



Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Day 135

May 24, 2021

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Monday, 24 May 2021

1
2 (10.00 am)
3 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to
4 today's hearing. Today we're going to continue hearing
5 evidence from Ms Blakeman, one of the councillors of
6 RBKC.
7 So would you ask Ms Blakeman to come back in,
8 please.
9 MS JUDITH BLAKEMAN (continued)
10 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good morning, Ms Blakeman.
11 THE WITNESS: Good morning.
12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All ready to carry on, I hope?
13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good, thank you very much.
15 Yes, Mr Millett.
16 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY (continued)
17 MR MILLETT: Good morning, Mr Chairman. Good morning,
18 members of the panel.
19 Good morning, Ms Blakeman.
20 A. Morning.
21 Q. Thank you very much for coming back to us.
22 On Thursday afternoon when we broke we were looking
23 at the LFB's enforcement notices in respect of
24 Adair Tower at the end of 2015.
25 Can we move that topic on a little bit in time --

1

1 not too far -- and go, please, to {TMO00886208/75}.
2 What I'm showing you here is the minutes of the TMO
3 board meeting on 4 January 2016 where Robert Black's
4 report is discussed.
5 If you look at the very foot of page 75, you can see
6 paragraph 9.12, which says this:
7 "The Chief Executive's report included an update on
8 the Adair Tower fire. The Board noted that the Company
9 and RBKC were going to be served with Enforcement
10 Notices by London Fire Brigade in respect of Adair Tower
11 and Hazelwood Tower. The Board would be kept updated."
12 Now, all the board required upon being informed that
13 an enforcement notice would be served was to be kept
14 updated, it appears from this; is that right?
15 A. Yes.
16 Q. Did nobody on the board ask why the deficiencies at
17 Adair Tower underlying the proposed enforcement notices
18 had not been addressed before the fire or, at any rate,
19 before the start of 2016?
20 A. Well, basically I can't remember, but I don't think that
21 we had known about the previous deficiency notices,
22 certainly I hadn't known.
23 Q. So, just to be clear, those weren't brought to the
24 attention of the board by the executive team or by
25 Mr Black?

2

1 A. No.
2 Q. Right.
3 A. Not to my recollection.
4 Q. Having been informed of the deficiencies, rather than
5 the deficiency notices, but certainly the deficiencies
6 making up the enforcement notices, did nobody on the
7 board ask why those had not been addressed as a matter
8 of urgency?
9 A. No. I mean, I can't remember.
10 Q. Do you remember whether the FRA system, the system
11 whereby the management of the TMO would address FRA
12 actions identified in the fire risk assessor's report
13 within a fixed timeframe, which is what I mean by the
14 FRA system, did nobody on the board ask why the FRA
15 system had let these deficiencies through the net?
16 A. I've no idea.
17 Q. Right. You don't remember that question ever arising?
18 A. No.
19 Q. Was the board not supposed to hold management robustly
20 to account?
21 A. Things like those would go to the finance, audit and
22 risk committee.
23 Q. But not the main board?
24 A. Well, we used to occasionally get their minutes just for
25 information.

3

1 Q. Only for information?
2 A. Yeah, but they were very -- there's not much on those
3 minutes, I've had a look at them over the weekend.
4 Q. Right. No. Well, that gives rise to the question: why
5 was the board not holding management, through whichever
6 committee it was, robustly to account for the inactivity
7 or inaction in respect of FRA actions that hadn't been
8 completed which had given rise to the Adair Tower fire?
9 A. Well, I can't answer about FRAs, because I didn't see
10 them, but I can answer -- because I also went over some
11 of my emails in the past, and I certainly raised issues
12 like that in my emails to them, to the --
13 Q. Yes.
14 A. -- TMO.
15 Q. You as a councillor, but not you as a board member?
16 A. No.
17 Q. Right.
18 Did nobody on the board suggest that the fact that
19 the LFB was now threatening to serve enforcement notices
20 indicated that there might be something wrong with the
21 FRA process?
22 A. I think it's because of the fire that we expected to
23 have deficiency notices. That was the expectation,
24 I think, of the board.
25 Q. After the fire?

4

1 A. After the fire, yes.
 2 Q. Yes, that's not quite my question.
 3 My question is: did nobody on the board ask the
 4 question: well, why have we got an enforcement notice
 5 given we have a fire risk assessor who is supposed to
 6 spot things in advance?
 7 A. I can't remember.
 8 Q. You can't remember?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. Can we go to {TMO00853181}.
 11 This is the minutes of a meeting of the TMO board
 12 held on 31 March 2016, as you can see from the top of
 13 the screen, and we can see that you were present. If we
 14 look at the list of council-nominated board members —
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. — you can see that you're in the list there.
 17 If we go to page 2 {TMO00853181/2}, at the bottom of
 18 the page, you can see that there is something called
 19 the presentation of the chief executive's report under
 20 section 9, if you go to that.
 21 It says, under 9.1:
 22 "Barbara Matthews presented the Chief Executive's
 23 report to the Board. She drew the attention of the
 24 Board to the progress update on the enforcement notices
 25 received in respect of Adair and Hazelwood towers

5

1 following the fire at Adair Tower."
 2 Then at 9.2, this:
 3 "Jeff Zitron questioned why Enforcement Notices had
 4 been issued given the fact that the Company had
 5 commissioned and had valid fire risk assessments in
 6 place at the time of the fire incident. Sacha Jevans
 7 explained that the Fire Risk Assessment that had been
 8 even though there were no issues reported by the
 9 consultant and the London Fire Brigade in their fire
 10 audit before the fire incident, the occurrence of the
 11 fire had created the opportunity to reassess the
 12 acceptable standards which then led to the issuance of
 13 the Enforcement Notices. It was reiterated that the key
 14 areas of focus for the Notices were the ventilation in
 15 the stairwells and self-closures on all flat entry
 16 doors. Simon Brissenden commented on the qualification
 17 of the risk assessors being used by the Company and
 18 reiterated the need to [use] experienced consultants who
 19 could highlight any eventualities as well in their
 20 reviews of the properties."
 21 Then it goes on {TMO00853181/3}:
 22 "The Board agreed that the Company needed to
 23 reconsider the frequency of the fire risk assessments
 24 being undertaken and the installation of door closers.
 25 Barbara Matthews [confirmed] that it was [intended] to

6

1 install door closers by the deadline and negotiate an
 2 extension of the works required on the ventilation
 3 issues. The Board requested that a report on the
 4 conclusions of the review of the stock should be
 5 presented at a future meeting covering any decisions and
 6 recommendations in respect of the fire incident."
 7 Now, it looks from the minutes that I've read to you
 8 there that the TMO board were told that the fire risk
 9 assessor had not identified any concerns before the fire
 10 at Adair Tower. Is that right, to the best of your
 11 recollection?
 12 A. To the best of my recollection and what's written here,
 13 yes.
 14 Q. Yes, and nor had the LFB identified any such concerns,
 15 even shortly before the fire, on the reading of this
 16 minute?
 17 A. That's correct, yeah, from what it says here.
 18 Q. Was that your understanding, doing the best you can with
 19 your recollection, at the time of this board meeting,
 20 end of March 2016?
 21 A. Well, I've already said we weren't given the deficiency
 22 notices before the fire, so we didn't know about them.
 23 Q. No.
 24 Would you have expected to have been told that,
 25 in fact, before the Adair Tower fire, the LFB had issued

7

1 a deficiency notice in respect of Adair Tower?
 2 A. Yes, certainly.
 3 Q. Yes.
 4 Did you find yourself persuaded by what Sacha Jevans
 5 had said about "re-assessment of acceptable standards
 6 giving rise to enforcement notices" in the middle of
 7 that first paragraph on that page there?
 8 A. Well, we were — we had the expectation that the people
 9 from the executive team knew what they were doing.
 10 Q. Yes. My point is a slightly more refined one.
 11 It seems that Sacha Jevans says here that the fire
 12 had created the opportunity to re-assess the acceptable
 13 standards which then led to the issuance of the
 14 enforcement notices. Were you persuaded by what she
 15 said there, namely that the fire had created this
 16 opportunity?
 17 A. Well, presumably, because presumably to have
 18 contradicted her would have been to call her a liar.
 19 Q. Indeed. The question I have, though, is: you don't go
 20 straight, do you, from re-assessment of acceptable
 21 standards to enforcement?
 22 Let me put it a different way: when you realised
 23 that there was an enforcement notice, did you not ask
 24 the question, or did the board not ask the question:
 25 well, what is it that's given rise to that? Surely it

8

1 can't just be something wrong with the standards?
 2 A. I can't remember.
 3 Q. Right.
 4 Did she leave you with the impression that somehow
 5 this was the LFB's fault and not the TMO's fault?
 6 A. I can't remember.
 7 Q. Or perhaps that the LFB might have moved the goalposts
 8 without giving the TMO fair warning about what the
 9 acceptable standards were?
 10 A. That's possible, yeah.
 11 Q. You say that's possible; do you recall that?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. Right.
 14 I've shown you where Mr Brissenden is minuted as
 15 raising concerns about the qualification of fire risk
 16 assessors being used by the TMO and the need for
 17 experienced consultants; did you know who the fire risk
 18 assessor for Grenfell Tower was at this time?
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. No.
 21 Now, the final agreement, as it appears from the
 22 last of the paragraphs I've read to you, is that the
 23 board had asked for reconsideration of the frequency of
 24 fire risk assessments.
 25 If the fire risk assessor had not identified the

9

1 issues leading to the enforcement notices in respect of
 2 Adair Tower, how did the board consider that more
 3 frequent fire risk assessments would remedy that?
 4 A. Sorry, I can't answer that.
 5 Q. Can you not?
 6 A. No, I can't answer that.
 7 Q. Well, you see, the board came to an agreement that the
 8 company needed to reconsider the frequency of fire risk
 9 assessments; why was frequency relevant, given that the
 10 fire risk assessor had failed to spot deficiencies which
 11 had led to an enforcement notice?
 12 A. I can't recollect.
 13 Q. Can we go to {TMO10045083/87}, please. This is the same
 14 set of minutes, but this is now the matters arising.
 15 If you look at page 87 under paragraph 9.2, which is
 16 number 7 in the list there on the left-hand column, with
 17 the date 31 March 2016, you can see that it says:
 18 "Adair Tower report on the conclusions, decisions
 19 and recommendations about lessons learn[sic] from the
 20 fire incident."
 21 Then, "By whom: Robert Black".
 22 Do you remember what happened as a result of that?
 23 A. The normal practice on the board was to rush through
 24 matters arising.
 25 Q. Right. When you say rush through matters, could you

10

1 explain what would happen?
 2 A. Well, very little would be mentioned about any of the
 3 matters arising.
 4 Q. Right.
 5 Do you remember specifically what the upshot of
 6 item 7 there was?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. Right.
 9 Can we then move forward in the year 2016 to
 10 September, and go, please, to {TMO10015198}.
 11 This is the minute of the meeting of
 12 29 September 2016, where the report that is referred to
 13 under paragraph 7 of the matters arising from the
 14 31 March 2016 meeting is discussed, and it's in the
 15 meeting pack for what I'm showing you now, which is the
 16 meeting of the board of directors of 24 November 2016.
 17 The minutes of the 29 September 2016 meeting are at
 18 page 5 {TMO10015198/5}, just go to that, there they are,
 19 and we can see that you were present at the
 20 29 September 2016 board meeting.
 21 If we go in that document to page 7 {TMO10015198/7},
 22 we can see item 8, which is the minute of the discussion
 23 about Robert Black's report on Adair Tower, chief
 24 executive's report:
 25 "8.2. The work at Adair Tower to fit new doors and

11

1 self—closers had now been completed. An audit had been
 2 carried out by the London Fire Brigade following the
 3 works. No feedback had yet been received but no
 4 concerns were apparent while the London Fire Brigade was
 5 on site. The Chief Executive had visited Adair Tower
 6 recently and was very impressed with the work being
 7 carried out.
 8 "8.3. Following the fire in a block of flats in
 9 Shepherd Bush caused by a faulty tumble dryer, it was
 10 asked if residents had been warned about these tumble
 11 dryers. An article had gone in the Link detailing the
 12 details of the particular dryers. This would also be
 13 followed up through work with the RAs and Compacts to
 14 spread the information."
 15 Now, the prosecution, or intended or anticipated
 16 prosecution, of the TMO under the enforcement notices is
 17 not expressly mentioned in these minutes, but if we look
 18 at paragraph 8.4, we can see a discussion, and it says
 19 this:
 20 "The London Fire Brigade had asked for the names and
 21 addresses of all the residents so they could speak to
 22 them about why they called the Fire Brigade, which was
 23 contrary to the 'stay put' policy operated. The RBKC
 24 had been informed at all stages of this investigation as
 25 well as their solicitors. No timeline had been made

12

1 available from the London Fire Brigade as to when the
2 report would be completed."

3 Now, I've read you a lot of this, because I'm trying
4 to provoke your recollection, but do you remember any
5 discussion at this meeting, late September 2016, about
6 the possibility of the TMO being prosecuted by the LFB
7 in respect of the matters the subject of the Adair Tower
8 enforcement notices?

9 A. I think that the borough had already been advised that
10 there was no intention to prosecute, but I can't --
11 you know, I can't remember the actual date that that
12 happened.

13 Q. Right. It looks from this that the discussion centred
14 on an update, and there is no minuted concern about the
15 prospects of prosecution. Does that accord with your
16 recollection?

17 A. If that's what it says here.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. I mean, the minutes were not verbatim records.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. Sadly.

22 Q. Are you able to help us with why, at least as a matter
23 of record, the board wasn't concerned about
24 a prosecution arising from fire safety deficiencies at
25 Adair Tower or Hazlewood?

13

1 A. It may be because the borough had already been told that
2 there would be no prosecution, but as I said, I can't
3 remember the actual times, dates.

4 Q. Right.

5 Let's go to Robert Black's report for the meeting at
6 which these minutes were approved, which is, as I say,
7 the 24 November 2016 board meeting. That report starts
8 in the board pack for that meeting we've just looked at,
9 at page 47 {TMO10015198/47}.

10 A. Sorry, there's no date on that.

11 Q. No, it's agenda item 10.

12 A. Of the November meeting?

13 Q. For the November meeting.

14 A. Right, okay, thank you.

15 Q. If we look and see where Robert Black's report -- this
16 is the start of it, you can see that page, but if we
17 look on, we can see page 58 {TMO10015198/58}, item 9,
18 "Health & safety update", and under 9.1 he gives
19 an update there.

20 You can see under 9.2:

21 "Adair Tower -- LFB's 'ongoing investigation' -- On
22 requesting an update TMO staff were advised in October
23 that the LFB had temporarily placed this 'on hold' due
24 to internal staffing issues. However, their intention
25 was to resume the investigation in early November. Once

14

1 the LFB paperwork has been completed on the post--Notice
2 audits they will have another case conference to
3 consider this investigation and this documentation will
4 be provided to the Legal and Enforcement Team. We are
5 hopeful that a final decision will then be reached,
6 however, there remains no firm timescale for this."

7 Now, just on that, do you recall that, as at
8 24 November 2016, the LFB's investigation was still
9 ongoing?

10 A. I don't recollect it.

11 Q. And that, therefore, there was still the risk of
12 a prosecution?

13 A. I don't recollect.

14 Q. Right.

15 Then at 9.3 there is a decision or an agreement to
16 appoint legal counsel to advise of any action to take.

17 Then at 10, if we go to 10 on page 59
18 {TMO10015198/59}, "KCTMO fire policy & strategy", it
19 says:

20 "This policy is currently being reviewed following
21 detailed discussions with the TMO's Health and Safety
22 Committee. In particular, the main proposed changes
23 include:

24 " ■ The need to adopt a more proactive approach to
25 the installation of self-closing devices to flat

15

1 entrance doors across the stock (recommendation is for
2 an installation programme over several years);

3 " ■ Increasing the frequency of the comprehensive
4 Fire Risk Assessment reviews;

5 " ■ Programme of installation of Fire Action Notices
6 in the communal entrance lobbies of all blocks."

7 Then it goes on to deal with storage and charging of
8 mobility scooters, hoarders and managed use of communal
9 space.

10 Then it says at the bottom, after the bullet points:

11 "The redrafted document will be submitted to the
12 next Health and Safety Committee and will include
13 indicative castings of the proposals. Any proposed
14 changes to the policy will require approval from the
15 Board and RBKC."

16 Did Robert Black explain why these proposed changes
17 were needed?

18 A. Sorry, was I at that meeting? The November meeting.

19 Q. We'd only know that from the minutes. But even if you
20 weren't, would you not have read this chief executive's
21 report at the time?

22 A. Oh, I would have read it, yes.

23 Sorry, can you go back to the question? I've
24 forgotten the question now.

25 Q. No, it isn't the question. The question is: did he give

16

1 any explanation as to why any changes like this were
 2 needed?
 3 Let me ask it a different way: did you ever ask him
 4 or did you ever receive an explanation of why these
 5 proposed changes were needed?
 6 A. I thought that the board had agreed on 6 January that we
 7 would ask for these matters to be investigated.
 8 Q. 6 January 2016?
 9 A. Yes. Sorry, is that 2015? I'm lost on the dates,
 10 I'm afraid.
 11 Q. Right. This is now November 2016.
 12 A. Yeah.
 13 Q. So did Robert Black ever explain to you, to the best of
 14 your knowledge, why these changes were needed?
 15 A. Well, not directly to me, no. He may have advised the
 16 board, I don't recollect.
 17 Q. Right.
 18 Can we then look at paragraph 11 in this, and I'll
 19 take this as quickly as I can, "LFB deficiency notice
 20 received", and then it refers to the deficiency notice:
 21 "If, whilst undertaking their audit, the LFB
 22 consider there are deficiencies which require our
 23 attention which are not significant enough to warrant an
 24 Enforcement Notice, they will issue a Deficiency
 25 Notice."

17

1 Just pausing there, was this the first time that you
 2 learnt that that was the process which the LFB would
 3 adopt?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. "These documents have no legal standing but the LFB do
 6 include a timeframe within which they expect landlords
 7 to comply and in the event of non-compliance there is
 8 the possibility that these could be escalated and
 9 an Enforcement Notice served. We have recently received
 10 a Deficiency Notice in relation to the LFB's audit of
 11 Lonsdale House, Portobello Court Estate, several months
 12 ago."
 13 Then it says this, just to focus on it:
 14 "The issue raised relates to flat entrance doors and
 15 the requirement for us to undertake regular inspection
 16 of self-closing devices on these doors. The tenants'
 17 doors at this block were replaced with fully fire-rated,
 18 self-closing compliant doorsets within the last
 19 four years and so we are surprised to have received this
 20 Notice. Discussions with the LFB's Fire Safety Team are
 21 ongoing in relation to these specific requirements."
 22 So it looks from this that, on top of the potential
 23 prosecution for the Adair Tower fire and the changes to
 24 the fire strategy, the board are now being told that
 25 a deficiency notice had been received in relation to

18

1 Lonsdale House, and also in relation to door-closers.
 2 My question is: did this now ring alarm bells at
 3 board level with the efficacy of the fire risk
 4 assessments and actions arising as a result?
 5 A. I think, to the best of my recollection, this was also
 6 being discussed at the housing and property scrutiny
 7 committee, and Laura Johnson had advised us that there
 8 was a full programme going to be or being put in place
 9 as we spoke. That's all I recollect.
 10 Q. Right. Did you get the sense that door-closers was
 11 something of a borough-wide endemic problem?
 12 A. Well, yes, because Laura Johnson mentioned it.
 13 Q. Yes. So you wouldn't be surprised, then, to see that
 14 there was a deficiency notice from the LFB in respect of
 15 door-closers at Lonsdale House?
 16 A. Probably not, I don't recollect.
 17 Q. The minute of the discussion of this report is at
 18 {TMO00841883}.
 19 Just to make it clear, as a matter of record, you
 20 were at this meeting.
 21 A. Okay, good.
 22 Q. And the reference for the minutes for the November
 23 meeting are {TMO00886829}. There is no need to go to
 24 that, but I've read that into the record.
 25 The minutes of the discussion of what I'm showing

19

1 you now is at {TMO00841883}. This is page 1, and this
 2 is the board meeting.
 3 The agenda is at page 2 {TMO00841883/2}, as you can
 4 see.
 5 If you go, please, to page 10 in that run of
 6 documents {TMO00841883/10}, you can see "Chief
 7 executive's report", and under 8.4 it says:
 8 "The works required by the London Fire Brigade
 9 Enforcement Notices were successfully completed within
 10 the extended timescales agreed with the LFB. The Fire
 11 Risk Assessments for these blocks were also
 12 comprehensively reviewed at the conclusion of the work
 13 and the LFB provided with all relevant documentation.
 14 The LFB Inspecting Officers undertook their post-Notice
 15 inspection at Adair Tower on 28 September 2016 and at
 16 Hazlewood Tower on 15 November 2016 — formal
 17 notification of the outcome of these inspections was
 18 awaited."
 19 Then the chief executive's report was noted.
 20 Now, there doesn't appear to have been any
 21 discussion, either of the changes to the fire strategy
 22 or of the potential prosecution, or the deficiency
 23 notice for Lonsdale House.
 24 Can you help us understand why there was no such
 25 discussion?

