



Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Day 130

May 13, 2021

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Thursday, 13 May 2021

(10.00 am)

SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to today's hearing. Today we're going to hear further evidence from Ms Laura Johnson, formerly of the housing department of the RBKC.

Yes, Mr Millett, could we ask Ms Johnson to come in, please.

MS LAURA JOHNSON (continued)

SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good morning, Ms Johnson.

THE WITNESS: Good morning.

SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Take a moment to get yourself organised and then we'll get started.

(Pause)

Yes, Mr Millett, when you're ready.

MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, good morning. Members of the panel, good morning.

Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY (continued)

MR MILLETT: Ms Johnson, good morning.

A. Good morning.

Q. I would now like to ask you some questions about Lakanal House and the Shepherds Court fires.

First of all, Lakanal House. The fire, as I said yesterday, took place on 3 July 2009. We saw Judith Blakeman's email to you on 4 July 2009, and just

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recapping from yesterday, I think you agree that you became aware of that fire at the latest the next day.

A. Yes.

Q. Can we now look, please, at {RBK00045588}.

This is a letter from the LFB, Ron Dobson, to Derek Myers on 9 July 2009, and Derek Myers was at that time the town clerk and chief executive of RBKC, wasn't he?

A. Yes.

Q. Just have a moment to look at it. It's entitled "Social housing — fire safety risk assessment and maintenance of means of escape provisions". Do you recognise this letter?

A. I don't remember this letter specifically, but I would have seen it.

Q. You would have seen it?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember what steps you took in relation to fire risk assessments as a result?

A. I'm afraid I don't.

Q. If you look at the second paragraph to start with, he says:

"Following the tragic fire in Camberwell on 3 July 2009 I consider it appropriate to personally write to you to remind you of certain matters for which

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you are either responsible under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order), or which you have a role in enforcing."

Was it your understanding at the time that RBKC was either responsible under that enactment or had a role in enforcing it?

A. I don't remember what I thought in July 2009, if I'm honest.

Q. Right. So when we look at the next paragraph, which is a reminder of the requirement of the order for suitable and sufficient fire safety risk assessments, can we just take that passage or paragraph as read?

A. Yes.

Q. And can we take it as read that it wasn't telling you anything you didn't already know?

A. No, I would have known that.

Q. Yes.

Now, moving to March 2010, can we go to {RBK00030060}, please.

This is a joint report which you produced, together with Robert Black and Jean Daintith. We can see that from lower down in the document. In fact, let's go to that. It's at page 4 {RBK00030060/4}, just to show you the bottom of the document. There's Robert Black's name, your name and Ms Daintith's name.

3

Can we go back to page 1 {RBK00030060/1}, please. It's entitled "LGA report 'extinguishing the risk': a councillor's guide to fire safety".

Again, did you draft this document yourself or was this drafted for you and you read it through and approved it?

A. I would not have drafted it myself, someone else would have drafted it in the department and I would have read it through and approved it.

Q. Looking at the date, it's for the scrutiny committee, 15 March 2010, as you can see from the second heading there.

Who is it in your department, do you recall, who would have done the primary drafting of this document?

A. Could we scroll down to the end of the document, please?

Q. Yes, page 4 {RBK00030060/4}.

A. It looks as though, because the contact officer is Janice Wray, actually it would have been Janice Wray at the TMO who authored this, and then it would have come across to RBKC.

Q. Who would it have come to within RBKC, do you remember?

A. I don't remember. It would have been in all likelihood that it would have come through Pam Sedgwick, as the housing commissioning manager at the time, or it may have come to me direct, I don't remember.

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1 Q. If it had come to you direct, who within TMO would you
 2 have gone to in order to correct anything, or would you
 3 have just relied on what Ms Wray was writing?
 4 A. If there was anything in there that I personally didn't
 5 agree with I may have gone back to Janice Wray and
 6 Robert Black jointly.
 7 Q. Let's look at page 2 {RBK00030060/2}, please,
 8 paragraph 3.1, under the heading "Approach to fire risk
 9 assessments in RBKC housing stock". I'll just read you
 10 3.1, it says:
 11 "Initially, fire risk assessments were carried out
 12 by KCTMO staff. However, the Fire Brigade's
 13 requirements became increasingly stringent —
 14 particularly in the immediate aftermath of the serious
 15 fire at Lakanal House in Southwark where six people
 16 died. Therefore, KCTMO and RBKC negotiated with the
 17 London Fire Brigade to agree our new approach, programme
 18 and timescales for carrying out these fire risk
 19 assessments and any necessary works that they identify
 20 across the Council's housing stock."
 21 Then in 3.2:
 22 "The London Fire Brigade advised in July 2009 that
 23 they considered a 3-year timescale (July 2012) for
 24 completion of all Fire Risk Assessments and a 5-year
 25 timescale (July 2014) for completion of all necessary

