costs where safety issues have arisen through no fault of their own. Where disputes have arisen about who should pay, the Mayor has called on Government to provide immediate funding to ensure that works are not delayed pending the outcome of legal cases. Correspondence with the Government on this issue is detailed further below in this paper.

21. The Strategy also reflects the importance to the Mayor of ensuring that lessons are learned. The need to listen to the views of social housing tenants and leaseholders is reflected in paragraphs 5.74 to 5.82 which set out in more detail the relevant policies reflecting the key principle that residents' voices must be at the heart of decision-making by councils and housing associations.
22. The Strategy proposes an immediate package of reform aimed at strengthening the voices of social housing residents so that widespread concerns arising from a particular estate, block or community do not go unchecked. The proposed reforms include three core elements.
  - The Mayor has urged the Government to streamline the process for individuals to raise complaints by allowing them to go directly to the Housing Ombudsman once they have exhausted their landlord's internal complaints procedure. The Mayor welcomes Government's subsequent alignment with this policy in the Social Housing Green Paper.
  - The Mayor has called on the Government to review the test applied by the Social Housing Regulator when determining whether regulatory action is necessary in relation to "consumer issues". In this context "consumer issues" include standards in tenant involvement and empowerment. The Mayor considers that the current test of "serious detriment" sets the bar too high, meaning that very few consumer standard complaints are investigated. Again, the Mayor welcomes the Government's agreement with this policy, as set out in the Social Housing Green Paper.

- The Strategy calls on the Government to introduce a Commissioner for Social Housing Residents – an individual independent of Government with a statutory remit to act as a watchdog for social housing tenants, leaseholders and freeholders. This person should be a social tenant and their key role would be to champion the views and interests of social housing residents, providing recommendations for Government policy.
23. The Mayor also includes in his Strategy provisions relating to estate regeneration. At the heart of these is the need to involve affected residents from the very start when works are being undertaken to improve or regenerate an estate. The Mayor considers it to be essential that tenants, leaseholders, freeholders and other residents and users of estates are reassured that, where regeneration is being considered, they will be fully involved in the process and that housing providers will abide by a minimum set of standards. To that end, in February 2018 the Mayor published a *Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration* which sets out his intention to promote the use of resident ballots as a condition of providing funding to landlords. Further information on this is set out below in this paper.

#### **Requests for additional resources post-Grenfell**

24. On 27 June 2017, the Mayor met with London Fire Commissioner Dany Cotton and Fiona Twycross (then Chair of LFEPA). The Mayor asked the Commissioner to review what specialist equipment and support the LFB required in order to assist their task of rescue and recovery in future major incidents.
25. On 12 July 2017 the Mayor sent a letter to the then Home Secretary Amber Rudd MP. The Mayor's letter is at **[Exhibit ML/3]**. The Mayor indicated that following the Commissioner's initial assessment, the LFB would need a range of new specialist equipment at an estimated cost of £6m. In addition, there were a number of additional costs related to staffing and the Inquiry and investigation team that would need additional resourcing. The LFB estimated that the additional staffing and maintenance of the new equipment could have an ongoing cost of £6m per annum. This, combined with an already forecast budget gap of around £13.5m, would leave the LFB facing a budget gap of some £25.5m by 2021/22. The Mayor urged the Home Secretary to act urgently on such matters.

26. Further correspondence was exchanged (copies of letters are exhibited at **[Exhibit ML/4]**) but in the absence of further funding from central Government, the Mayor has nonetheless, in the interests of public safety, ensured that LFB has the investment it identified as being necessary to deal with any future major fire incident in a residential high rise block. The LFB recently invested some of that funding in the purchase of fire hoods which are designed to be worn by evacuating residents to protect them from smoke and the toxic gases it contains. Further information is set out in the position paper submitted to the Inquiry by LFB.
27. In the period since the Grenfell Tower fire the Mayor has responded to a number of consultations on issues related to fire safety, planning and housing. A summary of these now follows.