20

1 A. Well, there may have been discussion, but the discussion
 2 wouldn't have been minuted because the minutes were not
 3 verbatim records.
 4 Q. No. Do you remember independently any discussion of any
 5 of those topics?
 6 A. Can't remember, sorry.
 7 Q. What about door-closers?
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Sorry, can I just ask you: if you
 9 felt that significant matters had been omitted from the
 10 minutes, no doubt that would have been raised at the
 11 next meeting, wouldn't it?
 12 A. Well, in the past, I'd raised the fact that some issues
 13 I had raised had not been minuted, and at that point
 14 I was told that they were not verbatim records, they
 15 were just records of what was agreed. So I'd already
 16 challenged that, the way —
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, it's always open, presumably,
 18 to the board as a whole either to adopt the minutes as
 19 they were presented in draft or to ask to have them
 20 corrected or supplemented?
 21 A. Well, that was open to the board. It wasn't open to me
 22 because I'd already raised it.
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: No, no, but someone's got to raise
 24 it with the board in order for the board to make
 25 a decision about it.

21

1 A. Well, I had done in the past.
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, but there were no limits to the
 3 number of times you could do it, was there?
 4 A. Well, the answer would have been the same.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, it might have been; it perhaps
 6 might not. Do you think?
 7 A. Well, it would have depended a lot on who'd raised it.
 8 If I'd raised it, it certainly wouldn't have been
 9 accepted.
 10 MR MILLETT: Why do you say that?
 11 A. Well, because most of the things that I said were not
 12 accepted at board meetings, that's why they weren't
 13 minuted.
 14 Q. Is it your recollection that you were something of
 15 a lone voice on the board?
 16 A. Yes. I put that in one of my statements.
 17 Q. I see. Therefore, is it right that if you had wanted to
 18 raise something which you thought was relevant, which
 19 had been discussed, and wanted to insert that into the
 20 minute, you would be rebuffed?
 21 A. Well, I mean, I cite as an example my concern about the
 22 internal TMO review of the works done at Grenfell Tower
 23 which I had challenged, and that was completely ignored
 24 and I wasn't allowed to speak to it even.
 25 Q. We'll come back to that topic later.

22

1 A. Okay.
 2 Q. Can you tell us in the main to whom you would address
 3 your suggestions and by whom you would be rebuffed?
 4 A. Robert Black. Relating to the board.
 5 Q. In relation to the board?
 6 A. Mm.
 7 Q. Yes. Was that your routine experience?
 8 A. Well, I mean, I'd given up with the board, frankly.
 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'm sorry I keep interrupting, but
 10 I'd just like to understand the position.
 11 Mr Black was the chief executive; was he a member of
 12 the board? He wasn't, was he?
 13 A. No, the board was the non-executives, but the executives
 14 and the chief executive reported to the board and
 15 attended board meetings.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, of course, but I assume that
 17 the board meetings were run by the chairman.
 18 A. Well, I can only go back to what I was asked about
 19 Mrs Edwards', the chair of the board, her witness
 20 statement that I agreed with where she said that she
 21 felt that the residents didn't run the board.
 22 I paraphrase, I can't remember exactly what she said in
 23 her statement, but I agreed with it.
 24 MR MILLETT: Who did run the board?
 25 A. The chief executive. In —

23

1 Q. But he wasn't on it. Sorry, forgive me.
 2 A. In practice, as opposed to — I mean, we've discussed
 3 this before: the theory and the practice tended to be
 4 different.
 5 Q. Yes, you have said that, and that was very clear in your
 6 evidence on Thursday.
 7 A. Mm—hm.
 8 Q. If you had wanted a discussion, or perhaps even
 9 a decision, held or taken at a board meeting to be
 10 recorded in the board minutes, why wouldn't it be
 11 the chairman's decision whether or not the minutes
 12 should reflect that discussion or decision as opposed to
 13 Robert Black, who was not on the board?
 14 A. Well, I can best give you an example. I think there was
 15 something that the board agreed which I wanted my name
 16 recorded against, and the moment I said I wanted my name
 17 recorded against, there was a huge row blew up as to
 18 why.
 19 Q. I'm really just trying to get a feel for why
 20 Robert Black, to your recollection, was interfering with
 21 matters of board governance in respect of a board of
 22 which he was not a member?
 23 A. Because the executive officers reported to the board,
 24 and they produced the reports, we questioned the
 25 reports.

24

1 Q. Yes, but the matter of keeping records of the board is
2 a matter for the board, not the executive team.
3 A. Yeah.
4 Q. So why weren't the records of the board solely the
5 domain of the board?
6 A. Well, as I said, I'd challenged them in the past and
7 been rebuffed. I don't know if other people had.
8 Q. Yes. By whom on the board had you been rebuffed?
9 A. Nobody, as far as I recollect.
10 Q. Right.
11 Now, let's look at what happened a week before this
12 board meeting on 17 November 2016.
13 Can we go to {TMO10017254}, please.
14 This is a deficiency notice issued by the LFB in
15 respect of Grenfell Tower dated 17 November 2016, as you
16 can see, and it's addressed to Janice Wray.
17 If you look at the first paragraph, towards the
18 bottom of your screen, it's the last sentence:
19 "... action should be taken by 18 May 2017."
20 If you go to page 5 {TMO10017254/5} you will see the
21 schedule of observations, and I'll summarise these for
22 you, on this page and the next.
23 In summary, the LFB wanted action on the following:
24 Under Article 11, you can see multiple actions in
25 the common parts, as they call it, several fire doors

25

1 didn't fit fully into their frames, breach in the
2 services duct.
3 Article 17(1), the first one is several fire doors
4 didn't fit fully into the frame, and the second one the
5 protected route had been compromised by the fitting of
6 doors that didn't close. Flats 44 and 153 were checked
7 and did not self-close.
8 Article 14 -- this is on the next page
9 {TMO10017254/6} -- twice, emergency routes or exits
10 inadequate in that there were various items stored in
11 the common parts, and again, in the second one,
12 emergency routes inadequate in that the two doors did
13 not self-close.
14 Article 8, smoke spread precautions inadequate due
15 to a breach in the services duct on the 8th floor.
16 Article 15(1), fire action notices not displayed.
17 I've summarised these.
18 Did you see this notice or the schedule of the
19 notice at the time, do you think?
20 A. No, certainly not.
21 Q. Certainly not, you're very clear about that.
22 A. Yes. The first time I saw it was when it was submitted
23 to this Inquiry.
24 Q. I see. So you weren't even made aware of this --
25 A. No.

26

1 Q. Right.
2 A. It would have supported the arguments I was making, that
3 I was having with the TMO and with Laura Johnson about
4 the fire problems at Grenfell Tower.
5 Q. Yes.
6 Do you agree that it is, by the middle of
7 November 2016, absolutely clear that the LFB were
8 concerned about the self-closer issue, if I can call it
9 that?
10 A. It's clear from this, yes. It wasn't clear at the time.
11 It was clear that I had concerns, the residents had
12 concerns. The matrixes which I agreed with Mr Thompson
13 and Mr Daffarn pointed this out.
14 Q. Yes, and those, to be clear, in chronological terms,
15 were August 2015 and May 2016 --
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. -- weren't they?
18 A. Yeah, yeah.
19 Q. Do you know whether this notice was raised under any
20 other business at the 24 November 2016 meeting?
21 A. Not that I recollect, no.
22 Q. No. On your evidence, it can't have been, otherwise you
23 would have known about it.
24 A. Well, of course I would. I would have used it in my
25 submissions to the TMO and Laura Johnson about my

27

1 concerns, and the concerns of residents, about
2 fire safety at Grenfell Tower.
3 Q. Yes. Does it follow from that answer that it ought to
4 have been raised with the board?
5 A. Absolutely, yes.
6 Q. Can we then go to --
7 A. And with the borough.
8 Q. Can we then go to {TMO10045908/2}, please.
9 This is an email from you on 23 November 2016. Now,
10 that's an important date because it's the day before the
11 board meeting of 24 November 2016, the minutes of which
12 we have now seen, and we've seen the ambit of the
13 discussion, which was why I've shown that to you
14 already.
15 Here is your email, and the topic is "Grenfell Tower
16 (again!)", and it says:
17 "While Mr Daffarn engages in hyperbole in his
18 Grenfell Action Group blog, it is read by most residents
19 of the Tower and the most recent article causes me
20 concern. Mr Daffarn discussed the fire safety issue
21 with me at a recent meeting and I did point out that the
22 instructions in the event of fire had been included in
23 one of the refurbishment newsletters. However, I do
24 take his point that instructions are not permanently
25 available on noticeboards nor in a discrete letter to

28

1 all residents (and in appropriate languages where
2 required) and I am asking whether this can be
3 rectified?"

4 Then you set out the content as an extract from the
5 most recent blog, and you can see that he refers to the
6 enforcement order which dates back to earlier in the
7 year in respect of Adair Tower.

8 If we go up to page 1 {TMO10045908/1}, we can see
9 Janice Wray's response to you the next day,
10 24 November 2016, at 08.51, and she says:
11 "Dear Councillor Blakeman ..."
12 Copied to Robert Black and Barbara Matthews:
13 "Robert has asked me to respond to your e-mail
14 highlighting fire safety issues raised by Mr Daffarn in
15 his blog.
16 "With regard to fire procedures in Grenfell Tower,
17 I can confirm that these were included in newsletters to
18 the block and they are also documented on our website.
19 Further, we do publish regular fire safety articles in
20 'The Link' magazine to all residents and we write to all
21 new tenants to outline the fire strategy for their
22 block, the procedure to follow in the event of a fire in
23 their flat and also a fire elsewhere in their block and
24 advise them of the London Fire Brigade's (LFB) free Home
25 Fire Safety Visit and how to access this. Additionally,

29

1 I can advise that we are currently considering
2 a programme of installation of Fire Action Notices —
3 similar to those now installed at Adair and Hazlewood
4 Towers — across all blocks. There has been a difference
5 of opinion amongst London Fire Brigade officers on the
6 value of fitting these notices within a block with a
7 'stay put' fire strategy, however, we are keen to be
8 proactive about this and I can confirm that we will be
9 proceeding with the fitting of these notices at
10 Grenfell Tower. It is likely that this will be
11 completed within the next two weeks.

12 "However, Mr Daffarn appears to be challenging the
13 'stay put' fire strategy, stating that this is the wrong
14 strategy and that we should be adopting a 'one out all
15 out' approach at Grenfell Tower. I would emphasise
16 that, despite extensive discussions with the LFB and
17 other fire professionals including our Fire Consultant
18 and Senior Consultants from specialist fire engineering
19 companies in relation to Grenfell Tower at no point has
20 the need to change the stay put strategy even been
21 raised. Further, the LFB operational crews continue to
22 be very proactive about undertaking regular
23 familiarisation visits to this block and the other
24 blocks on this estate and remain content with the
25 arrangements in place.

30

1 "Finally, with regard to the mention of a fatal fire
2 at Hazlewood Tower 10 years ago I'm afraid I have no
3 knowledge of this. However, I have requested that the
4 LFB interrogate their records and advise on this. I am
5 also unclear on the reference to 'the Fire Investigation
6 Team ordered that the grills on the fire escape
7 staircase be covered over'. I can confirm that
8 Adair Tower was regularly audited by the LFB — most
9 recent in the month before the fire took place — and no
10 recommendations were made in relation to the design of
11 either staircase or the lift lobbies. Requirements in
12 relation to these areas were included in the Enforcement
13 Notices as it was only following the fire that the LFB
14 recommended that changes to the Building's original
15 design were required.
16 "I hope this is helpful but please let me know if
17 I can be of further assistance."
18 I've read that all to you because it's all
19 important, but this email, as I pointed out, was sent to
20 you at 08.51 am. Did you receive this before the TMO
21 board meeting on 24 November 2016, which was later in
22 the day?
23 A. I can't remember.
24 Q. Do you remember reading it —
25 A. Oh, yes.

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1 Q. — before the board meeting?
2 A. I don't know about reading it before the board meeting.
3 I doubt it somehow.
4 Q. Your concern was fire safety and specifically
5 fire safety instructions to residents; is that right?
6 A. Yes. Well, that's what the residents had asked me to
7 raise, yes.
8 Q. Yes. Do you know why you didn't, at least according to
9 the record we've seen, the minutes we've seen, raise
10 those concerns at the TMO board meeting?
11 A. Well, I may have done, but it wouldn't have been
12 minuted.
13 Q. I see. Do you recall doing so independently?
14 A. I can't remember.
15 Q. Janice Wray says, or suggests, at least, that there was
16 a plan to install fire action notices at Grenfell Tower
17 within two weeks.
18 Did you know at the time that that was related to
19 the deficiency notice at Grenfell Tower? Presumably
20 not, in light of your last answers.
21 A. No.
22 Q. Would you have expected Janice Wray to refer to the
23 deficiency notice for Grenfell Tower in her email to you
24 in answering your concern?
25 A. Well, certainly if I'd known about it, yes.

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1 Q. No, particularly if you hadn't known about it.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Would you have expected her to be candid with you —
 4 A. Yeah.
 5 Q. — and tell you that there had been a deficiency notice
 6 on precisely this —
 7 A. Yes, but that would have then supported my argument that
 8 there were problems at Grenfell Tower about fire safety.
 9 Q. So you agree?
 10 A. Yeah.
 11 Q. Yes.
 12 I think it's right, just to confirm, at this stage
 13 you did not know or still did not know that before the
 14 fire at Adair Tower, the LFB had issued a deficiency
 15 notice in respect of that building? No. No.
 16 Now, as you see in the last paragraph, Janice Wray
 17 said that the LFB had audited Adair Tower a month before
 18 the fire and no recommendations were made in relation to
 19 the design of the staircase and the lift lobbies.
 20 Did that lead you to believe that the LFB had not
 21 identified any other concerns at Adair Tower before the
 22 fire in that building?
 23 A. Well, I hadn't seen the deficiency notice.
 24 Q. Exactly right, and therefore did — well, let me ask it
 25 this way: what did her representations in that last

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1 paragraph about Adair Tower and the audit by the LFB
 2 lead you to think about what the LFB had thought about
 3 Adair Tower before the fire in that building?
 4 A. Well, I suspect it would have led me to believe that
 5 everything was okay at Adair Tower and Hazlewood Tower.
 6 Q. Now, the next board meeting, as I say, was
 7 10 January 2017. We haven't yet seen the minutes of
 8 that. They're at {TMO10046960/6}, if we can just go to
 9 those.
 10 We can see that you are present as one of the two
 11 council-nominated board members there, with Fay Edwards
 12 in the chair.
 13 If we can go, please, to paragraph 6.4 on page 8
 14 {TMO10046960/8}, we can see the minutes of the
 15 discussion:
 16 "6.4. A member queried whether the London
 17 Fire Brigade's (LFB) investigation into the fire at
 18 Adair had been concluded. The Executive Director of
 19 Financial Services & ICT informed the Board that the LFB
 20 had not yet closed the investigation. The solicitors at
 21 RBKC had been briefed in the event of a prosecution.
 22 The Company had carried out the works as specified in
 23 the enforcement notices. The Executive Team had visited
 24 the both Adair and Hazelwood buildings to see the
 25 completed works. A strategy is being developed to

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1 install self-closers to all flat entry doors across all
 2 the properties managed.
 3 "6.5. In response to a question from a Board
 4 member, the Executive Director of Financial Services &
 5 ICT confirmed that a Fire Risk Assessment had been
 6 completed after the works had been carried out which
 7 showed the improvements from the management actions and
 8 remedial works. There were a number of lessons learned
 9 from the incident which would be taken into account."
 10 Now, the last sentence of section 6.4 there about
 11 the strategy to install self-closers to all flat entry
 12 doors across all properties managed, given the lack of
 13 self-closers was an issue in the Adair Tower fire, and
 14 also an issue, as we've seen now from the deficiency
 15 notice, in respect of Grenfell, did you get the sense at
 16 this meeting that the installation of door-closers
 17 across the borough was a matter of the utmost urgency or
 18 not?
 19 A. Well, I would have done, but Laura Johnson deferred the
 20 whole programme, as I recollect, from the housing and
 21 property scrutiny committee meetings that I was at.
 22 Q. Yes. I'm asking you really your impression, as best you
 23 can recall it, whether the board was given the
 24 impression that this was an urgent matter being urgently
 25 remedied or not?

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1 A. I can't recollect.
 2 Q. Do you accept that the board ought to have demanded
 3 a tight and detailed timetable for the installation of
 4 door-closers, rather than accepting the suggestion of
 5 a "strategy" being "developed"?
 6 A. All I can say to that is I suspect the board assumed
 7 that the strategy meant that it was going to be
 8 implemented.
 9 Q. Right, but how quickly? Did you get any sense of
 10 urgency?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. Shouldn't you have done? Shouldn't the board have taken
 13 the bull by the horns and demanded a rapid roll-out of
 14 a door-closer programme across the borough?
 15 A. The board may have done, I don't recollect.
 16 Q. You don't recollect that?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. Again, there is no mention here of the Grenfell Tower
 19 deficiency notice of 17 November 2016 that I've shown
 20 you. Do you recall whether this document was mentioned
 21 at all in this —
 22 A. No, I knew nothing about it until this Inquiry.
 23 Q. Yes.
 24 Can we then look next at the chief executive's
 25 report for the next meeting, 23 March 2017,

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1 {TMO10046960/6}. This is his report.
 2 I'm sorry, this is the —
 3 A. 10 January.
 4 Q. — minute of the January meeting.
 5 The report is for 23 March 2017, and we need to go,
 6 I think, to page 10 in this run of documents
 7 {TMO10046960/10}. That's the first page, and you can
 8 see that there is a synopsis, and item 5 in the synopsis
 9 is "Health & Safety (including Fire Safety)", if you can
 10 see that.
 11 If you go to page 15 {TMO10046960/15}, please, let's
 12 look at item 5, second main paragraph under
 13 "Adair Tower — LFB's 'ongoing investigation'":
 14 "The LFB's Fire Safety Team Leader advised at the
 15 regular LFB/TMO Liaison Meeting in January that the LFB
 16 had held a further case conference on this issue in the
 17 first week in January and their conclusion had been that
 18 there was enough evidence to prove offences but also
 19 a lot of mitigating circumstances. The question of
 20 whether a prosecution would be in the public interest is
 21 apparently still to be addressed."
 22 Now, if there had been any doubt at all in your mind
 23 about the status of that prosecution, do you accept that
 24 it was clear from that report that there was now
 25 sufficient evidence for a criminal prosecution over the

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1 Adair Tower fire?
 2 A. I don't think it says that.
 3 Q. Well, it says the LFB's conclusion had been that there
 4 was enough evidence to prove offences.
 5 A. But also a lot of mitigating circumstances, whatever
 6 they were.
 7 Q. Well, do you remember this discussion?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. So you don't remember your reaction —
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. — to the update about the possibility of prosecution?
 12 A. No. Was I at that meeting?
 13 Q. Yes, you were.
 14 A. Okay.
 15 Q. If we go on to page 16 {TMO10046960/16}, "LFB Notices of
 16 Fire Safety Deficiencies", and there is a long list
 17 here, but it says:
 18 "If, whilst undertaking an audit, the LFB consider
 19 there are deficiencies which require attention but which
 20 are not significant enough to warrant an Enforcement
 21 Notice, they will issue a Deficiency Notice. These
 22 documents have no legal standing but the LFB do include
 23 a timeframe within which they expect landlords to
 24 comply. Further, in the event of non-compliance there
 25 is the possibility that these could be escalated and

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1 an Enforcement Notice served."
 2 Then this:
 3 "Since the fire at Adair Tower in October 2015 the
 4 TMO have received nine Deficiency Notices in relation to
 5 the following blocks ..."
 6 Balfour House on the Balfour Burleigh Estate, five
 7 Notices in November 2015, that's about communal storage;
 8 Barandon Walk, Lancaster West, about the design, glazed
 9 roof; 9 Colville Square, and that's about stay put;
 10 Lonsdale House, which is about self-closing devices;
 11 Grenfell Tower, self-closing devices.
 12 Then a paragraph underneath it:
 13 "Self-closing devices on flat entrance doors.
 14 "The need to adopt a more proactive approach towards
 15 the retrofitting of self-closing devices on flat
 16 entrance doors throughout the housing stock was
 17 recognised as part of the thorough review of our Fire
 18 Policy & Strategy. This is necessary to satisfy the
 19 LFB's requirements as they have confirmed that they
 20 consider our previous policy would take too long to
 21 ensure 100% of tenanted doors are fitted with these
 22 devices. A change should also reduce the likelihood of
 23 further LFB Deficiency Notices being issued on the basis
 24 of absent self-closers. The TMO is, therefore,
 25 currently in discussion with RBKC about the possibility

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1 of introducing a 3 or 5-year programme to install
 2 self-closing devices across the stock."
 3 Now, there is a lot of text there that I've read to
 4 you but a number of questions which arise.
 5 First of all, nine deficiency notices. Surely that
 6 was to the board a red flag for the TMO that something
 7 wasn't quite right with how the TMO were going about
 8 managing fire safety in their stock; do you accept that?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Do you remember that?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. You don't remember being impressed or depressed,
 13 perhaps, that there were nine deficiencies?
 14 A. Probably, but I couldn't —
 15 Q. Right.
 16 Did you note that the final bullet point related to
 17 Grenfell Tower and the maintenance of flat entrance door
 18 self-closers, something close to your heart?
 19 A. Yeah, yeah, I may have noticed that, I don't know.
 20 Q. Right. You can't remember?
 21 A. I can't remember.
 22 Q. Right.
 23 I've shown you the paragraph under the heading
 24 "Self-closing devices on flat entrance doors". Given
 25 that there had been issues or problems with self-closers