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1 works to be reasonable."
 2 Now, just looking at that, do you know how RBKC
 3 changed its approach to fire risk assessments following
 4 the Lakanal House fire?
 5 A. RBKC didn't change its approach to fire risk assessments
 6 because they were undertaken by KCTMO, so it would have
 7 been KCTMO that then changed its approach to fire risk
 8 assessments.
 9 Q. So —
 10 A. Although we had joint responsibility, they were the
 11 organisation that undertook the fire risk assessments,
 12 commissioned the fire risk assessments, monitored the
 13 fire risk assessments, and then undertook the actions
 14 that came out of the fire risk assessments.
 15 Q. Yes. It's really that latter part. In relation to
 16 RBKC's role in respect of fire risk assessments, did
 17 RBKC change its approach following the Lakanal House
 18 fire and the Fire Brigade's approach as a result of it?
 19 A. Not specifically, no, RBKC didn't, unless KCTMO did,
 20 so ...
 21 Q. Looking at paragraph 3.2, as I've shown you, we can see
 22 that July 2014 was the deadline for completion of all
 23 works identified in any FRA action plan. Was that
 24 deadline ever extended, to your knowledge?
 25 A. I don't remember.

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1 Q. Look at 3.3, please, and the bullet point at the foot of
 2 page 2. The paragraph starts:
 3 "Specifically, RBKC and KCTMO then proposed and the
 4 London Fire Brigade agreed the following ..."
 5 And you can see that there is a list of things that
 6 were agreed.
 7 The bullet point at the foot of page 2 says:
 8 "That each Fire Risk Assessment would have an Action
 9 Plan setting out recommendations and these would clearly
 10 state which actions are required to comply with
 11 legislation, which are necessary to comply with British
 12 Standards and which would be considered to be good
 13 practice and these recommendations will be progressed in
 14 this priority order."
 15 Was the goal that the priority would be set
 16 independently by the fire risk assessor and then
 17 observed by the TMO and RBKC?
 18 A. Yes, that would be the methodology.
 19 Q. So it wasn't negotiable? The priority wasn't
 20 negotiable?
 21 A. It may well have been, because when the fire risk
 22 assessor delivered their fire risk assessment report to
 23 KCTMO, it would be my expectation that the person
 24 responsible at KCTMO would discuss the grading of the
 25 actions that they had undertaken, and there may have

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1 been some opportunities to move them or there may not.
 2 I wasn't in those meetings, so I'm —
 3 Q. Right. So is this right: even though your understanding
 4 from this document you approved and then presented said
 5 that the fire risk assessment would have an action plan
 6 which would set out what was required to comply with
 7 standards and legislation, and these recommendations
 8 will be progressed in this priority order, you still saw
 9 scope, did you, for negotiation between the fire risk
 10 assessor and the TMO in relation to any particular
 11 action?
 12 A. What I'm saying to you is that that's based on my
 13 experience of being involved in fire risk assessments.
 14 I don't know whether that actually took place in this
 15 instance.
 16 Q. Well, that's what I was asking you. Was the goal that
 17 the priority would be set independently by the FRA —
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. — and observed? Right. So the goal was that it
 20 wouldn't be negotiable?
 21 A. Yes, the goal was that it would not be negotiable.
 22 Q. Thank you.
 23 A. The person undertaking the fire risk assessments would
 24 present those to KCTMO and then they would form
 25 an action plan in merit order.