#### **Response to MHCLG consultation on desktop studies**

28. On 11 April 2018, in response to the recommendations resulting from Dame Judith Hackitt's interim report of December 2017, the Government opened a consultation on restricting or banning the use of assessment in lieu of tests, also known as 'desktop studies', as a way of assessing the fire performance of external cladding systems. This method of assessment had been an established part of the system for classifying the fire performance of construction products and systems set out in paragraph 1b of Annex A of Approved Document B (statutory guidance on fire safety). The purpose of the consultation was to inform consideration of whether desktop studies were appropriate for use in this context at all, and if so, whether the proposed changes to restrict their use went far enough.
29. In his response to the consultation, set out in a letter dated 25 May 2018 to the Secretary of State **[Exhibit ML/5]**, the Mayor raised his serious concerns about the Government's proposals, and his conviction that desktop studies were not an acceptable route to compliance for cladding systems in England. The Mayor's response noted that, based on the Government's own impact assessment of its proposals, there would be a 30% increase in the use of desktop studies. This would represent a failure to comply with Dame Judith's recommendation to "significantly restrict" their use.

30. The Mayor noted that since the Grenfell Tower fire, the use of desktop studies undermined public confidence in high-rise buildings as they lack the rigour which is provided through a BS8414 full scale test, increasing the risk that dangerous materials will be used. The lack of oversight of those carrying out the studies was also highlighted as contributing to the risks associated with them. In short, the Mayor concluded that given the potential ramifications of less rigorous testing, the Government must implement a total ban on their use in order to prioritise the safety of residents over increased time and cost to industry.

### **Response to Hackitt Report on Building Regulations and Fire Safety**

31. On 17 May 2018 the Government published the final report of Dame Judith Hackitt following her review of building regulations and fire safety commissioned in July 2017. The purpose of the report was to make recommendations to ensure a sufficiently robust regulatory system for the future. It examined building and fire safety regulations and related compliance and enforcement, with a focus on high rise residential buildings. The report set out over 50 recommendations for Government.
32. The Mayor responded to the recommendations within the final report in a letter to the Secretary of State dated 7 August 2018 [**Exhibit ML/6**]. Whilst he welcomed the report as providing a positive framework for reform which also recognised the role planning can play in fire safety, he expressed a number of specific concerns including those set out below.
- The definition of “high-risk residential buildings” as those of ten storeys and higher was too narrow and the Mayor encouraged the Secretary of State to consider the application of these recommendations to a wider range of buildings, to include those below 18 metres.
  - The Mayor noted with surprise, the report’s failure to recommend a ban on combustible materials and made clear his support for such a ban (as to which see further below). He also supported greater transparency in relation to the publication of test results of products on the market.

- The report did not allow for consideration of the efficacy of current sprinkler regulations. The Mayor called on the Government to go further than the recommendations and make sprinklers mandatory in new buildings over 18 metres and to provide funding for the retrofitting of sprinklers (see also further below as to sprinklers).
- The Mayor had serious concerns about the proposed industry-led approach to assessing competence and called for clear standards to be set out.
- The Mayor concluded that the proposal to give industry greater ownership of statutory guidance was extremely risky and should be rejected because of the negative impact on public confidence in the regulations.

### **Response to consultation on banning combustibles**

33. On 18 June 2018 the Government opened a consultation on banning the use of combustible materials in the external walls of high-rise residential buildings of 18 metres or over. The consultation invited views on proposals to revise the building regulations to ban the use of combustible materials in the external wall systems on such buildings.
34. In his response, set out in a letter to the Secretary of State dated 7 August 2018 **[Exhibit ML/7]**, the Mayor stated in clear terms his strong support for a total ban on the use of combustible materials for the entire wall construction of all buildings (including any attachments to the external face), regardless of the height or use of the building. The Mayor proposed that each component of the materials should have a European fire resistance clarification of A1 or A2 and he called on the Government to legislate urgently (through an amendment to the Building Regulations) to ensure a swift and comprehensive ban of any non-compliant materials.
35. In this letter, the Mayor also emphasised the need to address weaknesses in existing housing stock. Specifically, he urged the Government to expand its testing and remediation programme in respect of ACM cladding (referred to above) to a broader assessment based on the combustibility and safety of cladding systems more generally.