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1 in Adair Tower to such an extent that the LFB were still
 2 considering a prosecution of the TMO, was anybody on the
 3 TMO board saying, "Three to five years and certainly
 4 five years is far too long for this plan"?
 5 A. I have no recollection, but it was probably because the
 6 TMO didn't have the funds to do it.
 7 Q. Did nobody think to go to Laura Johnson and say,
 8 "Five years is certainly too long, it must be shorter,
 9 we need the money"?
 10 A. Well, I know now that Barbara Matthews did say that --
 11 Q. Right.
 12 A. -- to Laura Johnson.
 13 Q. Was there any discussion on the board about the board
 14 doing that?
 15 A. I can't remember.
 16 Q. Rather than leaving it to the officers?
 17 A. There may well have been, I can't remember.
 18 Q. Right.
 19 Did anybody on the board ask how this apparently
 20 generic problem, penetrating the entirety, it seems, of
 21 the TMO stock at the time, had been permitted to arise?
 22 A. Possibly, I can't remember.
 23 Q. You can't remember.
 24 Did nobody actually ask, you know, "Are these fire
 25 risk assessors really competent to do their job, whoever

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1 they are?"
 2 A. I don't think so, no.
 3 Q. Did nobody ask the question, "Is your system for closing
 4 out fire risk assessment items actually working?"
 5 A. I have no recollection.
 6 Q. Did anybody raise the question of the regularity of
 7 inspections of self-closing devices or the maintenance
 8 programme in respect of those devices?
 9 A. No, I don't remember.
 10 Q. Or how you were going to stop tenants pulling them off
 11 or breaking them or stopping them --
 12 A. Again, I don't remember.
 13 Q. No. Right.
 14 Can we turn to a completely different topic, which
 15 is the complaints process.
 16 Now, in your time as councillor, Ms Blakeman, it's
 17 right that you raised a significant number of complaints
 18 and concerns on behalf of residents of Grenfell Tower,
 19 didn't you?
 20 A. Amongst other residents, yes.
 21 Q. Amongst other residents, amongst other properties?
 22 A. Sorry, amongst other blocks, properties, estates,
 23 sometimes right across the whole borough.
 24 Q. Yes.
 25 I'd like to ask you about your understanding of the

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1 process by which residents could raise fire safety
 2 concerns, before we look at specific complaints and
 3 concerns that you did raise on their behalves.
 4 Can we start, please, by looking at your statement
 5 to the Inquiry {RBK00054461/16}, paragraph 84. You say
 6 there, under the heading "Communications with
 7 residents", answering the question:
 8 "What system was there, if any, for residents to
 9 express their concerns and views about fire safety?"
 10 You say this:
 11 "In theory residents could express their concerns
 12 and views to the KCTMO, to Rydon during the
 13 refurbishment, to RBKC, through the GTLA and the
 14 Compact, to the Lancaster West Residents Association, to
 15 ward councillors, via the Grenfell Action Group blog and
 16 directly to Cabinet Members and the Member of
 17 Parliament."
 18 Now, you have described the Lancaster West
 19 Residents' Association in paragraph 85, if you look
 20 a little bit below that, in the fourth line, as "rather
 21 inactive at the time". What was the time that you're
 22 referring to there?
 23 A. Well, that whole period of the refurbishment of
 24 Grenfell Tower.
 25 Q. Right.

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1 A. And before.
 2 Q. I see.
 3 When did the Lancaster West Residents' Association
 4 cease to be rather active?
 5 A. I don't recollect when they ceased to be active because
 6 they were not very active throughout the whole period,
 7 as I recollect. Towards the end, they then had
 8 an election and a new committee came in which was much
 9 more active, but that was very late in the day.
 10 Q. Was it open to Grenfell Tower residents to join the
 11 Lancaster West Residents' Association?
 12 A. Well, they could have done, yes.
 13 Q. And presumably they could have revived it as well, if
 14 they thought it was inactive?
 15 A. Well, it would have been like turning round a large
 16 tanker, because they wanted to be able to negotiate with
 17 the council and Rydon and the TMO about the works to
 18 Grenfell Tower. If they'd at the same time had to
 19 revive the Residents' Association that covered the whole
 20 of the estate, which is the biggest in the borough, they
 21 would have not had time to raise their issues about
 22 Grenfell Tower.
 23 Q. I see. I see. So is that why the revival of the LWRA
 24 was actually not considered as an option, do you know?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Right.
 2 Can we then turn to something called the Memoli
 3 report.
 4 Do you remember that, in 2009, Maria Memoli,
 5 an independent adjudicator, completed an investigation
 6 report on long-standing complaints about the TMO?
 7 A. I was told about that. I was not involved at the time.
 8 Q. Did you read it at the time?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. You didn't?
 11 A. No. I was not involved in housing at that time.
 12 Q. No, all right.
 13 A. I was told about it by residents.
 14 Q. Did you come to learn of the Memoli report?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. When was that, do you remember?
 17 A. Oh, crikey. Well, it was during the time when the
 18 residents were up in arms about the refurbishment of
 19 Grenfell Tower.
 20 Q. So from 2012, is that a — I'm guessing. Can you help
 21 me?
 22 A. No, the refurbishment didn't start in 2012.
 23 Q. Well, the discussion of it did.
 24 A. Yeah, but that was just approval of the principle.
 25 Q. Well, can you tell me, though, when, to the best of your

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1 recollection, you first became aware of the Memoli
 2 report?
 3 A. It was probably round about 2014/2015.
 4 Q. Right.
 5 Let's look at it, {IWS00001462}. There it is,
 6 that's its first page.
 7 On page 3 {IWS00001462/3} we have an executive
 8 summary. If we look at the first paragraph, it says:
 9 "There are a number of tenants, leaseholders and
 10 freeholders within the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
 11 who feel aggrieved that their problems have not been
 12 resolved by the TMO despite several years of
 13 complaining."
 14 Then if you look down to the bottom of page 3, you
 15 can see the summary of the main recommendations. If we
 16 scroll through those, you see at the bottom of page 3
 17 "Customer Care/Relations".
 18 On to page 4 {IWS00001462/4}, "Customer
 19 Services/Complaints" and "Repairs, Major Works and
 20 Service Charges".
 21 Over on to page 5 {IWS00001462/5}, "Governance
 22 Issues", "Corporate Policy", "Financial Issues",
 23 "Follow-up and Review", et cetera.
 24 Page 43 {IWS00001462/43} and onwards are the
 25 detailed recommendations.

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1 You say you first became aware of this or read this
 2 document in 2014, you think?
 3 A. I became aware of it. I didn't read it. I didn't have
 4 a copy of it.
 5 Q. Right. When do you think you first read it?
 6 A. When this Inquiry started.
 7 Q. How did you become aware of it, do you remember?
 8 A. Residents mentioned it to me, and so I think it was
 9 referred to at the board at one stage as well.
 10 Q. I was going to ask you, do you remember when it was
 11 referred to the board?
 12 A. No, it was referred to at the board, at a board meeting
 13 that I was at.
 14 Q. Yes, do you remember when that was?
 15 A. No. Probably quite early on during my service on the
 16 board.
 17 Q. Right.
 18 Do I take from your evidence so far about this
 19 document that none of the main recommendations I've
 20 pointed out to you on pages 3, 4 and 5 of this document
 21 informed the TMO's work when you were a board member?
 22 A. I've no idea, because the report was 2009, I joined the
 23 board right at the end of 2012 —
 24 Q. Yes.
 25 A. — by which time I understood that the Memoli report

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1 recommendations had been implemented.
 2 Q. When you joined the board in that year, did somebody
 3 tell you there was a Memoli report but not to worry
 4 about it because the recommendations had been
 5 implemented?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. So when you say, "by which time I understood that the
 8 Memoli report recommendations had been implemented",
 9 when did that understanding first come into your mind?
 10 A. Well, it didn't sort of occur in one go, it kind of
 11 occurred over the years as I was on the board.
 12 Q. Right.
 13 Can we just try and break this down a bit and see if
 14 we can get to what happened.
 15 So you say it was the residents who first brought
 16 the existence of the Memoli report to your attention?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Does that tell us that when you joined the board and
 19 thereafter, until the residents told you about it, you
 20 had no idea about it, and it was never discussed at
 21 a board meeting?
 22 A. It certainly wasn't discussed at the board when I was
 23 there.
 24 Q. Do you remember who it was who first brought the
 25 existence of the Memoli report to your attention?

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1 A. I think it may have been Mr Montero from World's End.
 2 Q. Oh, I see, not somebody from Lancaster West or Grenfell?
 3 A. No.
 4 Q. When he brought it to your attention, did you go and see
 5 if you could find a copy?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Why is that?
 8 A. No time.
 9 Q. No time.
 10 Did you ever see the adjudication judgment, draft or
 11 final, of somebody called John Butler of July 2009?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. Did you ever see a follow-up document which was the
 14 appendix to that document —
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. — about what should be done by the TMO in response to
 17 the Memoli recommendations?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. No. Do you know at all, even now, what role the board
 20 of the TMO played in following up on the Memoli
 21 recommendations and the Butler report?
 22 A. I only know that they got a new chief executive and they
 23 got rid of some of the members of the actual resident
 24 members of the board. But all that was before my time
 25 on the board.

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1 Q. When in 2014 you became aware of the existence of the
 2 Memoli report, did you go to any other member the board
 3 and say, "I hear that there is this report from 2009,
 4 I'd like to look at it, please, because I'm getting
 5 complaints about it"?
 6 A. No, I wasn't getting complaints about it, people were
 7 harking back and saying what they needed was another
 8 Memoli report.
 9 Q. I see. So is it right that nobody was saying to you at
 10 the time, "The Memoli recommendations have not been
 11 carried into effect so far as we can see"?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. I follow.
 14 Can we go to {MET00045751/12}, please. This is your
 15 28 June 2019 Metropolitan Police statement, page 12.
 16 Second paragraph from the bottom of the page, you say
 17 this:
 18 "I would say that generally, the TMO treated the
 19 residents and ward councillors with a fair amount of
 20 disdain. Any issues raised were deemed an exaggeration
 21 and it seemed that the TMO believed that ward
 22 councillors were being pushed by the Grenfell Action
 23 Group as we didn't like what was being written about us.
 24 This was not the case. Although some of the things that
 25 appeared on the GAG blog about the ward councillors were

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1 unjustified, other matters raised by GAG were absolutely
 2 justified. However, as I mentioned above GAG's apparent
 3 belief that if the ward councillors had opposed the
 4 school, it wouldn't have been built was unrealistic."
 5 What led you to believe that the TMO treated both
 6 residents and ward councillors with disdain?
 7 A. Because they did.
 8 Q. No, but what led you to believe that?
 9 A. Well, for example, the response to all my complaints.
 10 Q. Was that attitude always prevalent in your experience as
 11 a board member?
 12 A. If the complaint was simple, and it could be resolved,
 13 then it would be resolved. But, for example, the
 14 matrices that I submitted. I mean, we discussed this on
 15 Thursday, that their responses to me tended to be bland
 16 reassurances rather than active responses.
 17 Q. Now, can we go to {TMO00885441}.
 18 This is a TMO operations committee meeting on
 19 1 October 2014, and we can see that you were there as
 20 present.
 21 If you go to page 3 {TMO00885441/3} and look at
 22 agenda item 7, please, "Performance update", you can see
 23 that there was a discussion about the TMO's performance.
 24 If we go over to page 4 {TMO00885441/4} at
 25 paragraph 7.8, it says:

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1 "Deborah Price questioned how issues raised by
 2 residents could be addressed which had somehow bypassed
 3 the complaints' process, yet resolved. Committee
 4 members thought that there was some ambiguity around how
 5 an enquiry progressed to a formal complaint although it
 6 was confirmed that these were also responded to. Simon
 7 Brissenden felt that there was a grey area at the start
 8 of the process, as it could prove difficult to establish
 9 when a complaint was originally raised by stage 3 of the
 10 process."
 11 Then at 7.9 it says:
 12 "The Committee also questioned whether there was any
 13 guidance on the online complaints process. Confirmation
 14 was given that the complaints' procedure was being
 15 reviewed, and Committee members' concerns would be
 16 addressed."
 17 Do you remember whether there was any substantive
 18 difference in how a complaint or an enquiry was treated
 19 by the TMO? In other words, any difference between
 20 treatment of a complaint on the one hand and treatment
 21 of an enquiry on the other?
 22 A. Well, at that stage I don't think I realised that they
 23 were treating some issues as enquiries and others as
 24 complaints, so I can't answer that.
 25 Q. It says at 7.8:

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1 "Committee members thought that there was some
2 ambiguity around how an enquiry progressed to a formal
3 complaint ... [and] Simon Brissenden felt that there was
4 a grey area ... "
5 Do you remember yourself feeling that the complaints
6 process was confusing as between what is properly
7 a complaint and what was properly an enquiry, as
8 defined?
9 A. Well, I asked for the KPI to be changed to ensure that
10 councillors' enquiries were included in the KPI, because
11 they weren't, and I ...
12 Q. That's KPIs.
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. From the residents' perspective, was it your impression
15 that there was confusion about which process to use,
16 an enquiry process --
17 A. Oh, yes, a huge confusion. An awful lot of residents
18 didn't understand the TMO's complaints process at all,
19 that's why they came to us.
20 Q. I see.
21 Can we look, please, at {TMO00879692}.
22 This is the TMO complaints policy which was revised
23 on 30 July 2015 and agreed by the TMO board -- the
24 board, including you -- on 10 September 2015. The
25 earlier version, I should just tell you, was dated 2010.

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1 That's the document, and it was presented to the TMO
2 operations committee on 30 July 2015 in accordance with
3 that notation, and we see those minutes at
4 {TMO00885900}, please.
5 I'll just show you the first page of that. We can
6 see that these are the minutes of the operations
7 committee on 30 July 2015, and you are present as
8 the council-appointed board member. You see that?
9 A. Mm--hm.
10 Q. If we go to page 5 in the document {TMO00885900/5},
11 paragraph 10.5, we can see that it says under the
12 heading "Revision of complaints policy" at the top of
13 this section, 10.5:
14 "Brendan Tracey sought clarity on whether the
15 provisions around the use of the complaints procedure by
16 KCTMO Board Members, Councillors, MPs and other elected
17 representatives to make complaints on behalf of their
18 constituents would not be considered as a conflict of
19 interest particularly for Board member.
20 Fola Kafidiya--Oke confirmed that the provisions of the
21 clause would result in a conflict, as Board members
22 could not use their position to act on behalf of
23 residents and any Board members involvement in such
24 matters would be limited to sign posting residents or
25 making no reference to their position. Janet Seward

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1 agreed to delete the wording from the revised policy."
2 What was the concern, do you remember, about TMO
3 board members making complaints on behalf of
4 constituents?
5 A. I don't remember the concern. I do remember being
6 challenged by the chief executive at one board meeting
7 about my perceived conflict of interest, and I remember
8 answering that by saying that I was elected to represent
9 the interests of Notting Dale residents and that would
10 always be my priority.
11 Q. Was that in early 2016 in relation to the TMO
12 investigation of the --
13 A. No, no, no --
14 Q. -- refurbishment?
15 A. -- it was much earlier than that.
16 Q. Do you remember what that was in connection with?
17 A. No.
18 Q. Do you remember this meeting and what this concern was
19 about, about board members making complaints --
20 A. No, I don't.
21 Q. -- on behalf of their constituents?
22 A. Unless it related to me, I don't know.
23 Q. By removing the wording to this effect from the policy,
24 was it agreed, do you remember, that board members could
25 not make complaints on behalf of their constituents if

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1 they were also a councillor?
2 A. I remember having a meeting with Fola Kafidiya about it,
3 and I remember advising the -- both the Labour group and
4 the council, I think, that in that case, if there were
5 the case, then no councillor who had any TMO property in
6 their ward could actually be on the board.
7 Q. Right. And what did you think of that?
8 A. Well, I thought that was absurd.
9 Q. That was what I was going to ask you.
10 A. There was only about one ward that didn't have any TMO
11 property in it.
12 Q. Well, I was going to ask you, surely this conflict
13 identified in this minute here was inherent in the idea
14 that councillors could sit on the TMO board?
15 A. Yeah, yeah.
16 Q. So if that's the case, why was it a conflict, did you
17 understand, for a board member to support or assist with
18 a complaint by a resident about the service provided by
19 the TMO?
20 A. Well, I didn't think it was a conflict.
21 Q. Who was pushing the idea that this was a conflict?
22 A. Robert Black, I think.
23 Q. But he wasn't on the board?
24 A. No.
25 Q. So how could he push it? What power did he have --

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1 A. Oh, sorry, no, he would have pushed it as chief
2 executive.
3 Q. But it wouldn't have been in his gift to call out
4 conflicts like that, would it? That would be for
5 the chairman or the rest of the board.
6 A. I think conflicts were called out by members of the
7 executive from time to time.
8 Q. Right.
9 What did the rest of the board think of this idea?
10 A. I'm not sure they understood it.
11 Q. Was the idea of having a TMO board comprised in part, at
12 least, of people like you that the board should be
13 impartial and independent, supervising the work of the
14 executive officers?
15 A. If you look at the role of councillors under the council
16 constitution, one of our roles is to sit on boards as
17 determined by the council.
18 Q. Yes.
19 A. And my understanding was that councillors sitting on the
20 board of the TMO were to ensure that the money was spent
21 properly.
22 Q. But was it not also to make sure that the work done by
23 the executive team was done properly?
24 A. I've no idea.
25 Q. Did you not understand —

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1 A. I was never given any induction or any explanation as to
2 why I was put on the board.
3 Q. No.
4 A. Only that the Labour group had one place on the board
5 and I was nominated to it by the Labour group.
6 Q. I'm just trying to get to the bottom of your
7 understanding of what the role of the board was.
8 Was it your understanding that the role of the board
9 was to be an impartial and independent organ,
10 supervising and scrutinising the work of the executive?
11 A. The work of the TMO.
12 Q. Yes, the work of the TMO executive.
13 A. Well, no, the work of the whole TMO, not just the
14 executive.
15 Q. Yes, but you were on the board.
16 A. Mm.
17 Q. And did you understand that the role of the board was to
18 supervise and scrutinise the work of the executive team?
19 A. To scrutinise and to challenge when they felt it was not
20 being done properly.
21 Q. You did think that?
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. Therefore, that being the case, how could there possibly
24 have been a conflict in taking up causes raised with you
25 by residents which had arisen out of the way in which

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1 the TMO executive team had done their work?
2 A. Well, I never thought there was a conflict.
3 Q. No.
4 A. In fact, I asked the borough solicitor about it.
5 Q. Can you enlighten us as to why anybody would have
6 thought that there was a conflict of this kind as
7 identified or reported in this minute?
8 A. Well, I gather that company law says that when the board
9 has made a decision, everybody is bound by it, whether
10 they agree with it or not.
11 Q. No, that's not quite an answer to my question.
12 Are you able to explain the circumstances in which
13 this notion of a conflict had arisen?
14 A. Well, I knew that they were very upset with the way
15 I was behaving.
16 Q. They being whom?
17 A. The board.
18 Q. Why would the board be upset?
19 A. Because I was submitting complaints to the TMO.
20 Q. To your way of thinking, did you think that the rest of
21 the board didn't understand that their role was to be
22 an impartial and independent organ supervising the work
23 of its officers?
24 A. Some of them may not have understood that.
25 Q. Did you get the impression that that was the case?