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1 Q. Right. So if there was negotiation between the TMO and
2 the fire risk assessor, that would not be compliant with
3 what you had contemplated in this joint report?
4 A. To be honest with you, I wouldn't know that level of
5 detail at the time in 2010, so I would not have referred
6 back — if KCTMO had undertaken any kind of negotiation
7 with the fire risk assessor, I wouldn't have known about
8 it. I just wouldn't have known that level of detail.
9 Q. No, it's not about a level of detail, forgive me. What
10 I'm asking you is what you contemplated, and I think,
11 just to be clear, is it right that when you presented
12 this document with your name at the bottom, you did not
13 contemplate that there would be any room for manoeuvre,
14 discussion, negotiation as between the TMO and the risk
15 assessor on the priority of FRA actions?
16 A. At the time of presenting this report, and as written,
17 I would say no, but I wouldn't have known about it in
18 that detail in 2010.
19 Q. Very well.
20 Now, let's go over the page, please, to page 3
21 {RBK00030060/3}. On page 3, "Progress with fire risk
22 assessments in RBKC housing stock" is the title, and if
23 we look at 4.3, halfway down the page, it says this:
24 "The Fire Risk Assessment Action Plans are raising
25 a number of issues which need to be progressed. In many

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1 cases these actions relate to simple and cheap
2 responsive items which can be progressed swiftly.
3 However, there are a number of potentially more costly
4 items such as an inspection programme to ensure that all
5 flat entrance doors in enclosed blocks are sufficiently
6 fire resisting, self-closing and smoke-sealed and where
7 this is not the case upgrading or replacing these.
8 Capital funding has been ear-marked to progress these
9 items and RBKC and the KCTMO are working closely to
10 ensure all significant risks are addressed with the
11 urgency they require."
12 Was that true?
13 A. I can only presume that the — as a result of this
14 particular piece of work, from there the door inspection
15 programme and replacement programme came.
16 Q. I'm sorry, let me try the question again.
17 A. I'm sorry, I don't know the detail that relates to this
18 4.3 because I don't remember.
19 Q. Well, let's just break it down.
20 The last sentence in that paragraph — I'll read it
21 again — says:
22 "Capital funding has been ear-marked to progress
23 these items and RBKC and the KCTMO are working closely
24 to ensure all significant risks are addressed with the
25 urgency they require."

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1 First of all, was it true that capital funding had
2 been earmarked to progress those items?
3 A. I don't know unless I was able to see the budget reports
4 from 2010, as I don't remember in that level of detail.
5 Q. Well, when you signed this report off, did you satisfy
6 yourself that that statement of fact was true?
7 A. I would have done, yes, and we would have —
8 Q. What did you do?
9 A. Well, I would have been — would have signed this report
10 off and then there would have been a report that
11 accompanied it which set out the programme of funding
12 for the year, and we would have been working with the
13 TMO to set aside funding in order to be able to meet
14 those requirements.
15 Q. How much was earmarked?
16 A. I don't know.
17 Q. At the time, did you know how much had been earmarked?
18 A. I may have done at the time, but it's 2010, it's
19 11 years ago now, and I can't remember.
20 Q. Do you remember the fact that you did know that there
21 was a figure, even if you can't remember the number?
22 A. No, I don't remember that, I'm afraid.
23 Q. Looking at the second statement of fact:
24 "... the KCTMO are working closely to ensure all
25 significant risks are addressed with the urgency they

11

1 require."
2 Was that statement of fact true?
3 A. I don't remember, but I presume —
4 Q. You don't remember whether it was true or not?
5 A. I can only presume it was true because I've signed my
6 name to it, and this was a report jointly authored by
7 myself and KCTMO, and we weren't in the habit of putting
8 items in reports that weren't true.
9 Q. That I follow, which leads me to the next question: if
10 you weren't in the habit of making false statements,
11 what did you do yourself to satisfy yourself that that
12 statement was true?
13 A. I don't remember doing — I don't remember.
14 Q. Did you just take it on trust from Janice Wray?
15 A. I may well have taken it on trust, yes.
16 Q. Why did you do that?
17 A. Because she's an experienced health and safety officer
18 working in KCTMO and is — has a high level of
19 responsibility for undertaking these actions, and
20 I would have seen evidence in the regular monitoring
21 reports that were presented to scrutiny committee
22 setting out the actions that they were taking on health
23 and safety.
24 Q. Do you know what it was that RBKC and TMO were doing by
25 way of this close working as stated here?