## Response to consultations on social housing

36. Consistent with the policies in the Mayor's Housing Strategy, on 18 June 2018 the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development responded on behalf of the Mayor to a consultation by the housing charity Shelter on social housing **[Exhibit ML/8]**. The response refers specifically to the Grenfell Tower fire as having highlighted the issue of social housing residents feeling that their voices had not been heard and reiterates the proposals set out in the Housing Strategy to address this issue.
37. The Mayor also responded on 25 September 2018 to a Labour Party Green Paper on affordable housing **[Exhibit ML/9]**. This again emphasised the need to ensure that the voices of residents should be at the heart of decision-making for social housing and refers to this and other relevant policies in the Housing Strategy set out in further detail above.
38. The consultation also sought views on what measures should form the basis of the fire safety criterion as part of a new "Decent Homes 2" standard. The Mayor expressed his support for a new separate category for fire safety and proposed consideration of the following specific measures in creating the new standard:
- automatic fire suppression systems, including sprinklers;
  - building materials, in particular ensuring non-combustible materials on the external walls of high-rise blocks;
  - fire doors;
  - means of escape;
  - firefighting lifts;
  - ability of firefighting vehicles to access the building; and
  - firefighting apparatus such as wet risers.
39. The Mayor's consultation response also strongly supports the LFB's campaign to increase sprinkler systems across all building types and especially high-rise buildings and those housing more vulnerable people. He notes that the campaign extends to retrofitting of existing high-rise blocks and welcomes the Green Paper's proposal to make available a fund of £1billion to achieve this in the social housing sector.

40. The Mayor will shortly be responding to the Government's Social Housing Green Paper "A New Deal for Social Housing". As part of this response, the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development and his team met with groups representing social housing tenants to ensure that their voices are central to reforming the sector. One of the central proposals in the Government's Green Paper was a review of the Decent Homes Standard. The Mayor welcomes this proposal as an opportunity to incorporate fire safety measures, including those set out at paragraph 38 above.

#### **Actions in relation to the removal of ACM cladding**

##### *(i) Social Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund*

41. During the summer of 2017, in response to the Grenfell Tower fire, the Government commissioned from the Building Research Establishment (BRE) a large-scale testing programme of ACM cladding assemblies. This led to the identification of large numbers of other high-rise residential buildings with aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding. In carrying out remediation of these blocks, social housing providers in London reported that the costs would impact on their new build programmes and/or planned repairs and maintenance. Given the serious concerns about the potential consequences of this for social housing providers' ability to build or maintain urgently-needed housing stock, on 16 May 2018 the Government committed £400 million nationally to remove and replace ACM cladding from residential tower blocks over 18m high owned by councils and housing associations.
42. Further to a Memorandum of Understanding entered into with MHCLG, the GLA administers this fund for eligible buildings in London. It assesses the applications from housing providers against the nationally prescribed criteria and makes recommendations to the Government, which gives final approval for all funding applications. This is consistent with commitments made in the Mayor's Housing Strategy (referred to above) in support of prioritising the safety of high-rise residential buildings, by ensuring that remediation is expedited and that costs are not passed on to leaseholders. Expenditure is incurred by the GLA and then reimbursed by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on a quarterly basis. By a Mayoral Decision dated 5 September 2018, the Mayor authorised expenditure of up to £275 million for this purpose during the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 [Exhibit ML/10].



*(ii) Costs of removing ACM cladding from privately owned residential blocks*

43. On 6 February 2018 the Mayor wrote to the then Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to express his concerns about the costs of removing ACM cladding from privately owned residential high-rise buildings in London **[Exhibit ML/11]**. The Mayor requested that, where disputes over costs are causing delays to remedial works, the Government should provide upfront funding and then seek to recoup the costs from the responsible body at a later date.

*(iii) Participation in London Councils monthly meeting*

44. An officer from the GLA's Housing and Land department attends the monthly Housing Director Fire Safety meetings convened by London Councils. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss the remediation progress on council-owned blocks, the progress of remediating buildings in the private sector, and wider fire safety issues faced by London boroughs.

*(iv) ACM cladding on GLA land*

45. For completeness, the Mayor informs the Inquiry that there are three sites<sup>1</sup> found to have ACM cladding where the GLA owns the freehold. These buildings are let on long full-repairing leases to third parties. The terms of the leases provide that the GLA is not responsible for repairs, maintenance or health and safety in these blocks. Despite this, the Mayor's team is working closely with the leaseholders to ensure that any necessary work is being carried out as quickly as possible. Interim fire measures are in place to ensure residents are safe.

**Estate regeneration and resident ballot requirement**

46. As noted above, the Mayor's Housing Strategy emphasises the fundamental importance of ensuring that the voices of residents in social housing are heard from the very start of any regeneration proposals. The Mayor has put this into practice by publishing his *Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration* in February 2018 **[Exhibit ML/12]**.

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<sup>1</sup> One additional site, where the freehold is owned by the London Legacy Development Corporation, is still in development and is therefore unoccupied.