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1 A. Yes.
2 Q. Who? Who did not understand that role?
3 A. It would depend. I can't recollect. But certainly
4 the council nominees. Certainly the Conservative
5 council nominees — the council nominees, I don't know,
6 I can't remember.
7 Q. Was it your impression from time to time that members of
8 the board would, as it were, close ranks —
9 A. Yes.
10 Q. — with the TMO executive?
11 A. Oh, absolutely, yes.
12 Q. What gave you that impression?
13 A. The way I was treated.
14 Q. In relation to complaints?
15 A. Yes.
16 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Are we to understand, then, that the
17 tenant members of the board who were, after all, in
18 a majority, closed ranks against you?
19 A. Some of them did, yes. Not all of them, but the
20 majority of them.
21 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: And did you have any understanding
22 as to why they did that?
23 A. Well, they were trained in being board members by the
24 executive; I wasn't.
25 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, what sort of training did they

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1 have?
 2 A. Well, I don't know because I wasn't included in it.
 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I see.
 4 Yes, thank you.
 5 MR MILLETT: Were there any other councillors who shared
 6 your view about other board members not understanding
 7 the role of the board as an impartial and independent
 8 organ?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Who were they?
 11 A. The members of the Labour group. Those who bothered --
 12 who understood what was going on, yeah.
 13 Q. I see. It sounds to me as if the impression that you're
 14 telling us about split on party lines.
 15 A. Yeah.
 16 Q. Is that right?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 MR MILLETT: I see.
 19 Mr Chairman, I have one document before a natural
 20 break.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, very well.
 22 MR MILLETT: Thank you.
 23 Can I go to your statement, please, at
 24 {RBK00054461/21}, paragraph 111. You're dealing with
 25 complaints by residents in this section, and you say

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1 this:
 2 "Some fire safety issues were mentioned from time to
 3 time on the Grenfell Action Group blog. On occasion
 4 I would suggest to the Chief Executive, Robert Black
 5 that the TMO should take the blog seriously, but he told
 6 me that no one at the TMO ever read it. I do not
 7 believe that this was true, but had no grounds to
 8 challenge that assertion."
 9 Why did you suggest to Robert Black that he take the
 10 GAG blog seriously?
 11 A. Because a lot of the complaints that they raised,
 12 particularly about fire safety, were quite valid in my
 13 view.
 14 Q. Even though from time to time they were quite rude about
 15 you?
 16 A. Yes. Yeah, I mean, that was one of the reasons why
 17 I wasn't convinced when Robert Black told me that no one
 18 at the TMO read the blog, because from time to time
 19 members of the executive would say to me, "You've only
 20 submitted this complaint because you don't want the GAG
 21 to write something nasty about you".
 22 Q. Is that why you believe that TMO officials did read the
 23 GAG blog, contrary to what Robert Black was telling you?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. Did he not tell you that the TMO had blocked the GAG

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1 blog on their system sometime in 2014?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. That was the effect of Claire Williams' evidence to
 4 the Inquiry?
 5 A. That was the first time I heard it.
 6 Q. You didn't know that?
 7 A. No, I didn't know that.
 8 Q. Did Mr Black give you the impression that staff at the
 9 TMO did not read the GAG blog because they didn't take
 10 it seriously, or did he give you the impression that
 11 they didn't read it because they didn't want to read
 12 criticisms of the TMO, however colourfully expressed?
 13 A. Both.
 14 MR MILLETT: Both.
 15 Mr Chairman, is that a convenient moment?
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I think it is.
 17 We will have a break now, Ms Blakeman. We will
 18 resume at 11.35, please. And, again, I have to ask you
 19 not to talk to anyone about your evidence while you're
 20 out of the room. Thank you.
 21 (Pause)
 22 11.35, please, Mr Millett.
 23 (11.16 am)
 24 (A short break)
 25 (11.38 am)

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, Ms Blakeman. I'm sorry we
 2 kept you waiting a bit longer than I had suggested.
 3 I think there was a technical problem.
 4 THE WITNESS: So I heard.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Anyway, ready to carry on now,
 6 I hope.
 7 Yes, Mr Millett.
 8 MR MILLETT: Yes, Mr Chairman.
 9 Ms Blakeman, just one or two questions arising out
 10 of the evidence you gave before the break.
 11 First, on those occasions when you weren't satisfied
 12 that the minutes reflected the discussions or decisions
 13 held or taken at a board meeting, did you not seek at
 14 the next board meeting, when looking to adopt the
 15 minutes, to have those minutes corrected, or at least
 16 your objection or correction minuted?
 17 A. Well, as I said earlier, I had at one meeting tried
 18 that, and I was told that only the decisions would be
 19 minuted. So there was not a lot of point in continually
 20 raising the same matter.
 21 Q. Could you not have insisted that your objection itself
 22 be minuted?
 23 A. Well, that would have provoked another long
 24 conversation. If you recollect, I also said that there
 25 was one occasion when I asked for my dissent to

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1 a decision to be recorded, and that prompted a huge
 2 attack on me from Robert Black.
 3 Q. Yes. You do realise that the constitution, the articles
 4 of association of the TMO, require full and accurate
 5 minutes to be maintained, don't you?
 6 A. Well, I mean, the articles of association, they could
 7 have removed me at any time they wanted as well.
 8 Q. If you had a huge attack prompted by this discussion,
 9 directed at you by Robert Black, was your response to
 10 Robert Black not simply to say, "Mr Black, you are not
 11 a member of this board"?
 12 A. No, I'm quite used to being bullied by men.
 13 Q. Well —
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, you could perhaps have asked
 15 the chairman to point out to Mr Black, no doubt very
 16 politely, that he had no locus, no standing, to be
 17 making any comments on a matter of that kind.
 18 A. In theory, yes, but I doubt that the chair would have
 19 had the courage to do so either.
 20 MR MILLETT: Well, that brings me to the next question: did
 21 you ever raise your concerns about this way of carrying
 22 on corporate governance with the chair?
 23 A. I had a meeting with the chair quite late in my board
 24 membership at which I expressed some concerns about the
 25 way I was treated.

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1 Q. And —
 2 A. Because at one stage, I mean, the leader of the Labour
 3 group was asked to remove me from the board and he
 4 refused to do so.
 5 Q. What was the upshot of your discussion with the chair
 6 about the —
 7 A. I think we then had a debate about the minutes, and then
 8 there was the fire and ...
 9 Q. Right. So this was late on?
 10 A. Yeah.
 11 Q. I see.
 12 Given that the board had a majority of residents as
 13 a matter of constitution, at least, why would the board,
 14 as you said before, regularly close ranks with the
 15 executive team?
 16 A. I don't know, you'd have to ask them.
 17 Q. I'm asking you, though, what your perception of that
 18 was.
 19 A. My perception was that — well, there were probably
 20 a couple of board members that were sympathetic to some
 21 of the issues that I raised. One of them was then not
 22 re-elected.
 23 Q. Were the residents, though, the residents —
 24 A. The residents, yes.
 25 Q. — who were on the board, not sympathetic to the

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1 concerns that you raised?
 2 A. Not all of them, no.
 3 Q. Really?
 4 Can we then turn to some specific
 5 fire safety—related complaints and concerns that you
 6 raised on behalf of residents.
 7 Let's begin with {TMO00848807}. This is the minute
 8 of an EMB meeting on 15 May 2012.
 9 A. Gosh.
 10 Q. And we can see from that document, the first page of it,
 11 that the chair is Rob Bryans, the secretary is
 12 Doug Steward, number 6 present is Edward Daffarn, and we
 13 can see that you are in attendance there as a co-opted
 14 board member, as member 13. Do you see that?
 15 A. Mm—hm.
 16 Q. First, when were you first co-opted to the EMB itself,
 17 do you remember, or was that on a meeting—by—meeting
 18 basis?
 19 A. I think it was about 2010.
 20 Q. 2010?
 21 A. I think so, when I was elected.
 22 Q. Right.
 23 A. To the Notting Dale ... and my predecessor had stood
 24 down, I think, in 2010.
 25 Q. Right. But you were co-opted to the EMB board —

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1 A. Yeah.
 2 Q. — in 2010?
 3 A. I'm pretty certain it was 2010.
 4 Q. Okay.
 5 Let's go to page 4 in this document {TMO00848807/4},
 6 agenda item number 8, please, "Grenfell Tower Proposal".
 7 It's a long piece of text, I'm not going to read it all
 8 to you.
 9 If we look down through it, to the fifth paragraph
 10 down in the minute, it says:
 11 "RB asked the board if we should have a 'Grenfell
 12 Committee' ..."
 13 And you will see that —
 14 A. Sorry, where is it?
 15 Q. It is on page 5 {TMO00848807/5}, and we are on page 4,
 16 which is the source of the confusion.
 17 If we go to page 5, the fifth paragraph down on that
 18 page:
 19 "RB asked the board if we should have a 'Grenfell
 20 committee' DS said it's a good idea and other members
 21 agreed. RB confirmed EMB will discuss and put names
 22 forward to be on the committee and this committee will
 23 just concentrate on the tower."
 24 RB is Robert Bryans, the EMB chair; yes?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Yes.
 2 We saw that Edward Daffarn was there; do you
 3 remember whether he agreed with this proposal?
 4 A. I can't remember.
 5 Q. Do you remember any opposition by Mr Daffarn to this
 6 proposal?
 7 A. I can't remember. It's too long ago.
 8 Q. Is Mr Daffarn's opposition something that you would
 9 remember?
 10 A. Not necessarily.
 11 Q. Now, we're not aware of a Grenfell committee, so to
 12 speak, having been established at this time either
 13 within or outside the EMB.
 14 A. That's correct.
 15 Q. Do you know why that was?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. Do you know what happened to this proposal?
 18 A. I can't remember.
 19 Q. Right.
 20 Can we then go to your second police statement,
 21 please, {MET00045751/10}. You refer there, under the
 22 heading "Grenfell Tower Compact", to that compact, and
 23 it asking to be recognised as a residents' association.
 24 You say in the third line from the end of the second
 25 paragraph there — the paragraph starts "An example of

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1 this is when the residents tried to form their own
 2 Residents Association". In the last three lines you
 3 say:
 4 "I reiterated the request for them to be able to
 5 form their own association but the TMO again refused.
 6 As a result the residents then went to their Member of
 7 Parliament, Victoria Borwick, for help who arranged
 8 a meeting between them and the TMO."
 9 Do you know why the TMO was resisting recognising
 10 the Grenfell Compact at this time?
 11 A. Well, they always said it was because they should have
 12 joined the residents' association.
 13 Q. And what did you think of that?
 14 A. Well, again I didn't think that the residents'
 15 association was appropriate because the residents'
 16 association tended to concentrate purely on arranging
 17 social events.
 18 Q. Right. You say that, "They said because they should
 19 have joined the residents' association"; what was your
 20 understanding about the real reason why the TMO refused
 21 recognition of an association, a compact?
 22 A. The real reason? Because they said they should have
 23 joined the residents' association.
 24 Q. How would that have helped?
 25 A. Well, they — in — again, it's this question of theory

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1 versus practice. In theory, residents' associations
 2 raise issues on behalf of their residents. In practice,
 3 this particular residents' association was pretty
 4 moribund and they tended to focus on arranging social
 5 events.
 6 Q. So if that was the practice, what was the reason — what
 7 was the justification, let me put it that way, for the
 8 TMO refusing recognition?
 9 A. I don't know, you'd have to ask them.
 10 Q. Well, I'm asking you for your perception of —
 11 A. My perception was because they felt that they should
 12 have joined the residents' association.
 13 Q. Why did Victoria Borwick's intervention help?
 14 A. Well, presumably because she was a Member of Parliament
 15 and she was a Conservative. She was also a councillor
 16 at the time, and I actually knew her quite well, and
 17 I brokered the first meeting.
 18 Q. You did, that is certainly correct.
 19 You say presumably because she was a Conservative.
 20 A. Well, and a Member of Parliament.
 21 Q. Yes. Why did that have anything to do with it?
 22 A. Well, I think she had more influence to bring to bear on
 23 the TMO than I had.
 24 Q. Right.
 25 Was it your understanding at the time that unless

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1 Victoria Borwick had lent her assistance, the TMO would
 2 not have moved on the point?
 3 A. I suspect they wouldn't have moved, yeah.
 4 Q. Right.
 5 Now, in your statement you refer to this as
 6 an example of where Mr Daffarn had unrealistic
 7 expectations of ward councillors. I don't need to show
 8 you the reference of that — well, in fact it's in the
 9 first paragraph on this page {MET00045751/10}. You say
 10 that he had an unrealistic expectation as to what
 11 opposition councillors could actually achieve on their
 12 behalf.
 13 Why was it unrealistic for Mr Daffarn to come to you
 14 for help, seeking recognition for a residents'
 15 association?
 16 A. It wasn't unrealistic for him to come to us; it was
 17 possibly unrealistic for him to expect that we could get
 18 what he wanted done.
 19 Q. Given that, as you have explained, the Lancaster West
 20 Residents' Association was inactive, or active only to
 21 the extent of organising social events, and given that
 22 the Grenfell Tower refurbishment project was not
 23 estate-wide, surely it was an entirely realistic
 24 expectation, or at least a realistic and justified
 25 request, for the residents of Grenfell Tower to be able

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1 to form a compact?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And therefore if it was a justified request, why was it

4 unrealistic to expect that that might be forthcoming?

5 A. Because they didn't ask to form a compact, they asked to

6 form their own separate residents' association.

7 Q. What difference would that make?

8 A. The difference was that there was a residents'

9 association for the whole estate, and I don't think that

10 the TMO fancied breaking down estates into different

11 residents' associations.

12 Q. Well, why not, given that —

13 A. Well, I don't know, because some time previously there

14 had been an attempt by the residents on one side of the

15 estate to break away from the residents' association on

16 the other side of the estate and that was turned down

17 too.

18 Q. Right. I mean, given that the refurbishment affected

19 the tower and not the entirety of the estate, why wasn't

20 it a realistic expectation that the TMO would entertain

21 the existence of a group devoted to protecting the

22 residents' interests?

23 A. Well, I thought it was a realistic expectation, but it

24 was turned down.

25 Q. Right.

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1 Now, let's go to page 5 in this document

2 {MET00045751/5}.

3 If we look at the third paragraph from the bottom of

4 the page, it's a long paragraph, you say in that

5 paragraph:

6 "I was not involved in the day-to-day management of

7 the project nor with any of the changes that were made

8 during the life of the project. For example, I was not

9 aware of changes to the materials specified for the

10 refurbishment of the Tower. I have no expertise in such

11 matters. Since the fire, I have reviewed the documents

12 in my possession. I was aware that the residents were

13 invited to choose what cladding they would like to see

14 added to the building. They were told that the purpose

15 of the cladding was to improve the look of the building

16 as well as to provide better insulation for the flats.

17 The residents were shown different samples of cladding

18 and approved zinc cladding although I do not believe

19 that any of the residents were experts and I assume

20 their decision was based mainly on aesthetics. The zinc

21 cladding was subsequently changed to aluminium cladding,

22 but this was not specifically brought to the attention of

23 the TMO Board or the TMO Operations Committee at the

24 time. I do not know if planning permission was required

25 for the change."

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1 Now, you suggest here that you became aware that

2 residents were invited to choose — your word,

3 "choose" —

4 A. Yes, I was told that they could have a choice.

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. But the choice seemed to be related more to colour, but

7 what they chose was zinc.

8 Q. And you say that because of consultation in 2012?

9 A. No, I was told that by the architect, Andrzej Kuszell.

10 Q. When were you told that?

11 A. Oh, God. In passing at some meeting or other, after

12 some meeting or other, very early on.

13 Q. Right.

14 What was the basis of your understanding — well,

15 sorry, let me start a little bit earlier down the track.

16 You say that after the fire you reviewed documents

17 and were aware that the residents were invited to choose

18 what cladding they would like to see added to the

19 building.

20 Is that right, that in fact it was after a review of

21 documents that you thought the residents were given the

22 choice?

23 A. I think the actual cladding, yes. Not the colour. The

24 colour — I knew about the choice that they were given

25 for the colour.

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1 Q. What was the basis of your understanding that they were

2 given the choice about the cladding?

3 A. I think it said so in one of the newsletters, but

4 I can't actually recollect now.

5 Q. Did you see any document which led you to think that the

6 residents were given a choice about the switch from zinc

7 to aluminium?

8 A. No, they weren't.

9 Q. No.

10 Were you aware of any effort by the TMO to tell or

11 inform the residents or ask the residents about the

12 change from zinc to aluminium?

13 A. No, they were not told.

14 Q. Or the reasons for that change?

15 A. No, they weren't told. There was no consultation on

16 that issue whatsoever.

17 Q. Did you realise that at the time?

18 A. No.

19 Q. You didn't?

20 A. It was after I looked at the documents, and I saw in one

21 of the newsletters a very, very tiny little bit that

22 said that it was aluminium cladding, not zinc.

23 Q. But that was by way of information, not by way of —

24 A. Yes. Yeah, that was by just telling them.

25 Q. Can I show you a document, {TMO00879771/17}, please.

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1 This is an extract of Peter Maddison's notebook, and
 2 on this page, on the right—hand side, you have an entry
 3 for February 2013, 4 February 2013, at the top
 4 right—hand corner.
 5 Halfway down the page, in the middle, he has written
 6 that you had a view, it looks, on the design or colour
 7 of the cladding and had been talking to the planners.
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. Is that right?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Did you as a matter of fact have a view on the cladding,
 12 either about design or colour?
 13 A. I was told, I think again by Mr Kuszell, that I could
 14 have a look at the choice of cladding and make
 15 a decision, and I decided it was nothing to do with me,
 16 it was to do with the residents, so I didn't.
 17 Q. Right.
 18 Do you recall speaking to Mr Maddison on this
 19 subject at that time, early February 2013?
 20 A. If I did, I would have said to him that I proposed not
 21 to make a choice myself because it was up to the
 22 residents.
 23 Q. Right.
 24 Do you remember speaking to anybody at Leadbitters
 25 on the subject of the design or colour of the cladding?

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1 A. No, because Leadbitters weren't doing the tower.
 2 Q. Well, in February 2013 that was still a moot point.
 3 A. Well, I was told by Mr Anderson, after a board meeting
 4 very early on, that Leadbitters had quoted 11 million
 5 for the project, which meant that they probably didn't
 6 want to do it.
 7 Q. But —
 8 A. So I wouldn't have talked to Leadbitters about the
 9 cladding.
 10 Q. All right.
 11 Had you spoken directly to the planners on the
 12 subject of cladding, whether design or colour?
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. Did you have any input at all into the planning
 15 decisions for the Grenfell Tower —
 16 A. Only the main planning decision which was approved by
 17 the planning committee, when I opposed it on behalf of
 18 the ward councillors on the grounds of overdevelopment
 19 of the site. But that was when the initial planning
 20 permission was agreed.
 21 Q. I see. So you opposed the development of Grenfell Tower
 22 altogether?
 23 A. Eventually we opposed it on the grounds of
 24 overdevelopment, because they decided to build flats as
 25 well and we felt that that constituted overdevelopment.

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1 Q. Right.
 2 Coming back, though, to February 2013 and this note,
 3 do you recall any discussion about or having a view
 4 about the material of which the cladding was to be made?
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. So no discussion about zinc or ACM or —
 7 A. No, no, no, absolutely not.
 8 Q. Can I turn to a different topic, which is consultation
 9 with the residents about the Rydon tender.
 10 Can we look, please, back at your police statement
 11 again at {MET00045751/5}.
 12 In that paragraph where there is a heading
 13 "Grenfell Tower refurbishment", it says in the second
 14 paragraph there:
 15 "My ward colleagues and I attended several of the
 16 consultation meetings held with residents of the Tower
 17 before the refurbishment began. I was also a member of
 18 the sub-committee, which recommended the bid from Rydon,
 19 further to the advice of the consultants commissioned by
 20 the TMO. During the tender process Mrs Edwards and I,
 21 as the resident representatives, interviewed the
 22 resident engagement officer of each of the shortlisted
 23 contenders."
 24 A. Correct.
 25 Q. Now, in that context, I want to ask you about that.

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1 Can we look, please, at {TMO10005311/3}.
 2 This is an email from you to Peter Maddison at the
 3 foot of page 3, 21 February 2014, in the context of
 4 discussions with the TMO about the then current tender
 5 for the project, to ask if there would be one or more
 6 residents on the interviewing panel. Can you see that?
 7 A. Yes, I had been told earlier, when I agreed to go on the
 8 panel, that there would be two resident representatives
 9 on the panel.
 10 Q. When were you told that?
 11 A. When I agreed to go on the panel.
 12 Q. I see, and when was that, do you remember?
 13 A. I think it was at or after a board meeting.
 14 Q. Right.
 15 So if you look at the response, which is higher up
 16 on page 3 — in fact it starts at the foot of page 2,
 17 the same day, over to page 3 — Peter Maddison comes
 18 back to you, copied to Claire Williams:
 19 "Dear Councillor Blakeman
 20 "Thank you for sending this across."
 21 Then in the last paragraph he says:
 22 "Yes — we hope there will be a tenant and
 23 a leaseholder involved in the interviews. If you can
 24 please hold the full day for the time being — we will
 25 firm up the times in due course."

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1 Were you aware of any discussion about including
 2 residents in the interviewing panel before your email
 3 that day?
 4 A. I had been told that there would be two resident
 5 representatives on the panel when I agreed to go on the
 6 panel. I didn't know it was conditional at that stage,
 7 I was told for definite that there would be. I was only
 8 later told that there might be.
 9 Q. Right.
 10 Had there been any attempt to include residents in
 11 the decision—making about the refurbishment before
 12 February 2014, to the best of your recollection?
 13 A. Well, only through the consultation meetings and the
 14 drop-ins and ...
 15 Q. Right. When I say decision—making, decision—making in
 16 the tender process.
 17 A. No. No, no.
 18 Q. Did you explore what arrangements the TMO had put in
 19 place for ensuring that residents of Grenfell Tower had
 20 been or could be properly represented in scrutinising
 21 the tender and fully briefed?
 22 A. Well, only that I was told that two resident
 23 representatives would be at the panel.
 24 Q. Yes, at the panel, on the panel. My question is: did
 25 you go into what arrangements the TMO had made to make

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1 sure that those residents who were going to be on the
 2 panel were fully briefed?
 3 A. No.
 4 Q. Or given all assistance that they needed in order for
 5 them properly to exercise their powers as
 6 representatives —
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. — of the people living in the building?
 9 A. No, we weren't — neither Mrs Edwards nor I, to the best
 10 of — well, Mrs Edwards to the best of my recollection,
 11 me certainly to my recollection, were given no
 12 information about the panel other than that we would be
 13 invited to interview the people who'd sent bids in.
 14 Q. Yes.
 15 Do you know where the tender had got to at this
 16 point?
 17 A. I don't think so.
 18 Q. Right. Did you ask?
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. Can we turn then to the question of concerns raised by
 21 residents during the refurbishment, particularly in
 22 relation to fire safety.
 23 {MET00041526}, please. If you look at the foot of
 24 page 1 of this email run, this is an email from
 25 Emma Dent Coad to you on 3 January 2015 saying:

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1 "For the record, I'm not responding to this, unless
 2 you ask me to."
 3 And this below is an email from GTLA to her, as the
 4 first recipient, and to you as the second recipient, and
 5 then copied to a long list of people.
 6 If we go to page 2 in the email run {MET00041526/2},
 7 it starts with the subject:
 8 "Improvement work on existing smoke extraction and
 9 ventilation, system which links to the fire alarm, under
 10 the Grenfell Regeneration Project.
 11 "Dear Cllr Dentcoad[sic],
 12 "Season[s] greetings from Grenfell Tower
 13 Leaseholder's Association.
 14 "We request the recipients of this email for their
 15 attention as this is a very serious matter for us all as
 16 residents of the Lancaster West Estate and the
 17 Grenfell Tower.
 18 "I am writing to you in relation to the email I sent
 19 to Cllr Rock Feilding—Mellen the Cabinet member of
 20 Housing and the Deputy Leader of the RBKC."
 21 And it goes on about that, and the subject is the
 22 works to the smoke extract system and it deteriorating
 23 and needing an upgrade to ensure compliance with health
 24 and safety. I'm summarising the topic.
 25 Then if you go a little bit lower down, you can see

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1 underneath the second bold sentence it says:
 2 "Rydon has been on site since June 2014 and so far
 3 there is no tangible evidence whatsoever Rydon and KCTMO
 4 intend to carry out replacement of the smoke vent and
 5 extraction and ventilation system which links to the
 6 fire alarm. We need confirmation that Rydon will carry
 7 out the work as part of the regeneration project as
 8 promised by the KCTMO."
 9 We can see from what I've shown you so far,
 10 particularly the large number of recipients, that the
 11 email asked all recipients to pay attention to the
 12 email. Did you?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Yes.
 15 Now, the concern being expressed here by Mr Awoderu,
 16 as I say, is that although the FRA, the fire risk
 17 assessment, from November 2012 had identified the AOV
 18 system, the smoke extract system, in Grenfell Tower as
 19 in need of an upgrade, there was as yet no sign that
 20 Rydon had done it. We will come back to that in
 21 substance in a moment.
 22 Did you understand that the GTLA was at this point
 23 making a formal complaint?
 24 A. Well, a formal complaint — I would understand this as
 25 a formal complaint. Whether the TMO would understand it

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1 as a formal complaint is a completely different issue.
 2 Q. Maybe, but I'm asking for your understanding.
 3 A. Well, yes.
 4 Q. Who did you think it was a formal complaint to, the TMO
 5 or RBKC?
 6 A. It should have been to the TMO.
 7 Q. Right.
 8 Given the long list of recipients which you can see
 9 at the bottom of page 1 and the top of page 2, who did
 10 you think that complaint was addressed to as
 11 a complaint?
 12 A. Well, that was the difficulty. I mean, I did speak to
 13 the leaseholders' association and say that if they sent
 14 issues to everybody, it meant that nobody would reply.
 15 Q. Indeed.
 16 If we scroll up a little bit {MET00041526/1}, we can
 17 see at the top of the email chain that you respond to
 18 Councillor Dent Coad the same day, 3 January 2015, and
 19 you say:
 20 "Oh dear, no don't bother. I do not understand why
 21 they have to e-mail absolutely everyone."
 22 Do you know why Ms Dent—Coad felt that she wasn't
 23 required to respond?
 24 A. Because it wasn't in her ward.
 25 Q. I see. What was her role in dealing with concerns about

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1 Grenfell Tower?
 2 A. Well, they were negligible because Grenfell Tower was
 3 not in her ward.
 4 Q. Right.
 5 Why did you tell Councillor Dent—Coad not to bother
 6 responding?
 7 A. Because it was not in her ward.
 8 Q. Right.
 9 Your reply suggests that you didn't agree with them
 10 emailing a large number of recipients.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. I think you have just explained this in your evidence
 13 just now, but could you humour me and just explain it
 14 again?
 15 A. Because if you send emails to everybody, then everybody
 16 thinks somebody else is going to reply.
 17 Q. Did you think to respond to Mr Awoderu and advise him of
 18 that?
 19 A. I had told him that on several occasions, both
 20 face-to-face — to Mr Ahmed, face-to-face to Mr Ahmed,
 21 and also certainly in one email I mentioned it.
 22 Q. Why did you think at the time that nonetheless the GTLA
 23 persisted in mass copying?
 24 A. Well, it was probably just as well that they did, with
 25 the benefit of hindsight.

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1 Q. Because?
 2 A. Because everybody was then made aware of the situation
 3 at Grenfell Tower.
 4 Q. But at the time?
 5 A. At the time I thought it was excessive.
 6 Q. You say you did advise him how better to get his message
 7 across.
 8 A. Yeah.
 9 Q. Did you tell him or give him advice along the lines of:
 10 "Look, if you really want to get this going and take it
 11 forward, you really need to send this to a focused group
 12 of people who will actually entertain the complaint
 13 formally?"
 14 A. Yes, yes.
 15 Q. You did, did you? How did you do that?
 16 A. That was Mr Ahmed, not Mr Awoderu. Mr Ahmed.
 17 Mr Awoderu put his name to it because he was
 18 a non-resident leaseholder and therefore I think
 19 Mr Ahmed felt that he would not — if he signed
 20 everything, then they would go for him.
 21 Q. Yes. All right.
 22 Can we go to {MET00042201}, please, which is where
 23 you do see the advice you gave him. You say:
 24 "Dear Tunde
 25 "I have asked the TMO for a response.

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1 "I seriously suggest you do not copy everyone into
 2 these e-mails. In any case, the list you are using is
 3 pre the 2014 council elections and is now very out of
 4 date.
 5 "Kind regards and Happy New Year."
 6 Did Mr Awoderu respond to you?
 7 A. Well, I always wrote "Dear Tunde" because he signed the
 8 letters, but actually the emails came from Mr Ahmed, and
 9 I knew that, and Mr Ahmed knew that, and Mr Ahmed knew
 10 that I knew.
 11 Q. Did the recipient of this email respond to you?
 12 A. I don't think so.
 13 Q. Did the recipient of this email stop copying everyone
 14 into his emails?
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. When you asked the TMO for a response, what did you do?
 17 Who did you ask?
 18 A. I can't remember, probably Peter Maddison.
 19 Q. Right. How did you expect your enquiry or complaint,
 20 I suppose, to be treated?
 21 A. I may have just forwarded it to the TMO and asked for
 22 a reply.
 23 Q. Right. Did you expect the TMO to treat it as a formal
 24 complaint or as a member's enquiry?
 25 A. As it was about services, it should have been treated as

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1 a complaint under their procedure.
 2 Q. Yes, and that's because, is it, they were dissatisfied
 3 with the service provided by the TMO, namely the delay
 4 in replacing the AOV?
 5 A. Yes. Yeah.
 6 Q. Yes.
 7 Can we go to {MET00042201/2}, please. This is
 8 a different reference but the same email, but lower
 9 down, and it's easier to see this one, which is why we
 10 have gone to this version of it.
 11 If you look at the second paragraph on page 2, it
 12 says:
 13 "Please find attached a scanned copy from KCTMO Ltd
 14 dated 30.06.11 in relation to the fire alarm and smoke
 15 extract system. For ease of reference, it states that
 16 'The reason for the works in[sic] that the original fire
 17 Alarm and smoke extract system are still in place and
 18 are deteriorating and in need of upgrade to ensure
 19 compliance with current health & safety legislation and
 20 continued operation. The work have been included in our
 21 capital programme'.
 22 "In a letter to me from the KCTMO Ltd dated
 23 30th January 2013 on page two it states, 'We can confirm
 24 that improvements will be made to the existing smoke
 25 extraction and ventilation, system which links to the

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1 fire alarm, under the Grenfell Regeneration Project'."
 2 Then it goes on:
 3 "Rydon has been on site since June 2014 ..."
 4 I have read that to you already.
 5 Is it right that the gist of the complaint is that
 6 the TMO had been told in 2011 of the need for work to
 7 the fire alarm and smoke extract system and again in
 8 2013, but as at January 2015, no work had been started
 9 on the smoke and extract system?
 10 A. Hence the complaint.
 11 Q. That was the gist of it?
 12 A. Mm.
 13 Q. So it was historical going back four years?
 14 A. Yeah.
 15 Q. Were you concerned to note that there had been a delay
 16 of four years to works to the fire alarm and smoke
 17 extract system at Grenfell?
 18 A. I was concerned about all the emails that the
 19 leaseholders' association sent me and I sent most of
 20 them, if not all of them, on to the TMO for responses.
 21 Q. Yes, I understand that as a generic answer, but were you
 22 specifically alarmed to discover that the smoke extract
 23 system was not only not working and in need of
 24 an upgrade, but had been so for four years?
 25 A. Yeah, I think I had done a separate email to the TMO

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1 about the smoke extract system.
 2 Q. Were you aware —
 3 A. Ventilation system.
 4 Q. — whether the fire alarm and smoke extract system was
 5 actually functioning at the time?
 6 A. I think I was told that it was. I can't remember.
 7 Q. Right.
 8 Did you know whether the TMO had implemented any
 9 mitigation measures at Grenfell Tower pending completion
 10 of the works to the fire alarm and smoke extraction
 11 system?
 12 A. I certainly asked for some mitigation works.
 13 Q. Right. What was the response?
 14 A. I can't remember.
 15 Q. Can we go to {TMO10008422/1}, please, so scroll up to
 16 the top of this email chain.
 17 We can see his response to your request for a TMO
 18 report on this matter, and it's dated 5 January 2015.
 19 After setting out the scope of the work for the
 20 refurbishment, halfway down the page he says this, do
 21 you see:
 22 "The scope of work to Grenfell includes the
 23 upgrade/renewal of Smoke & and fire safety and
 24 ventilation system.
 25 "The system is currently beyond economic repair. We

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1 are working with Building Control to agree a design for
 2 the system that will meet current standards.
 3 "We have been in close contact with the Fire Brigade
 4 to make them aware of the current situation, so they can
 5 take this into account in their approach to any fire
 6 safety issues.
 7 "Our contractors (Rydon) have also been in liaison
 8 with the Fire Brigade to agree safe working methods in
 9 the interim while the system is being worked on.
 10 "We have posted notices throughout the building and
 11 explained in newsletters that a 'stay put' policy is in
 12 place in the event of a fire."
 13 Did you understand this message back to you to mean
 14 or indicate that the smoke extract system, the AOV
 15 system, was still working?
 16 A. No, my understanding was that something had been put in
 17 place in the interim. This is an example of what
 18 I referred to, I think, on Thursday as bland responses
 19 intended just to reassure me and shut me up.
 20 Q. I see. So although it says, "The system is currently
 21 beyond economic repair", nonetheless did you — well,
 22 what did you take from the last paragraph, which starts
 23 "Our contractors (Rydon) have also been in liaison with
 24 the Fire Brigade"?
 25 A. Well, I understood that to mean that there were —

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1 safety measures had been implemented in the meantime.
 2 Q. Right.
 3 Were you aware at this time — and this is
 4 January 2015 — that the LFB had issued a deficiency
 5 notice to the TMO in respect of the non—functioning AOV
 6 system at Grenfell Tower in March 2014?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. With a cure date of May?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. 5 May 2014. No?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. Would you have expected Peter Maddison to have told you
 13 of that fact in his report to you here?
 14 A. Well, yes. If that were the case, yes.
 15 Q. Did you expect Peter Maddison to tell you why there was
 16 a delay in carrying out the repairs to the AOV that had
 17 been pointed out to you in Mr Awoderu's or Mr Ahmed's
 18 message?
 19 A. I thought this does reassure.
 20 Q. It doesn't explain why it had gone unaddressed for
 21 four years.
 22 A. No, it doesn't.
 23 Q. My question was: did you expect at the time Mr Maddison
 24 to have explained why that was?
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. But you didn't ask him to?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. Why was that?
 4 A. Lack of resources, lack of time, as I explained. This
 5 was the point when the whole of Silchester Estate was
 6 being proposed to be demolished, and I had to deal with
 7 that too.
 8 Q. How did you take it? How did you leave this response?
 9 Were you happy with it?
 10 A. I wasn't happy with it, but I accepted it. I realised
 11 I wasn't going to get anything else out of them.
 12 Q. Right.
 13 Can we then turn to the Grenfell Compact and the
 14 matrices that we looked at or you referred to before.
 15 In your second police statement, which we've now
 16 looked at a number of times, could we go back to that,
 17 please, {MET00045751/8}, you say there in the second
 18 paragraph:
 19 "Following the refurbishment I worked with two
 20 residents Mr Daffarn and Mr Thompson and together we
 21 drew up a matrix of outstanding problems. This was sent
 22 to the TMO and I requested regular updates. The matrix
 23 was a table highlighting some of the outstanding
 24 problems, with a further column for the TMO and/or Rydon
 25 to set out what actions they were taking to address the

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1 issues. Fire safety was an issue included in this
 2 matrix and the fact that the stairwell hadn't been
 3 included in the refurbishment. I produce as my
 4 exhibit JB/5 copies of the matrix from August 2015 and
 5 May 2016."
 6 Now, before we look at the matrices, Ms Blakeman,
 7 can you explain how you, Mr Daffarn and Mr Thompson went
 8 about preparing them?
 9 A. Well, they told me what the problems were and I put them
 10 into a matrix.
 11 Q. Right. Did you have a meeting with them?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Right. You sat down with them and —
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. — sketched it out?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. Did any other residents other than Mr Daffarn and
 18 Mr Thompson contribute to those matrices?
 19 A. Mr Collins may have done, I'm not sure. I can't
 20 remember.
 21 Q. Yes, in fact he says he did.
 22 A. Okay.
 23 Q. Was it your understanding that these concerns were
 24 fairly representative —
 25 A. Oh, yes.

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1 Q. — of the concerns shared by a large number —
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. — of the residents of the tower?
 4 A. Yes, otherwise I wouldn't have put them in the matrix.
 5 Q. What was it that gave rise to that understanding?
 6 A. The number of complaints I'd had from residents.
 7 Q. What, separately?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. I see. So was it your perception that Mr Daffarn,
 10 Mr Thompson and Mr Collins, to the extent that he
 11 contributed, were reflecting what you had already heard
 12 in the building —
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. — or around the building?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Yes.
 17 Now, let's look at the first of these matrices.
 18 This is August 2015, {MET00045762}, please.
 19 You can see, just to remind you how it's laid out,
 20 there is a number column on the left—hand side, then
 21 "Resident Issue" in the middle, and then "TMO/Rydon
 22 Response" on the right.
 23 Now, from email correspondence, we believe that you
 24 sent it to Peter Maddison on 28 August 2015, and the
 25 email is at {MET00070923}. We will just quickly look at

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1 that just to pin that down in timing terms.
 2 At the bottom of page 1, you to Maddison, 28 August,
 3 and you attach the matrix. You refer to it and you
 4 attach it.
 5 Now, let's look back at the matrix then, if we can,
 6 which was the last document {MET00045762}. There it is.
 7 You can see, if you go to page 3 {MET00045762/3},
 8 a list of some 28 concerns or issues related to the
 9 refurbishment.
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Were you surprised that there were so many, when it came
 12 to drafting it and numbering them —
 13 A. No, I wasn't surprised because I'd had so many different
 14 complaints from residents.
 15 Q. Right.
 16 If we go to number 22 on page 2 {MET00045762/2}, the
 17 last but one, we can see that there is an item there
 18 about alternative hot water facilities for washing,
 19 that's item 21. There is also an investigation, if you
 20 go to item 23, into the floor numbering:
 21 "Change floor numbers back to reflect current flat
 22 numbers and find an alternative numbering system for the
 23 two new floors."
 24 Did you see that as a fire safety issue?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. You did. And you can see —
 2 A. Well, it was an emergency issue, not just fire safety
 3 but any emergency.
 4 Q. Right.
 5 It's difficult, apart from that issue, to see
 6 whether any of these issues were specifically
 7 fire safety issues. Is that right?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. Well, which of these would you have said at the time
 10 were intended to be fire safety matters? Take a moment
 11 to look through.
 12 A. Well, can I see the whole document?
 13 Q. Yes, of course. Go to page 1 {MET00045762/1}.
 14 A. Well, number 1 is a fire safety issue.
 15 Q. Right. Just cast your eye down page 1.
 16 A. Number 6, I think there was — Mr Collins certainly had
 17 a concern about HIUs in the hallway which related to
 18 fire safety.
 19 Q. How did that relate to fire safety?
 20 A. Because he was concerned that the boiler was put on top
 21 of the electrical —
 22 Q. Right.
 23 A. — incoming issue.
 24 Q. I see. So the HIUs, and possibly the floor numbering —
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. — which we've looked at. Any others, do you think?
 2 A. And the boxing of the open pipework.
 3 Q. Yes. Scroll down a bit further on to page 2
 4 {MET00045762/2}, perhaps. We can see, just casting your
 5 eye down the middle column, we've got more HIUs under
 6 item 14.
 7 A. Yeah, 14 refers to the HIU one.
 8 Q. Yes. And then alternative hot water, which we've
 9 already looked at, which is also related to the HIUs in
 10 one sense.
 11 A. Yeah.
 12 Q. Then floor numbers at 23, and on page 3 {MET00045762/3},
 13 any of those related to fire issues?
 14 A. Well, effective communication would relate to it.
 15 Q. Right.
 16 Looking at the response to number 23 at the bottom
 17 of page 2 {MET00045762/2}, just go back to that:
 18 "Change floor numbers back to reflect current flat
 19 numbers and find an alternative numbering system for the
 20 two new floors."
 21 The response was:
 22 "Royal Mail requires the lower floors to be
 23 numbered, so that the address is easily identifiable for
 24 the emergency services in the case of any incident.
 25 Floors have been re-numbered and temporary signage

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1 fitted until the final version is available. The floor
 2 levels have been altered and it is not possible to
 3 revert to the old numbering."
 4 Were the new floor numbers easily identifiable for
 5 the emergency services in the event of an emergency?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Why was that?
 8 A. Because they didn't relate to the — the flat numbers
 9 didn't relate to the floors. You see, flat 13—whatever
 10 would be on the 13th floor, but after the refurbishment
 11 it was put on the 16th floor, and so on.
 12 Q. Was that problem not resolved by the temporary signage
 13 that the TMO put up?
 14 A. No, because they just put up paper notices, which
 15 disappeared or fell off or whatever.
 16 Q. Right. So —
 17 A. There was also an issue that in the stairwell, because
 18 the stairwell wasn't included in the refurbishment
 19 project, the door numbers on the stairwell didn't relate
 20 to the flat numbers any longer either.
 21 Q. Right. Was the problem the actual renumbering of the
 22 floors or was the problem the signage?
 23 A. The renumbering of the floors.
 24 Q. Right.
 25 A. But the signage didn't help.

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1 Q. I see.
 2 A. Because it didn't — I mean, it was not permanent until
 3 quite late on.
 4 Q. Can we then go to {TMO10010093/2}, please.
 5 This takes us to early October 2015, and what I'm
 6 showing you is an email exchange you had with
 7 Peter Maddison on 2 October 2015.
 8 Very bottom of page 2, you write to Maddison,
 9 2 October 2015, received also by Claire Williams, copied
 10 to other councillors:
 11 "Dear Mr. Maddison ..."
 12 And then over to page 3 {TMO10010093/3}:
 13 "I am writing to let you have the issues raised with
 14 members of the Grenfell Tower Compact at last Saturday's
 15 surgery with my colleague Cllr. Atkinson in advance of
 16 your meeting next week. They are as follows ..."
 17 Then you set out a long list of items.
 18 Just before we look at those, you I think weren't
 19 present at the Saturday surgery, were you?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. Why did you write to Peter Maddison and not
 22 Councillor Atkinson?
 23 A. Because Peter Maddison was the person to deal with the
 24 complaints.
 25 Q. I see. So this was part of the complaints process, was

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1 it?
 2 A. Yeah.
 3 Q. I follow.
 4 If we go to page 3, we can see that you, as we can
 5 see, list a large number of items of concern from
 6 residents, and at point 6 you say this:
 7 "They continue to have an issue with the numbering
 8 of the floors, as do the ward councillors. Whatever the
 9 Post Office requires, the new system of numbering is not
 10 effective and could prove dangerous in the event of an
 11 emergency. The notices about the floor number changes
 12 are not prominent or secure and in any case would not be
 13 helpful to children, anyone who does not read English or
 14 indeed anyone with literacy problems. The solution the
 15 residents propose is that the lower floors should have
 16 a new name, such as 'Lower Grenfell'. We believe that
 17 this issue does require some further consideration."
 18 Although you weren't present at the meeting, what
 19 did you think the residents meant when they said that
 20 the new system of numbering could prove dangerous in the
 21 event of an emergency?
 22 A. Because it could mean whoever was dealing — from the
 23 statutory services, whoever was dealing with the
 24 emergency might go to the wrong floor and might be
 25 delayed as a result.