47. A key element of the Mayor's policies on estate regeneration is the new resident ballot requirement. From 18 July 2018, the Mayor requires any landlord seeking GLA funding for strategic estate regeneration projects which involve the demolition of social homes to demonstrate that they have secured resident support for their proposals through a ballot. This is to make sure that GLA funding only supports estate regeneration projects if residents have had a clear say in plans and support them going ahead.
48. The requirement applies to projects that involve the demolition of any social housing and the building of 150 or more homes (of any tenure). There are some exemptions to the requirement, including where demolition is required to address concerns about the safety of residents. Full details are outlined in the Resident Ballot Requirement funding condition, which is part of the Mayor's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide (the rules and procedures for providing housing with funding from the GLA) **[Exhibit ML/13]**.

### **Asbestos Screening**

49. In a letter dated 21 September 2018 to Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England, Dr Fiona Wilcox, the coroner investigating the deaths which occurred at Grenfell Tower, called for the setting up of a screening programme for those exposed to smoke and dust during and after the fire. On 1 October 2018 the Mayor wrote to the Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, echoing Dr Wilcox's call for a system of long-term health screening due to concerns for the future health impacts of the tragedy for those who survived it **[Exhibit ML/14]**.

### **Concerns about potential land contamination**

50. Following a report in the *Guardian* on 13 October 2018, in which reference was made to preliminary results from a study of soil around the Grenfell Tower site having shown high levels of toxins, the Mayor wrote to the leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC) on 18 October 2018 **[Exhibit ML/15]**. In that letter the Mayor reminded the Leader of the Council of the local authority's responsibilities

under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to determine whether land is contaminated and asking for urgent clarification as to what measures it is taking to address residents' concerns.

### **London Councils peer review into London local government's collective resilience arrangements**

51. In the autumn of 2017, London Councils commissioned an independent peer review focusing on boroughs' collaborative resilience arrangements and considering ways in which they might be further strengthened. This was a response to the testing of London's resilience arrangements through a number of events in 2017 including the Grenfell Tower fire, which raised serious concerns about the response of RBKC. On behalf of the Mayor, the GLA (through the Mayor's Chief of Staff David Bellamy) participated in the review. The strengthening of the mutual aid arrangements was a particular area of focus and London Councils was urged by the Mayor's representative to take steps to ensure that there is a clearer and stronger requirement for a local authority to invoke mutual aid where required.
52. In a report for the London Councils Leaders' Committee on 6 February 2018, there were set out a number of recommendations for consideration **[Exhibit ML/16]**. This included a specific recommendation (no. 6) on the role of the Mayor, in the following terms:

*Formally recognise in plans the role of Mayor of London as the voice of London and Londoners, and his strategic role in relation to civil protection rather than having a direct operational role. Ensure there is awareness and understanding of these roles and responsibilities, documented in plans and tested through exercising, as well as effective two way communications in incident response and recovery.*

53. The London Resilience Local Authorities' Panel (LAP) has put a series of work streams in place to begin implementation of the recommendations, with progress to be reviewed early next year. The implementation plan and associated documents can be found at: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/34046>.

## **Further support**

54. To support the local community in the immediate aftermath of the fire, the GLA, together with RBKC and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, jointly created a fund to support small businesses in the area. Local businesses were invited to apply for funding to cover expenses such as rent, lost stock and payments to suppliers. The GLA contributed £50,000 of the total £250,000 fund. The Mayor has also written to a number of banks, urging them to delay collecting payments from businesses which are still affected by the aftermath of the fire, and has called upon utility firms to do the same.
55. In March 2018, the Mayor made a further £65,000 available for business support. The money was provided to local enterprise agency the Portobello Business Centre (PBC) to deliver the support on behalf of the London Growth Hub, the Mayor's SME support initiative. PBC is working with businesses in the area to identify their business needs and the steps that need to be taken.
56. The Mayor has also dedicated resources to the rehousing of Grenfell Tower families. As of 15 October 2018, the GLA had, through the Homes for Londoners 16-21 programme, approved grant funding of £12,780,000 to RBKC for the purchase of 213 affordable housing units for rehousing Grenfell survivors and others from the general waiting list. Of this total, £6,780,000 has so far been disbursed.
57. In addition to the financial support detailed above, the Mayor, through Transport for London, has since March 2018 been in discussions with local residents regarding the possibility of making changes to Latimer Road London Underground station by way of a memorial to the victims of the Grenfell Tower fire. A number of options have been considered, including the potential re-naming of the station but feedback received so far suggests that this may not be the preferred option and consultation continues.