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1 Q. Do you know if any residents reported any concerns about
 2 the floor numbering themselves directly to the TMO?
 3 A. Well, they may have done, but residents used to,
 4 particularly those whose first language was not English,
 5 like to ring up with their complaints, and then when
 6 their complaints weren't addressed, they would come to
 7 me and say, "well, I rang and nobody" — and I would
 8 say, "Well, you need to put the complaint in writing",
 9 and they didn't like to because — I entirely
 10 understand, because they don't like writing in a strange
 11 language. So I said, "Well, come to me, then, I will
 12 put the complaint into writing for you".
 13 Q. I follow. I follow.
 14 So is this an example, then, of the kind of
 15 complaint that some residents of the tower could in
 16 effect really only make through you?
 17 A. Yes, I mean, there was no mechanism for collective
 18 complaint, only for individual complaints.
 19 Q. Indeed. And for some individuals, as you've just said,
 20 you were the only conduit and you —
 21 A. Well, I wasn't the only conduit, the compact was as
 22 well, and other residents.
 23 Q. Yes.
 24 A. But certainly those who came to me and complained that
 25 their complaints had not been dealt with, I would say,

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1 "Well, did you put it in writing? Otherwise they can —
 2 these things can be lost."
 3 Q. I follow.
 4 Then looking at paragraph 7, you say:
 5 "They would like another independent inspection of
 6 the arrangements in the event of a fire. Perhaps this
 7 might be better carried out at the end of the project,
 8 although I think they have concerns about what would
 9 happen during the works in the event of a fire,
 10 especially because of the floor numbering problem. This
 11 request should also receive further consideration."
 12 When you say "another independent inspection of the
 13 arrangements", were residents aware of a previous
 14 inspection?
 15 A. Well, I had asked on behalf of the leaseholders'
 16 association some years before this for an independent —
 17 for a fire investigation, and I was told that the LFB
 18 had carried one out. Now, whether that was communicated
 19 to all the residents or not, I can't recollect.
 20 Q. Was that the LFB visit in 2013?
 21 A. Could have been. Whatever it was was in response to
 22 a request I submitted on behalf of the leaseholders'
 23 association.
 24 Q. Right. Was it the leaseholders who were saying "another
 25 independent investigation" or was that your word?

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1 A. No, that was my word.
 2 Q. I see.
 3 Do you know what specific concerns caused residents
 4 to ask for an independent investigation of the
 5 arrangements in the event of a fire?
 6 A. I think that was post—Lakanal. The recommendations from
 7 the coroner included a statement that after a major
 8 refurbishment there should be a full independent
 9 assessment of fire safety matters.
 10 Q. And what was it in 2015 that had prompted the residents
 11 to ask for another independent investigation?
 12 A. No, I asked for another; they asked for an independent
 13 investigation.
 14 Q. Sorry, you're quite right, and you corrected me. What
 15 was it that prompted them to ask for an independent
 16 inspection of the arrangements in 2015?
 17 A. Because of their concerns.
 18 Q. About the numbering, among other things?
 19 A. Yeah — well, not just the numbering, but yeah, the
 20 whole thing.
 21 Q. Why did you think it was better to carry out
 22 an inspection at the end of the project rather than —
 23 A. Well, that was because of the coroner's report, but
 24 I also felt that perhaps one during the works would have
 25 been advisable. But I think I put that — I think I did

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1 separate emails about those, and I was told that the LFB
 2 came regularly to Grenfell Tower.
 3 Q. Now, if we go up to page 1 in this email run
 4 {TMO10010093/1}, you can see Peter Maddison responds to
 5 you the same day. Unfortunately his response, although
 6 it's in red in the original, appears black in the
 7 electronic copy we have here and doesn't come up.
 8 But if we go to the top of page 2 {TMO10010093/2},
 9 we can see item 6, and the very last sentence which
 10 says:
 11 "We will review this again and come back to you."
 12 It's in red in the original, you can't see it, it's
 13 in black.
 14 In item 7, the last word there is "Agreed". It's in
 15 black, but was in red in the original.
 16 Those were his responses.
 17 As I say, he appears to have responded promptly and
 18 positively to your concerns under items 6 and 7; was
 19 that how you saw it at the time?
 20 A. Well, I think he did come back to me with regard to the
 21 floor numbering and said "No" and said it was the
 22 responsibility — that the Royal Mail had insisted, as
 23 he had said previously.
 24 Q. Well, he doesn't though, does he? He says at the end of
 25 6 —

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1 A. No, in a separate email exchange.
 2 Q. Yes. But on this one he says —
 3 A. On that one he says, yes, "We will review this again and
 4 come back to you", and then he did come back, but that
 5 was in a separate email.
 6 Q. It is, and we'll come to that, but at this stage,
 7 Ms Blakeman, were you mollified — were you happy with
 8 his answer?
 9 A. Well, I would await his formal response.
 10 Q. He didn't brush you off straightaway at least?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. No.
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. Did you ask at this stage for a copy of the existing
 15 fire risk assessment for Grenfell Tower?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. If we look on, we then get to {TMO10025473}, which takes
 18 us on a little bit later in the same month. This is now
 19 18 October 2015.
 20 We can see here that you are, in the second email
 21 down, writing to Robert Black on 18 October:
 22 "Dear Mr. Black
 23 "I am writing to let you know that the Notting Dale
 24 ward councillors are coming under great pressure to ask
 25 for a full report on the refurbishment process at

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1 Grenfell Tower to be written up for an in—depth
 2 discussion by the Council's Housing and Property
 3 Scrutiny Committee.
 4 "We are very sorry about this because we had hoped
 5 that, after recent meetings attended by the ward
 6 councillors, things had calmed down and we were now
 7 making progress. But we certainly agree with some of
 8 the outstanding matters that continue to be raised with
 9 us. These include the following."
 10 Then it goes on.
 11 Why did you email Robert Black directly?
 12 A. Because he was the chief executive and I wasn't getting
 13 anywhere with Peter Maddison.
 14 Q. Right, I see. And who was putting pressure on you for
 15 a full report?
 16 A. The residents.
 17 Q. Were many residents at Grenfell putting pressure on you
 18 to obtain a full report?
 19 A. Yeah, this is following the meeting that we attended
 20 which was held in the show flat. There were a lot of
 21 residents there.
 22 Q. Was that in October or was that before?
 23 A. I can't remember, I think it was before.
 24 Q. Yes. Why were residents asking for the report to be
 25 discussed at scrutiny, at the RBKC's scrutiny committee?

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1 A. Presumably because they felt that the HPSC had more
 2 influence over the TMO than I did.
 3 Q. I follow.
 4 Was there any discussion at this time about raising
 5 these issues with the TMO board?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Did you suggest that the issues that had been raised
 8 with you by the residents, such as in the matrix we've
 9 seen with the compact and such as we've seen with the
 10 email that's come to you, and that you've reflected in
 11 the numbered list we saw you sent, discussed at the
 12 board?
 13 A. I think they'd been discussed at the board and I'd got
 14 nowhere.
 15 Q. Right.
 16 Can we go back to your email, then, please,
 17 {TMO10025473}, which I think is still on the screen.
 18 Lower down from where we were, if you look at the
 19 third paragraph, you raise a number of concerns and, in
 20 summary, they are an investigation into Rydon
 21 contractors bullying residents, that's the paragraph
 22 that starts "Mr. Lawrence of Rydon gave a firm
 23 undertaking", and then if you turn the page
 24 {TMO10025473/2}, after some discussion of the HIUs, you
 25 can see that on page 2 there is also discussion in the

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1 middle of page 2 on the floor numbering. You say:
 2 "Less serious, but also of great concern, is the
 3 numbering the floors. For a long time both residents
 4 and ward councillors were told that this was under
 5 instruction from the Royal Mail. However, residents
 6 used the Freedom of Information procedures to obtain
 7 a categorical denial from Royal Mail that they had
 8 insisted on this. Residents were then told that this
 9 was an instruction from the Planning Department.
 10 "I am very concerned that both councillors and
 11 residents were misled. I have also checked the planning
 12 applications and can find no reference to floor
 13 numbering. There are always alternative mechanisms for
 14 floor numbers when new ones are installed that do not
 15 need to disrupt a whole block, certainly not one of the
 16 size of Grenfell Tower."
 17 Then further down to the end of your email on page 3
 18 {TMO10025473/3}, in the last two paragraphs, you say
 19 this:
 20 "I apologise for the length of this e-mail, but I am
 21 afraid that both residents and ward councillors are at
 22 the end of our tethers. Residents fear that direct
 23 action is again becoming the only option for them. We
 24 would not like to encourage this, but we can see their
 25 point.

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1 "We get regular deputations now to all our
 2 surgeries. We can only provide residents with the
 3 information that we have available. This puts us under
 4 pressure if we are given misleading information and also
 5 if we are seen to be aware of matters — such as
 6 completion dates — that have not been provided to
 7 residents."
 8 You don't mention here that you thought the new
 9 numbering could cause confusion in the event of
 10 an emergency, which was the point that you had raised at
 11 item 6 in your 2 October email earlier in the month.
 12 Was that because it was no longer a concern?
 13 A. No, I think it was because we'd already raised it.
 14 Q. Right, but you don't repeat it?
 15 A. Well, I mention that Royal Mail had denied —
 16 Q. Right.
 17 A. — involvement and they'd gone to the planning
 18 department. We couldn't find anything at the planning
 19 department that required it. So it remained
 20 outstanding.
 21 Q. It remained outstanding, and was your main concern at
 22 this point the actual renumbering, or was it by this
 23 stage the signing, the signposting?
 24 A. Well, it was the whole thing, everything that's set out
 25 in the email.

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1 Q. And you say that the TMO had misled you about the
 2 decision-making process for renumbering the floor
 3 numbers; had you lost confidence in the information that
 4 the TMO were providing you at this point?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. By this time.
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Who do you believe it was that had misled you?
 9 A. Well, Peter Maddison was my main point of contact —
 10 Claire Williams and Peter Maddison were my main points
 11 of contact, but they were presumably acting under
 12 instructions from their superiors.
 13 Q. Did you ever get to the bottom of this Royal Mail point?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. It's quite a serious allegation that you have made here,
 16 that councillors and residents were misled.
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Did you ask Robert Black to investigate?
 19 A. Erm ... well, one would have assumed that, as I'd
 20 written to him, he would.
 21 Q. You assumed it; did you actually ask him to undertake
 22 an investigation?
 23 A. I can't recollect.
 24 Q. Did you ask the rest of the board as a board to require
 25 Mr Black to undertake an investigation?

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1 A. No.
 2 Q. Why is that?
 3 A. Because there was no point my raising issues at the
 4 board.
 5 Q. Did this problem about the Royal Mail point cause you to
 6 doubt any other information provided by the TMO to you
 7 about the refurbishment?
 8 A. Well, it could have set a precedent. I didn't know.
 9 Q. You say the ward councillors and residents were "at the
 10 end of our tethers".
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. What did you mean by that?
 13 A. The fact that everything we raised, we'd just get kicked
 14 back on.
 15 Q. Why did you understand that residents thought direct
 16 action was the only option for them? Why did you think
 17 that that was the case?
 18 A. Because some of them may have told us that.
 19 Q. You refer to regular deputations to your surgeries; do
 20 you know who attended your surgery from Grenfell Tower?
 21 A. Well, we didn't take names, but quite a few people came.
 22 Q. Right. And that was the experience, as far as you could
 23 see it, for the other councillors?
 24 A. I think so, yes, because this — I think this email was
 25 based on something from Councillor Atkinson, so he

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1 obviously had the deputation as well when he ran the
 2 surgery.
 3 Q. Right.
 4 Now, moving on with this subject, we next go to
 5 a report drafted by the TMO in response to this email of
 6 yours of 18 October 2015.
 7 It's at {TMO00831964}. I'll just put it up for you
 8 first of all. It's entitled, "Investigation into the
 9 issues raised by Cllr Blakeman in her e-mail dated
 10 18 October 2015". We'll come back to look at the body
 11 of it in a moment.
 12 Just to be clear, this was sent to you, it seems, on
 13 26 October 2015 at {TMO00852632/2}. Just to be clear,
 14 you did get this.
 15 If we look at the bottom of page 2, Sacha Jevans
 16 writes to you on that date, 26 October 2015, copied to
 17 Robert Black:
 18 "Dear Councillor Blakeman,
 19 "Robert has forwarded your email for my response.
 20 I attach a full reply to the issues that you have raised
 21 and also attach copies of the Grenfell newsletters for
 22 your reference."
 23 Then:
 24 "Peter Maddison is available to meet with you at 2pm
 25 on Friday 30th October. I would be grateful if you

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1 could confirm that this time is acceptable."
 2 Now, let's go back to the report that Sacha Jevans
 3 sent you on 26 October 2015, at {TMO00831964}, there it
 4 is. That's the first page.
 5 Can we go to page 4 {TMO00831964/4}, please, where
 6 we can see the subheading "Changes in Floor numbering",
 7 and we will focus on that specifically. It says:
 8 "The proposed changes in floor numbering were
 9 initially communicated to residents in the newsletter of
 10 February 2015 (copy attached) and subsequently in the
 11 April 2015 newsletter (copy attached).
 12 "In our April 2015 newsletter we reported the
 13 following:
 14 "'2. Postal addresses.
 15 "When the new flats in the lower floors are finished
 16 they will need postal addresses. We've applied for
 17 these from the Council, who are liaising with
 18 Royal Mail. The Royal Mail requires the lower floors to
 19 be numbered, in case the emergency services need to
 20 visit. This means that all the floors will have to be
 21 re-numbered and temporary signage will be installed
 22 until the final version is available. While it does not
 23 affect your address, we apologise for any difficulties
 24 this may cause.'
 25 "This clearly states that we were working with

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1 the Council (Planners) who were in liaison with
 2 Royal Mail about the numbering of the new flats and the
 3 floor numbering. This gives an explanation of the
 4 respective roles of KCTMO, the Council and Royal Mail in
 5 this matter. It was the Council Planners who informed
 6 us that the floors should be numbered in the way we have
 7 now implemented. We have taken the planner's advice in
 8 good faith and acted on it. I do not agree that
 9 residents or councillors have been misled as
 10 Cllr Blakeman suggests."
 11 Then it goes on:
 12 "The new floor numbering went live in May 2015 when
 13 the lift service was reinstated following the creation
 14 of the additional lift stops at the new levels 1, 2
 15 and 3. Residents have been using the new numbering
 16 since this date and we have not received any
 17 correspondence or complaints until the matter was raised
 18 by Mr Collins in August 2015."
 19 Then there is at page 5 {TMO00831964/5} a bullet
 20 point summary of why the TMO was rejecting your
 21 allegations.
 22 Now, as I've shown you, the report suggests that the
 23 TMO did not mislead you and that the suggestion came
 24 from the council to amend the floor numbering.
 25 Did that in particular or perhaps more generally

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1 what I've read to you allay your concerns about the
 2 information provided to the residents?
 3 A. Well, it was difficult to understand by then what was
 4 going on, because initially we were told it was the
 5 decision of the planners to change the numbers. When
 6 I queried that, I was told no, it was the decision of
 7 Royal Mail. Then the residents said that they'd used
 8 a freedom of information request to Royal Mail and
 9 Royal Mail had denied that it was down to them, so I was
 10 very, very confused as to who was responsible and, well,
 11 the TMO said that.
 12 Q. Did you take them at their word?
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. Why is that?
 15 A. Because the residents had been to Royal Mail under the
 16 Freedom of Information Act.
 17 Q. Did you go back to Mr Maddison and say, "I'm very sorry,
 18 but this doesn't add up because here we have the
 19 Royal Mail's response and it's inconsistent with what
 20 you're telling me"?
 21 A. I can't remember.
 22 Q. I don't think we have a record of you doing that.
 23 A. Okay. Well, I'd probably given up by then, because
 24 I wasn't getting anywhere.
 25 Q. As I've shown you, at the bottom of page 4

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1 {TMO00831964/4}, there is the reference to the new
 2 numbering and the lifts and there being no
 3 correspondence or complaints until it was raised by
 4 Mr Collins in 2015. That suggests that Mr Collins was
 5 the only resident who had concerns about the floor
 6 numbering.
 7 A. No, Mr Collins was the chair of the compact and
 8 residents would have complained to him.
 9 Q. Well, I was going to ask you, that was the question: was
 10 it correct that Mr Collins was the only resident with
 11 such concerns?
 12 A. Well, he would have been putting the concerns on behalf
 13 of residents as chair of the compact.
 14 Q. The response doesn't appear to answer your concern
 15 expressed in your item 6 —
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. — that the new numbering could prove dangerous in the
 18 event of an emergency.
 19 A. Exactly.
 20 Q. Did you go back on that point?
 21 A. No, I mean, as I said, I'd probably given up by then
 22 because I was just getting the same old nonsense.
 23 Q. Right.
 24 If we go to {TMO00852632}, please, this is an email
 25 exchange between Laura Johnson and Sacha Jevans on

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1 2 November 2015, shortly after you were sent the
 2 18 October response on 26 October.
 3 Now, you of course were not copied in to this
 4 particular exchange, but let's see what Laura Johnson
 5 says, in the middle of your screen:
 6 "I read this and actually felt really sorry for
 7 Peter and the team, this is a really good project with
 8 loads of positive outcomes for the residents and due to
 9 the negative stance taken by a minority on various
 10 details the project is made to feel no longer like the
 11 success it actually is. Officers and Cllr FM take
 12 a different view from Cllr B [Blakeman], we acknowledge
 13 there has been problems but overall apart from the
 14 non-controllable issue of companies going into
 15 liquidation and slight over run in finishing it's gone
 16 really well. We shall celebrate when it's finished, the
 17 children go to the new nursery, kids are boxing in
 18 a fabulous new gym and people are living in lovely warm
 19 flats."
 20 Did you agree just with that sentiment that it was
 21 a minority of residents at Grenfell Tower who took
 22 a negative stance?
 23 A. Not by then, no.
 24 Q. Not by then being November 2015?
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Right.
 2 Were you aware that RBKC officers and
 3 Councillor Feilding—Mellen took a different view from
 4 yours on the refurbishment?
 5 A. All the time, yes.
 6 Q. Right. In your view, was it going well?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. If we go to the top email, we can see that Sacha Jevans
 9 says to Laura Johnson by way of response, same day,
 10 2 November 2015:
 11 "Hi Laura,
 12 "Thanks for your positive comments. I met with
 13 Councillor B on Friday and we went through more detail.
 14 I then took another look round Grenfell and it is really
 15 looking good it will be great when it's finished."
 16 Do you remember that meeting? Do you remember
 17 meeting Sacha Jevans?
 18 A. Too long ago.
 19 Q. Too long ago.
 20 Do you remember meeting any senior operations
 21 executive from the TMO to discuss your continuing
 22 concerns —
 23 A. I think so, yes.
 24 Q. You do think you did?
 25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Let's be more specific ——
 2 A. Well, I mean, I can't remember that far back.
 3 Q. No. Do you remember discussing the 18 October response
 4 to your email with anybody at the TMO?
 5 A. I can't remember.
 6 Q. Right.
 7 Do you remember having any discussions with the TMO
 8 about continuing questions that you had about the
 9 fire safety of Grenfell Tower ——
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. — at this stage in the refurbishment?
 12 A. I can't remember.
 13 Q. Now, we've seen no response from you to the 18 October
 14 report sent to you on 26 October 2015. Did you respond,
 15 do you think?
 16 A. I think I may have responded to Laura Johnson, because
 17 something was sent out that they wanted me to put my
 18 name to and I refused to put my name to it.
 19 Q. Did you take the report that had been sent to you on
 20 26 October 2015 back to the Grenfell Compact?
 21 A. I probably would have sent it to them, yes, but I can't
 22 confirm that one way or the other.
 23 Q. Right. How would you have done that, by email or by ——
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. Right, by email. And do you remember what the reaction

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1 was from the Grenfell Compact?
 2 A. Well, I can't remember whether I sent it or not, so
 3 I can't remember whether there was a reaction or not.
 4 Q. Now, turning to a slightly different topic — and I may
 5 come back after the break to follow up on one or two
 6 aspects of the evidence you've given just now, just to
 7 chase down one or two documents, but moving on, if
 8 I may.
 9 Can we go, please, to {RBK00054461/17}. This is
 10 your statement, and you say at paragraph 91:
 11 "As residents became more and more frustrated and
 12 feeling that their concerns about the refurbishment and
 13 fire safety issues were being ignored I suggested that
 14 they submit a petition to the HPSC. I worked with them
 15 on the prayer of the petition and submitted it to the
 16 full Council meeting in December 2015. This was then
 17 considered by the TMO and I exhibit as JMB/26 ...
 18 a Briefing note on the petition that was sent by
 19 Sacha Jevans to the TMO Board in advance of a TMO Board
 20 meeting on 4th January 2016. The petition was then
 21 discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on
 22 6th January 2016 and I produce the minutes of that
 23 meeting at which representations on behalf of the
 24 Grenfell Tower residents were considered, as my exhibit
 25 JMB/27 ..."

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1 Now, the idea to submit a petition to HPSC appears
 2 to have come from you. Is that right?
 3 A. No, Mr Daffarn asked me how on earth we could get the
 4 issue discussed by the housing and property scrutiny
 5 committee, and I said probably the best mechanism would
 6 be through a petition to the council, because unless it
 7 had over 1,500 signatures, which it wouldn't have, it
 8 would be referred to the relevant committee.
 9 Q. Did you tell Mr Daffarn that you had had a full
 10 response, or what looked like a full response, by the
 11 TMO to your concerns as set out in your 2 October email?
 12 A. Well, whether I said that or not is irrelevant because
 13 I didn't consider it as a full response. It was more of
 14 the bland nature of reassurance rather than actually
 15 dealing with the issue.
 16 Q. Did you show Mr Daffarn the 18 October response ——
 17 A. I don't know. If I copied it to the compact, he would
 18 have seen it. I don't know.
 19 Q. Right.
 20 Why did you mention a petition to Mr Daffarn as
 21 a possible route, given that on the face of it, on paper
 22 at least, the TMO had provided an answer or a purported
 23 answer to your points in the 18 October document?
 24 A. Because that clearly, whether they saw it or not, it was
 25 clearly not satisfactory and concerns remained.

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1 Q. I don't think we've seen a record of you going back to
 2 Peter Maddison or Sacha Jevans and saying, "This
 3 18 October defence document, response document, is
 4 unsatisfactory"?
 5 A. No, I probably gave up by then.
 6 Q. Right. So, having given up, and left things, left on
 7 paper, at least, as they were, why not at least tell
 8 Mr Daffarn that you had had a response from the TMO,
 9 this was it, you didn't regard it as satisfactory, and
 10 focus the petition on the defects, as you saw them, in
 11 that response?
 12 A. I can't recollect. I mean, that's an impossible
 13 question to answer.
 14 Q. Well, is it?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. I just wonder why that's so, because ——
 17 A. If I had sent ——
 18 Q. Let me put the question to you, if I may. If you were
 19 unhappy with the TMO's response, which was sent to you
 20 in late October, and had identified flaws in it, then
 21 the question is: why didn't you either bring those flaws
 22 to the attention of the TMO by way of riposte, or advise
 23 Mr Daffarn that he should do so as part of the petition
 24 process?
 25 A. Well, there was no point advising Mr Daffarn to do that,

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1 because he would have had less — even less authority
 2 than I, and he asked me: what is the best way to get the
 3 housing and property scrutiny committee to discuss these
 4 issues? And I said probably through a petition.
 5 Q. Was it usual for residents to raise concerns through
 6 a petition in this way?
 7 A. Well, I'd raised the power surges through a petition as
 8 well.
 9 Q. I see. So there was a precedent for it?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Why did you suggest they petition the HPSC in
 12 particular?
 13 A. No, it was a petition that is submitted to the council.
 14 If it has more than 1,500 signatures, it is considered
 15 by the council. If it has fewer than 1,500 signatures,
 16 it goes to the relevant appropriate committee —
 17 Q. I follow.
 18 A. — which in this instance was the housing and property
 19 scrutiny committee —
 20 Q. Yes, I see, thank you.
 21 A. — which was the intention of it.
 22 Q. Yes, and what outcome were you hoping to achieve?
 23 A. I was hoping — well, to an extent the committee did
 24 consider it. They didn't accept the need for
 25 an independent investigation of how the refurbishment

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1 had been carried out.
 2 Q. Indeed, and we'll come to that.
 3 At this point, so early December 2015, can you
 4 remember what fire safety issues were still occupying
 5 residents' concerns?
 6 A. Not offhand, no, but I'm sure you'll show me.
 7 Q. Let's go, then, to the meeting itself, 6 January 2016,
 8 {RBK00032130}.
 9 This is the minute of the meeting of the HPSC on
 10 that date, and we can see who is present.
 11 A. Yeah.
 12 Q. You are present as a member.
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Along with Councillors Marshall and Mackover, and
 15 Robert Black is in attendance.
 16 On page 2 of the minutes {RBK00032130/2} we can see
 17 the agenda item A4, "Grenfell Tower — verbal item", and
 18 it was a verbal item, as I understand it — is this
 19 right? — because there was going to be discussion.
 20 A. It was a verbal item presumably because they didn't want
 21 to put things down on paper.
 22 Q. Right. What does verbal item normally mean in RBKC
 23 parlance?
 24 A. I think normally it means either that there wasn't
 25 a paper ready in time for circulation or that they don't

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1 want to put something down in writing.
 2 Q. Right. Was it identified as a verbal item at the
 3 meeting or is that just a —
 4 A. Yes, and on the agenda that was sent out before the
 5 meeting.
 6 Q. I follow.
 7 Now, as we understand what happened, looking at this
 8 document, Laura Johnson presented the issue that
 9 Grenfell Tower had been completed, the refurbishment had
 10 been completed, and on page 3 {RBK00032130/3}, you can
 11 see at the top of the page that:
 12 "Mr Edward Daffarn, lead representative of the
 13 Grenfell Tower Residents Association, was given
 14 an opportunity to address the Committee."
 15 That's how it's recorded.
 16 A. Yeah, I think he was cut short before he'd finished.
 17 Q. Yes. Let's just look at the note for the moment.
 18 He's described there as the lead representative of
 19 the Grenfell Tower Residents' Association.
 20 A. He was one of the lead representatives. I think they'd
 21 set up a committee.
 22 Q. Right. Was it agreed or understood that he would be
 23 speaking for the residents of Grenfell Tower?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. Right.

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1 At the bottom of the page — well, let's just take
 2 it a bit more slowly. We can see that he highlighted
 3 six main issues in his representation, and they're
 4 numbered there: lack of consultation and residents
 5 engagement; boilers being placed in hallways without
 6 consultation and warning; residents had experienced
 7 threats, harassment, lies and intimidation; lack of
 8 response to legitimate complaints; poor workmanship and
 9 site management; and compensation.
 10 "He concluded that there was a need for urgent
 11 scrutiny of the management of the works that had been
 12 carried out which needed to be conducted as an
 13 independent investigation. He said residents had been
 14 belittled, ignored or side-lined and their day-to-day
 15 concerns downplayed. He said that it was vital that
 16 lessons are learned for any future works and the
 17 problems experienced not replicated.
 18 "A copy of Mr Daffarn's full statement has been
 19 placed on the Minute Book."
 20 Then we see that you are recorded as saying
 21 something, and it goes like this:
 22 "Cllr Blakeman said that it was important that
 23 an examination of the project be conducted so that the
 24 Council could learn from the experiences of the
 25 residents of Grenfell Tower. She said that there had

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1 been a mismatch of information between what had been
 2 reported and what the residents were actually
 3 experiencing. She said that the newsletter sent to
 4 residents in relation to the boilers had been
 5 incomprehensible and the residents would not have
 6 understood the importance. Cllr Blakeman reported that
 7 there had been two babies born during the works that had
 8 special needs and no respite was provided for these
 9 families. She said that a number of individual
 10 complaints had been submitted but had not been responded
 11 to and this may lead to residents approaching the
 12 Housing Ombudsman. She said she could provide specific
 13 examples where required."

14 A. Yeah, can I make the point that the babies didn't have
 15 special needs; they had special needs as newborn babies,
 16 in case that's misunderstood.

17 Q. I had actually understood it differently, but that's
 18 very clear.

19 I pause there; were you referring, when you say that
 20 there had been a mismatch, to the TMO survey conducted
 21 in December 2015?

22 A. No, I meant a mismatch between what the newsletters said
 23 and what residents actually experienced.

24 Q. Well, I'm asking you about this because it says
 25 "mismatch of information between what had been

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1 reported".

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And I'm asking you: what was it that had been reported?

4 A. Well, I go back to the bland reassurances that I was
 5 given that weren't actually happening.

6 Q. So you weren't referring, then, to the survey which had
 7 been referred to?

8 A. Well, that was one issue.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. But only one.

11 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, is that a convenient moment?

12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I think it is. Thank you,
 13 Mr Millett.

14 Well, we'll stop there for some lunch now,
 15 Ms Blakeman. We will resume at 2 o'clock, please. And
 16 please would you not talk to anyone about your evidence
 17 while you're out of the room.

18 THE WITNESS: Sure.

19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, thank you.

20 (Pause)

21 Thank you, 2 o'clock, then, Mr Millett.

22 MR MILLETT: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Chairman.
 23 (1.02 pm)

24 (The short adjournment)

25 (2.00 pm)

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Ms Blakeman? Ready to
 2 carry on?

3 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.

4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.

5 Yes, Mr Millett.

6 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, thank you.

7 Ms Blakeman, we were on or in the 6 January 2016
 8 housing and property scrutiny committee meeting.

9 Before that, there had been a blog published by GAG
 10 in early November 2015, and I just want to show that to
 11 you, please, at {IWS00002205}.

12 I'm not sure it's a blog the Inquiry has shown
 13 before, because it's the first time I think we've seen
 14 that graphic or photograph, but ignoring the photograph,
 15 if you look at the text at the bottom, there is
 16 a sentence which says, halfway through the paragraph:
 17 "If they really want to help the communities living
 18 in KCTMO properties then they should demand that the
 19 RBKC immediately commission an independent investigation
 20 into the KCTMO, similar to the devastating Memoli
 21 Investigation, and the resulting report published in
 22 2009, that highlighted the many abuses and failings of
 23 the KCTMO at that time."

24 Then over the page {IWS00002205/2}, in the second
 25 main paragraph:

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1 "Complaints are often sidetracked, ignored or simply
 2 responded to with brazen lies and falsehoods."

3 Et cetera, and then the next paragraph says this:

4 "The Memoli Report highlighted a similar range of
 5 unacceptable practices and behaviour in 2009 and many
 6 local residents believe that the TMO failed to improve
 7 significantly following the Memoli scandal and has since
 8 reverted completely to type. Most of the failings
 9 identified by Memoli are as prevalent today as they were
 10 when the original report was published. This treatment
 11 of residents by the KCTMO is totally unacceptable and
 12 the Grenfell Action Group is demanding change.

13 "We urge our readers to examine the contents of the
 14 Memoli Report and then approach local Resident
 15 Associations, local councillors, or your local MP,
 16 urging them to pressurise the RBKC to launch another
 17 independent investigation into how the KCTMO operates
 18 today and to explain why they have failed so dismally to
 19 respond to the recommendations made by Memoli in 2009."

20 Now, did you read that blog at the time?

21 A. I must have done because I read the blog avidly.

22 Q. You read the blog avidly?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Did that blog prompt you to reach for the Memoli report
 25 and see what it was that Memoli had reported on which

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1 the GAG blog was saying had not been cured in 2015?
 2 A. Well, not particularly, no, because I was more struck by
 3 the thing about West London Citizens at the start.
 4 Q. Right. I mean, this blog does call for readers to
 5 examine the contents of the Memoli report and then
 6 approach people such as yourself.
 7 My question is: why didn't you reach for the Memoli
 8 report, look at it and find out what it was that the
 9 authors of the GAG blog were keen that you should read
 10 and do something about?
 11 A. Probably lack of time, lack of resources, too much other
 12 work to do.
 13 Q. Right. I mean, had you done so, might that have
 14 provided you with some kind of ammunition with which to
 15 assist the residents in presenting their petition?
 16 A. I don't know.
 17 Q. Right.
 18 Can we then go back to the evening of 6 January 2016
 19 and the HPSC meeting, and if we go to the minutes at
 20 {RBK00032130/4}, second paragraph, and it says this:
 21 "Cllr Mackover thanked the residents for attending
 22 and presenting to the Committee. He said that he had
 23 noted down the main issues and the Scrutiny Committee
 24 was the correct forum to bring these issues. He
 25 confirmed he had visited Grenfell Tower and had seen the

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1 works in December 2015. Cllr Mackover suggested that
 2 a Working Group could have a look at the lessons learned
 3 for future regeneration projects and he would be happy
 4 to chair this Group. He stressed that the Group would
 5 not be set up to investigate individual complaints or
 6 issues but to look at how things could have been done
 7 better with the focus on an 'Outcome Review'.
 8 Now, I think probably let's just look at the next
 9 few paragraphs as well before we get to the question:
 10 "Cllr Berrill—Cox agreed that a Working Group would
 11 be the best mechanism to conduct a review and look at
 12 the lessons learned. He said that it was important to
 13 look at what consultation proposals were in place for
 14 any future projects."
 15 Then if we go to the bottom of the page, we can see
 16 Councillor Press:
 17 "Cllr Press said that Grenfell Tower was the first
 18 example of the regeneration of a Tower in the Borough
 19 and as good practice there should be a review of how the
 20 project went and she would support a recommendation for
 21 a Working Group on the matter. She said that
 22 Cllr Blakeman's comments that the Group needed to be
 23 independent with the resources and skills necessary.
 24 She said an independent reviewer may be useful to give
 25 expertise."

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1 Now, it looks as if, just on what I've read you,
 2 Councillors Mackover, Berrill—Cox and Press were all in
 3 favour of a working group being set up; is that right?
 4 A. Yes. And (inaudible).
 5 Q. And it appears, although it's not clear, that
 6 Councillor Press agreed with you that such a group or
 7 review ought to be independent; yes?
 8 A. I think the English in that sentence is unclear.
 9 Q. It is, I agree with you, but can we take it that she was
 10 aligning herself with your position —
 11 A. Yeah.
 12 Q. — that the group needed to be independent — the review
 13 needed to be independent.
 14 A. An independent reviewer, yeah.
 15 Q. Now, if we go to page 5 {RBK00032130/5}, a little bit
 16 lower down, we can see that Councillor Marshall, who was
 17 the chairman, says this:
 18 "the Chairman said that if a Working Group was
 19 established then it would decide on what resources it
 20 needed and its scope. He said however that he was
 21 reluctant to establish another Working Group until those
 22 in existence had reported. He suggested that a Group
 23 was not set up immediately and that urgent complaints
 24 should be dealt with through the TMO process."
 25 Just pausing there, does that intervention suggest,

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1 just looking at it, that there was some reluctance from
 2 the chairman to establish a working group?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Was that your recollection?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Right.
 7 Then if we look at the fourth paragraph down from
 8 the top:
 9 "Ms Johnson reported that once the project had been
 10 completed the TMO Board would be conducting their own
 11 review and this could help any Scrutiny Working Group
 12 with their Terms of Reference and act as one source of
 13 information."
 14 Then if you look at the final paragraph just above
 15 A5, "In conclusion", it says this:
 16 "In conclusion the Chairman agreed that a Working
 17 Group would be commissioned at some point in the future
 18 but that this was dependant on a number of factors
 19 including the conclusion of existing Working Groups and
 20 the review work conducted by the TMO."
 21 Did the suggestion that a working group be set up at
 22 an undetermined point in the future, some point in the
 23 future, come mainly from the chairman, or was it the
 24 view of the committee as a whole, do you recall?
 25 A. I can't remember.

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1 Q. Was the effect of this conclusion to kick the working
2 group proposal into touch, despite there being support
3 for it from some councillors, such as yourself and
4 Councillor Press?
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. In effect, is that what happened?
7 A. Yes, that's what happened. In the meantime,
8 David Collins and I had drawn together what we called
9 the Grenfell pathway, which was also a learning process
10 from the problems that had arisen during the
11 refurbishment project.
12 Q. Did that lead to a meeting between him and
13 Councillor Feilding—Mellen later in the summer?
14 A. He and I met Councillor Feilding—Mellen. I also
15 submitted it to the TMO board, and the TMO board —
16 Q. What did they do about it?
17 A. They did nothing with it.
18 Q. Right.
19 A. Councillor Feilding—Mellen said he would take it away
20 and consider it, and David asked me why — later on why
21 we'd had no response from Councillor Feilding—Mellen.
22 He said he had bumped into Feilding—Mellen in the street
23 and had asked about it, and Councillor Feilding—Mellen
24 had been somewhat equivocal.
25 I don't understand why there was no learning process

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1 from the project.
2 Q. Did you take that forward yourself, using your power as
3 councillor?
4 A. Yes, yes.
5 Q. And how far did you get?
6 A. Nowhere.
7 Q. Why is that?
8 A. I don't know. Well, I mean, I do know, but I mean ...
9 Q. What is your explanation, sitting there today, for
10 getting —
11 A. Well, I mean, there comes a point when banging your head
12 against a brick wall ceases to be attractive and one
13 stops.
14 Q. Can we go then to {TMO00853181}.
15 This is the minute of a board meeting of the TMO on
16 31 March 2016. Can we look at page 1 to start with. We
17 can see not only that that is what it is, but also that
18 you are present as a council—nominated board member; do
19 you see that?
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. Together with Paula Fance, you will see her name just
22 above yours.
23 If we go to page 3 {TMO00853181/3}, please,
24 paragraph 10, we can see "Grenfell Tower review update"
25 halfway down your screen. There it is.

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1 Paragraph 10.1 says this:
2 "Paula Fance presented the conclusions of the review
3 undertaken by a panel of the Board on the Grenfell Tower
4 Project. Jeff Zitron requested that the review should
5 reflect and consider the fact that 40 per cent of the
6 residents of the building signed the petition against
7 the Company and propose actions that could have been
8 taken by the Company to manage the feelings of the
9 residents for such a project. Peter Maddison
10 highlighted that the post—satisfaction survey would
11 flush out the residents' feelings on the project which
12 would help the Company reconsider future projects of the
13 same nature. The Board agreed that Paula Fance should
14 meet with Cllr. Blakeman to address the points she
15 raised on the contents of the report. It was proposed
16 to share the conclusions of the Panel's review with
17 RBKC."
18 Did the board, do you remember, agree to consider
19 Jeff Zitron's suggestion there?
20 A. No.
21 Q. Why is that? Why not?
22 A. Because the report which was read out in full, it was
23 part of a filibuster, the report was read out in full,
24 and at the end of it, or I think perhaps even at the
25 beginning, it commended the work of Rydon, the work of

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1 Peter Maddison, the work of the TMO.
2 Q. Yes, but he's suggesting that the review should reflect
3 and consider the fact that 40% of the residents had
4 signed a petition against the TMO.
5 A. Yes, but the decision, since the decision was to commend
6 the work of the TMO, obviously rendered that pointless.
7 Q. I see. So was that suggestion then too little, too
8 late?
9 A. Yes.
10 Q. Right. But was it too late? I mean, after all, this
11 report was being presented to the board, but it needn't
12 have been what ultimately got presented to the
13 scrutiny committee, so why was it too late?
14 A. Because the board had decided that they approved the
15 report.
16 Q. Did you approve the report?
17 A. No. It's quite clear from what I said.
18 Q. Can we then go to your witness statement at paragraph 93
19 on page 18 {RBK00054461/18}. You say:
20 "My position was that I was prevented from
21 expressing my concerns about the internal review at both
22 the TMO Board meeting and the subsequent HPSC meeting on
23 11 May 2016. In MPS2 I exhibit JB/11 my email to all
24 members of HPSC of the same date in which I outlined
25 some of my comments on the KCTMO internal review. I was

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1 not allowed to speak on the subject at the HPSC meeting
 2 on 11 May 2016."
 3 Then if we go to your police statement,
 4 {MET00045751/9}, please, we can see there, third
 5 paragraph from the top, you say:
 6 "This report [and that's the report to the TMO board
 7 of 31 March 2016] was sent to the TMO Board for
 8 consideration. The debate was left to the very end of
 9 a very long meeting and I said that I was very unhappy
 10 with much of what it contained. Given the lateness of
 11 the hour I said that I would put my concerns in writing
 12 for discussion at the next Board meeting. Subsequently
 13 I was invited to meet Paula Fance to discuss my
 14 concerns. When I attended the meeting, I found she was
 15 accompanied by Sacha Jevans and both of them urged me
 16 not to put my concerns in writing. However I did put
 17 them in writing and sent them to each Board member.
 18 I produce as my exhibit JB/9 a copy of the report
 19 I sent.
 20 "At the following Board meeting I was reprimanded
 21 for sending my document to all Board members without the
 22 permission of the Chair and Chief Executive, and the
 23 Board declined to discuss my written concerns. Instead
 24 the Board endorsed the original report and resolved to
 25 forward it to the RBKC Housing and Property Scrutiny

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1 Committee. I produce as my exhibit JB/10 a copy of the
 2 report to the Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee."
 3 Now, you said that you were reprimanded at the
 4 following board meeting, and I just want to know which
 5 one that was.
 6 You didn't attend the TMO board meeting on
 7 26 May 2016. You next attended a TMO board meeting,
 8 according to our records, on 20 July 2016. That's
 9 {TMO00886463}, there is no need to turn it up.
 10 Actually, let's turn it up. If you look at it, you
 11 are present.
 12 A. No, I'm not. It says "Apologies".
 13 Q. Sorry, you're not present there.
 14 If we go to {TMO00886390}, you're not present at
 15 that one either.
 16 A. Well, that's the same — that's May, isn't it?
 17 Q. That's the May meeting.
 18 A. Yeah.
 19 Q. Because I've shown you actually both of the minutes.
 20 You're not present at either of them.
 21 A. No, I think it was a later meeting because it was
 22 sort of dark when I arrived.
 23 Q. So it must have been March?
 24 A. No, I think it was September.
 25 Q. September?

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1 A. Yeah.
 2 Q. They're normally at 6.30?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Right. Early September or late September?
 5 A. Can't remember.
 6 Q. Right. Well, I'm not going to try and debate the
 7 position of the sun in the heavens, but you think it was
 8 September 2016 when you were reprimanded, not March —
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. — or May or July?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. Right.
 13 Either way, coming back to your statement, did
 14 Paula Fance or Sacha Jevans actually explain to you why
 15 you shouldn't put your concerns in writing?
 16 A. No. No, they just asked me not to put my concerns in
 17 writing.
 18 Q. They didn't tell you why not?
 19 A. I asked a few questions about the report, which they
 20 answered. The only question I recollect asking them was
 21 that where they said they'd received only seven
 22 complaints, I queried that, and then I asked them who
 23 had sent the — which resident had sent the four
 24 complaints, and they said it was me, but that can't have
 25 been me because I'm not a resident. I assumed they

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1 meant Mr Daffarn.
 2 Q. Right.
 3 Did you seek permission from Paula Fance to share
 4 your written reports of your concerns with the TMO
 5 board.
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Why not?
 8 A. Because I'd already told the TMO board I would put my
 9 concerns in writing and send it to them.
 10 Q. Yes, but they were complaining about you doing that, so
 11 why didn't you seek their permission to do that?
 12 A. Because I'd already said to the board I would send my
 13 concerns if I was not satisfied by the meeting with
 14 Paula Fance. I wasn't expecting to see Sacha Jevans at
 15 that meeting.
 16 Q. Did any other TMO board members read the report or
 17 express any concerns that you had raised?
 18 A. I think if Kush Kanodia was still on the board, he would
 19 have done.
 20 Q. If we go to the meeting of the 11 May 2016 housing and
 21 property scrutiny committee, {RBK00028532}, this is the
 22 part B minutes.
 23 Can you just explain to us what part B minutes were?
 24 A. They're confidential.
 25 Q. Right. That means this was in a closed session; is that

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1 right?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. So not public?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Were you asked to sit in the public gallery for this
 6 discussion?
 7 A. I was asked to sit in the public gallery at the start of
 8 the meeting. I was instructed to sit in the public
 9 gallery at the start of the meeting and not to
 10 participate in the debate because allegedly I had
 11 a conflict of interest.
 12 Q. Who told you that?
 13 A. Mr Black and the chairman, Councillor Marshall.
 14 Q. Right. What about during the part B, Grenfell Tower
 15 board review?
 16 A. Well, the same thing, but I'd already opted to sit in
 17 the public gallery. Because I'd put a lot of my
 18 concerns into an email, I had hoped that other members
 19 of the committee would raise my concerns on my behalf.
 20 Councillor Press attempted to do and she was shut down
 21 as well.
 22 Q. So when it says under B2, the first line, "It was noted
 23 that Cllr Blakeman sat in the Public Gallery for this
 24 item and did not participate in discussions", that's
 25 factually correct —

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. — but doesn't perhaps reflect the fact that you were
 3 ordered to sit up there?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Is that what you're saying?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Before we go through the minutes, I just want to ask you
 8 about an email exchange of the same date, 11 May 2016.
 9 You've referred to the question of conflicts. Let me
 10 just examine that with you, if I may.
 11 {TMO10013234}, please. This is an email from
 12 Robert Black to Rock Feilding—Mellen dated 11 May 2016
 13 at 17.07, so just ahead of the meeting, and it says:
 14 "Thank you for sharing this."
 15 But you need the context of this, and we need page 3
 16 {TMO10013234/3} for that, please, because it starts with
 17 you emailing Councillor Marshall and other councillors
 18 copied in. There is your email there, and it says:
 19 "Dear Quentin
 20 "To save time this evening, please see some advance
 21 comments below."
 22 And you set them out.
 23 A. Well, not the miscellaneous matters, that was querying
 24 the accuracy of the minutes.
 25 Q. Indeed.

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1 Then if we go up to page 2 {TMO10013234/2}, we can
 2 see Rock Feilding—Mellen writing to Councillor Marshall,
 3 and he says:
 4 "Dear Quentin
 5 "I think the HPSC needs Judith to be clear about her
 6 role as a board member of the TMO, and she needs to be
 7 guided about whether that is an interest to be declared,
 8 and what is the most appropriate forum for her to make
 9 some of these points — within the TMO or at HPSC.
 10 "I've also copied in officers so they can get early
 11 sight of the issues raised below, so that they can
 12 respond in case you are minded to discuss all these
 13 issues tonight.
 14 "Yours,
 15 "Rock."
 16 Then if we go up to page 1 —
 17 A. Sorry, can I just say, I have always, when I've been at
 18 a board meeting — at an HPSC meeting, I have always
 19 declared my membership of the TMO board.
 20 Q. Yes. Even though everybody would have known that?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. If we go up to page 1 {TMO10013234/1}, you can see there
 23 is an email from Robert Black to Rock Feilding—Mellen
 24 and Councillor Marshall, copied to Laura Johnson, "RE:
 25 Scrutiny Meeting this Evening", and there is

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1 an attachment, and he says:
 2 "Dear Councillors
 3 "Thank you for sharing this."
 4 I've shown you that.
 5 Then he says this in the second paragraph:
 6 "Having spoken to RBKC Governance they highlighted
 7 what the rules are around conflicts of interest because
 8 Cllr. Blakeman should be declaring her interest as
 9 a member of the TMO Board when any declarations are
 10 requested."
 11 A. Which I did.
 12 Q. Well, hold on. We will just read the text and then
 13 we'll discuss it together:
 14 "The Committee should be deciding whether her
 15 interest is significant to preclude her from
 16 participating in the discussions (in this case, her
 17 interest is conflicted two-fold, she is the elected
 18 member for the area under consideration and she is
 19 a board member of the company being scrutinised, she
 20 cannot be using her powers on the committee to force her
 21 own needs).
 22 "In addition, if the points she raises in the emails
 23 below have been passed to the Committee (which at this
 24 point, they have), she is now in breach of her duties as
 25 a Director of KCTMO and I would be required to draw this

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1 to the attention of the TMO Board. The Board could
 2 exercise its powers against one of the council's
 3 nominees (but probably not wanting to do this) so the
 4 council should prevent her from openly breaching her
 5 duties by allowing her make [sic] detrimental comments
 6 against the TMO Board and its report."
 7 Now, it goes on in similar terms, but I've read the
 8 gist of this to you.
 9 You were made aware, were you, of these concerns at
 10 the time?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. You weren't?
 13 A. No, not until the start of the meeting, when they said
 14 I had a conflict of interest without going into any
 15 detail.
 16 Q. Did you agree that there was a conflict?
 17 A. No, I didn't, but in the interests of allowing the
 18 meeting to continue and the fact that I'd sent an email
 19 setting out my concerns, I agreed to sit in the public
 20 gallery and not participate in the discussion.
 21 Q. Right. Why did you do that?
 22 A. Because I was bullied by the chairman and by
 23 Robert Black.
 24 Q. What did Mr Black say to you?
 25 A. Oh, crikey. He said that I'd had an opportunity at the

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1 TMO board to raise all my points of concern, which
 2 I hadn't, because there was a filibuster. The item was
 3 put on at the end of the agenda. Interestingly, those
 4 minutes, unlike other minutes, do not state the time
 5 that the meeting finished. It finished at around 9.30,
 6 which meant that the board had been meeting for
 7 three hours, and I felt that there was no point making
 8 my points of concern at that stage because everyone,
 9 including myself, was exhausted.
 10 Q. In general, were TMO board members who also sat on the
 11 housing and property scrutiny committee, such as
 12 yourself, expected not to participate in discussions on
 13 that committee about the TMO?
 14 A. That was the first I'd heard of it.
 15 Q. Can you explain from your perspective how that might
 16 begin to work?
 17 A. No, because I didn't understand it.
 18 Q. You say it's the first you've heard of it; in all your
 19 time —
 20 A. No, sorry, at that meeting was the first I had heard of
 21 it.
 22 Q. Indeed, but at that time, in all the years you'd been on
 23 both the TMO board and the HPSC, had anybody ever raised
 24 this question of a conflict of interest with you?
 25 A. I'd had a very fraught meeting, private meeting, with

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1 Fola Kafidiya.
 2 Q. When was that?
 3 A. I think it was — it was 31 January, but I forget which
 4 year.
 5 Q. In the context of what?
 6 A. In the context of my role on the TMO board.
 7 Q. Yes, but in the context of a particular dispute or
 8 particular topic?
 9 A. I don't think so. I mean, Robert Black asked me very
 10 early on at a board meeting to make my position clear,
 11 and at that board meeting I said I was elected to
 12 represent the interests of the residents of Notting Dale
 13 ward and they would always take priority.
 14 Q. Can you explain how you understood that to be a matter
 15 for Mr Black, being the chief executive and not
 16 a director?
 17 A. No, I was quite a new member of the board at that stage.
 18 Q. Right, okay.
 19 I take it that at this meeting, nonetheless, you
 20 didn't press the point that you were entitled, having
 21 given a full declaration of your interest, to sit, as
 22 other members of the committee, in on the discussions?
 23 A. Sorry, which meeting?
 24 Q. 11 May 2016.
 25 A. Yes. No, sorry. The meeting at which Robert Black

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1 asked me about my role or —
 2 Q. No, this meeting, 11 May 2016.
 3 A. Right.
 4 Q. I take it that you didn't press the point?
 5 A. Well, we would have just gone on boxing and coxing for
 6 hours. There was no point because I'd already put most
 7 of my concerns in writing to every member of the
 8 committee.
 9 Q. Now, coming back to the minutes, then, can we do that,
 10 {RBK00028532/3}.
 11 If we look at page 3 in these part B minutes, we can
 12 see that ...
 13 A. I don't think it's that page.
 14 Q. No, you're absolutely right, I think it's page 2.
 15 (Pause)
 16 If we go back to page 1 {RBK00028532/1} and go to
 17 the third paragraph on page 1, we can see that there is
 18 a discussion which says:
 19 "Mr Black was asked why the report was considered to
 20 be private and he said that the Board had a right to
 21 decide on the circulation of their report but he would
 22 ask if it could be released to the public. He added
 23 that a list of all the issues looked [at] and addressed
 24 could be found on page 3 of the summary report that was
 25 available to the public. Cllr Press added that not

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1 publicising the report could be building up conspiracy
 2 around the issues and the TMO should consider releasing
 3 the report before the Housing Ombudsman stage. Mr Black
 4 agreed to speak to the Chair of the Board about making
 5 the report publicly available."

6 Why did the TMO want the TMO board review to be
 7 confidential?

8 A. I have no idea.

9 Q. Did you ask? I know you were in the public gallery --

10 A. Sorry, I was sitting in the public gallery.

11 Q. -- but did you have an opportunity later to ask?

12 A. No, Councillor Press asked on my behalf.

13 Q. Right.

14 If you go on to page 2 {RBK00028532/2}, we can see,
 15 first full paragraph:

16 "The Chairman commented that one of the features of
 17 the evidence that had been presented to the Committee by
 18 the residents was that of wide and sweeping allegations
 19 and he asked if through their investigations the Board
 20 had satisfied themselves that these allegations could
 21 not be substantiated and any specific allegations had
 22 been properly processed and addressed."

23 Just pausing there, do you remember that those were
 24 the terms in which the chairman had asked the question?

25 A. I can't remember.

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1 Q. In other words, asking whether the board had satisfied
 2 themselves that the allegations could not be
 3 substantiated, rather than asking themselves whether
 4 there was anything in the allegations?

5 A. What, the wide and sweeping allegations?

6 Q. Indeed.

7 A. I can't remember.

8 Q. The very ones that are referred to.

9 A. I can't remember.

10 Q. I just wonder why it was suggested that the question was
 11 put in the negative. Can you help?

12 A. Well, I was in the public gallery, I wasn't allowed to
 13 speak.

14 Q. Very well.

15 A. I was sitting there fuming, but ...

16 Q. You were sitting there fuming?

17 A. Mm--hm.

18 Q. Right. In which case you were an observer --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- and nothing else, as I understand it.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. It goes on:

23 "Ms Jevans said that many of the allegations had not
 24 been specific but one in relation to the access to
 25 residents' properties had been investigated and the

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1 process around how access is gained was reviewed.
 2 Mr Black added that the TMO complaints procedure could
 3 [not] pick up and deal with group complaints."

4 A. No, "could now pick up and deal with group complaints".

5 Q. "... could now pick up and deal with group complaints."

6 A. That was not correct.

7 Q. That was not correct.

8 Was there any discussion, do you recall, about the
 9 points that you made in your email?

10 A. No.

11 Q. At all?

12 A. No, Councillor Press attempted to, but was closed down.

13 Q. I mean, for example, you picked up in your email,
 14 paragraph 6.2, that one resident did not make four
 15 complaints and you had raised at least 14 complaints.

16 A. Yeah, I counted up afterwards and it was actually 19,
 17 not 14.

18 Q. Right. But that wasn't discussed?

19 A. No. No, no, because that was the point at which
 20 I discovered that my complaints were not classified as
 21 complaints against the TMO, they were member's
 22 enquiries, so they didn't appear. I mean, they were
 23 probably not shown to the working group.

24 Q. Where it says, "Mr Black added that the TMO complaints
 25 procedure could now pick up and deal with group

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1 complaints", was that a reference to any kind of change
 2 in the TMO complaints procedure that you had identified
 3 or knew about?

4 A. No, he'd been asked I think at the 6 January meeting to
 5 investigate the lack of ability to raise group
 6 complaints, and he reported back and said that there was
 7 no problem, which was not correct.

8 Q. Right. He says, and you have rightly picked it up when
 9 I misread it, "Mr Black added that the TMO complaints
 10 procedure could now pick up and deal with group
 11 complaints". That, on the face of it, indicates
 12 a change.

13 A. There was no change.

14 Q. It indicates that he had identified a change. Did you
 15 understand that he was saying that there had been
 16 a change for the better?

17 A. Well, they couldn't pick up because, even at that late
 18 stage, group complaints were not possible. I think
 19 David Collins had attempted to make a group complaint
 20 and was told that -- when he tried to send it to the
 21 Ombudsman, he was told it was an enquiry.

22 Q. My point is simply: did you get the impression that
 23 Mr Black was telling the meeting that there had been
 24 a change in the complaints procedure for the better?

25 A. No, I think he was just saying that the complaints

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1 procedure was good as it stood.
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Is it possible that "now" is
 3 a misspelling of "not"?
 4 A. I don't think so.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, that would be consistent with
 6 what you're saying.
 7 A. Well, it would be consistent with what I'm saying but
 8 not what Mr Black was saying.
 9 MR MILLETT: Right, okay. We may have to —
 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I'm not sure, because I thought you
 11 said that Mr Black was saying everything was as good as
 12 it could be.
 13 A. Yeah.
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Not that there had been a change.
 15 A. Yeah.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: And if there had been no change,
 17 "not" would be the right word, wouldn't it?
 18 A. No, his investigation of the complaints procedure led
 19 him to the view that collective complaints could be made
 20 but only about services, but that was not correct,
 21 because David Collins attempted subsequently to make
 22 a collective complaint and was knocked back.
 23 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, thank you.
 24 MR MILLETT: Very good.
 25 Mr Chairman, I've come to the end of my prepared

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1 questions.
 2 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Oh, right.
 3 MR MILLETT: It may be that now is an appropriate moment for
 4 the usual break.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes.
 6 Well, Ms Blakeman, when counsel gets to the end of
 7 his questions, or thinks he has, we have to have a short
 8 break to enable him to check that he has covered
 9 everything, and also to enable other people who are not
 10 present in the room but following the proceedings to
 11 make their own suggestions.
 12 So we'll have a break now until 2.50, and then, when
 13 you come back, we will see if there are any more
 14 questions for you. All right?
 15 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much.
 17 (Pause)
 18 Right, 2.50, then, Mr Millett. Thank you.
 19 (2.35 pm)
 20 (A short break)
 21 (2.57 pm)
 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Right, Ms Blakeman. Well, let's see
 23 if there are any more questions for you.
 24 Yes, Mr Millett.
 25 MR MILLETT: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Chairman. One or

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1 two. Probably just one, but we will see.
 2 Can you please be shown {IWS00002109}. This is the
 3 first page of the second witness statement of
 4 Edward Daffarn.
 5 Can we please go to page 30 {IWS00002109/30}. On
 6 that page, there is a heading, "Part IV: delay on the
 7 refurbishment. Slow progress on Grenfell refurbishment
 8 works after the decision to invest".
 9 Then at paragraph 70, he says:
 10 "After the decision to invest in Grenfell Tower was
 11 taken GAG became suspicious that the work would not be
 12 done at all. There was significant delay to the
 13 project. I had also been told that there was
 14 significant opposition to the works being funded within
 15 the Council. As I have mentioned previously, I was told
 16 by Judith Blakeman that Councillor Feilding—Mellen (who
 17 was sitting on the RBKC Cabinet but was not a Cabinet
 18 Member for Housing and Property at the time) was
 19 vehemently opposed to the project. Councillor Blakeman
 20 told me that he was actually opposed to any investment
 21 in Lancaster West as a whole."
 22 Now, do you recall telling Mr Daffarn that
 23 Councillor Feilding—Mellen was opposed to any investment
 24 in Lancaster West as a whole?
 25 A. I don't recollect telling him that. I do recollect that

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1 there was a desire to demolish Grenfell Tower, demolish
 2 Lancaster West, demolish Bramley House and demolish the
 3 Silchester Estate and rebuild as part of their
 4 regeneration processes, and I believe that was supported
 5 by Councillor Feilding—Mellen initially.
 6 Q. Right. Mr Daffarn's recollection, as recorded here, is
 7 that you told him that Councillor Feilding—Mellen was
 8 opposed to any investment in Lancaster West as a whole;
 9 do you disagree with that?
 10 A. Well, I think he was opposed to the investment because
 11 he wanted it to be razed to the ground and rebuilt.
 12 Q. Was that always your understanding of
 13 Councillor Feilding—Mellen's intentions?
 14 A. Not always, no.
 15 Q. When did they change?
 16 A. Well, I — they decided that the Latimer master plan was
 17 too expensive to implement immediately, so he decided
 18 that he would do it incrementally instead, and that was
 19 one of the reasons for the decision to demolish the
 20 Silchester Estate. It was one of the reasons for
 21 building the More West development on the
 22 Silchester Estate. It was one of the reasons, because
 23 they decided that they couldn't decant all the residents
 24 from Grenfell Tower, that they decided to refurbish it
 25 rather than knock it down.

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1 Q. So do you think you had this conversation with
2 Mr Daffarn early on?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. We know that the original Latimer master plan was some
5 time in 2009, which had projected the demolition of the
6 whole of the Lancaster West Estate, and a regeneration
7 of a much wider area, but that had changed, and clearly
8 by 2011/2012 there was a plan in place to regenerate
9 Grenfell Tower.
10 So is it right that, whenever you had this
11 conversation, it would have been before then?
12 A. Well, I don't remember the conversation, but I suspect
13 it must have been.
14 Q. Right, I see. So if and when this happened, this would
15 have been at the time, is it, that —
16 A. At the time, yeah.
17 Q. At the time that there was discussion about the
18 demolition of the whole estate?
19 A. No, I think they had already decided that the Latimer
20 master plan wouldn't, as they say, wash its face, so
21 they decided not to do it. But
22 Councillor Feilding—Mellen, I believe, was still
23 committed to it, because it was then — he then began to
24 introduce it incrementally, and the decision to knock
25 down the whole of Silchester Estate and rebuild it three

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1 times the density was part of that incremental
2 introduction of that Latimer master plan. Because there
3 was also a plan to knock down the walkways or finger
4 blocks on Lancaster West after they'd finished the
5 Grenfell Tower refurbishment.
6 Q. So it's not your evidence, or is it, that
7 Councillor Feilding—Mellen always remained vehemently
8 opposed to the project, or indeed any investment in
9 Lancaster West?
10 A. Well, not as such, but he did want to knock it down.
11 Q. At one stage?
12 A. At one stage, yeah. Well, I think he secretly wanted to
13 carry on that view, because they started incrementally
14 to say that, you know, for example, the
15 Silchester Estate would be knocked down, and they went
16 through a massive consultation exercise on that, very
17 expensive, and wasting a lot of money.
18 Q. Ms Blakeman, thank you very much. I've got no further
19 questions for you. It only remains for me to thank you
20 very much for coming —
21 A. No, you're supposed to ask me what I have to say first.
22 Q. Well, yes, we decide who we ask that question of, but
23 I'm very happy to ask it if you'd like to volunteer.
24 A. Thank you, yes, I would like to volunteer.
25 Q. What would you like to say?

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1 A. First of all, I would like to say that the one thing
2 I regret is that David Collins and I did not press the
3 Grenfell pathway sufficiently hard, because it was
4 an alternative to the TMO's working group review, and it
5 was a learning process and it set out what we had
6 learned from the Grenfell Tower project, and although it
7 was never accepted by the council or by the TMO, we did
8 send — well, David sent it to the residents of
9 Trellick Tower, because they were next on the list.
10 Q. Very good. Is there anything else you would like to
11 add?
12 A. Well, I'm not going to sit here with tears in my eyes
13 and say how terrible the fire was because I watched the
14 fire, I knew over 30 of the people, including children,
15 who died in that fire, and that fire should not have
16 happened, and it only happened — well, no, one reason
17 why it happened was because the council first of all did
18 not take Mr Daffarn seriously, and secondly they then
19 decided to vilify me as well. They didn't listen to the
20 residents, and they should have done.
21 MR MILLETT: Ms Blakeman, thank you very much for your
22 evidence and for your answer to the final question that
23 I did not put to you. I'm very grateful anyway.
24 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much for inviting me.
25 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I normally say thank you before the

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1 witness leaves the room on behalf of the panel. It is
2 helpful to us to hear from those who were involved at
3 the time, and we're grateful to you for coming to give
4 us your evidence.
5 THE WITNESS: Thank you for inviting me to give evidence.
6 Thank you.
7 (The witness withdrew)
8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, now, Mr Millett, I'm not sure
9 our next witness is available today. Is that right?
10 MR MILLETT: No. No, we had a slightly — no, he is not.
11 He is available tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock, and that
12 is Mr Carl Stokes.
13 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: So we have nothing more to do this
14 afternoon?
15 MR MILLETT: I'm going to invite you to rise a little early
16 this afternoon.
17 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: That's all right. We understand why
18 that should be the case.
19 Very well, we will break there for the day. We will
20 resume at 10 o'clock tomorrow, and look forward to our
21 next witness then.
22 10 o'clock tomorrow. Thank you very much.
23 (3.05 pm)
24 (The hearing adjourned until 10 am
25 on Tuesday, 25 May 2021)

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