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1 A. I don't know, but it would have been undertaken by
 2 Pam Sedgwick's team at that time.
 3 Q. Do you know what arrangements had been made or
 4 contemplated by RBKC to monitor the progress into the
 5 future of this flat front door project?
 6 A. At this precise time I don't know, but I know because of
 7 the reports that came to scrutiny committee setting out
 8 the progress against that flat entrance door programme,
 9 and I do know that a member of Pam Sedgwick's team was
 10 closely involved in monitoring the implementation of
 11 that flat entrance door programme and I was kept up to
 12 date on it.
 13 Q. Would you agree that according to what I've shown you in
 14 this document, all flat front doors in the TMO's stock
 15 should have been inspected and made fire safe by
 16 July 2014?
 17 A. I think that's what the document is alluding to broadly.
 18 Q. Why do you say "broadly"?
 19 A. Erm ...
 20 (Pause)
 21 Yes, in the sentence in 4.3, I would say that there
 22 was an expectation set out in this report that all --
 23 that there was an inspection programme of all flat
 24 entrance doors, and that was undertaken, because there
 25 was then a programme of replacement doors undertaken for

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1 tenanted doors, there was around 1,200 tenanted doors
 2 replaced, and there was a programme of inspecting
 3 leaseholder doors as well.
 4 Q. I'm just trying to get you to accept that, on this
 5 document, the expectation and the planning was that all
 6 flat front doors in the TMO's stock would have been
 7 inspected and made fire safe by July 2014?
 8 A. They were inspected, and as far -- and as a result of
 9 that, there was a fire door replacement programme.
 10 Q. Yes. You're not quite answering my question, forgive
 11 me. Let me try it once more.
 12 The document contemplates that all flat front doors
 13 in the TMO's stock would have been inspected and made
 14 fire safe by July 2014. That was its expectation.
 15 A. Yes, it does state that, yes.
 16 Q. Thank you.
 17 Now, can we go to your first witness statement,
 18 please, at page 28 {RBK00034943/28}. I'd like to look
 19 with you, please, at paragraph 110, under the heading
 20 "Lakanal House Fire". You say there:
 21 "On 17 April 2013, Cynthia Vachino confirmed to me
 22 the completion of the Lakanal House inquest. She
 23 provided a summary of the Coroner's recommendations and
 24 actions arising from the inquest and attached various
 25 letters and the narrative verdicts ..."

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1 And you exhibit those at LJ/33.
 2 Can we just look at that, {RBK00001553}. That is
 3 the formal set of recommendations and actions, the
 4 Rule 43 report.
 5 Did you read this document?
 6 A. I would have -- yes, I would have read through it.
 7 Q. Yes.
 8 If we go to page 8 {RBK00001553/8}, please, towards
 9 the top of the page there is a heading "Fire safety,
 10 fire fighting and search and rescue", do you see that?
 11 And you can see what is written below that.
 12 Can we take it that you would have read that or did
 13 read that when you received this?
 14 A. Yes, I would.
 15 Q. So you were familiar with the stay-put principle?
 16 A. Yes, I was.
 17 Q. And the explanation of it set out in this document?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And the recommendation that's made in the second and
 20 third paragraphs there? Yes?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Yes.
 23 Did you take any action to ensure that the
 24 appropriate guidance was given to residents relating to
 25 the stay-put principle?

15

1 A. I personally didn't, but I was aware of the fact that
 2 I also received information regarding Lakanal House
 3 through London Councils as part of a remit that we had
 4 around fire safety, as the housing group, and I passed
 5 on information to the TMO from that group, one of which
 6 is a -- I think there was a leaflet around the stay-put
 7 policy, and I understand the TMO did some work around
 8 making residents aware through their Link magazine
 9 around stay put.
 10 Q. Did you ever have any discussions with the TMO about
 11 generic risk assessment 3.2, high-rise firefighting?
 12 A. No, I don't believe I did.
 13 Q. Particularly about evacuation arrangements?
 14 A. No, I don't believe I did.
 15 Q. Can we go to page 9 in this document {RBK00001553/9},
 16 which is entitled "Retro fit of sprinklers in high rise
 17 residential buildings". Did you note those
 18 recommendations?
 19 A. I would have read them.
 20 Q. Yes. Did you or did anybody at RBKC ever actually
 21 consider the retrofitting of sprinklers in high-rise
 22 residential buildings in the TMO stock?
 23 A. No, I don't believe we did.
 24 Q. Why was that, in brief?
 25 A. To be honest with you, I don't remember.

16

1 Q. Right.
 2 Can we go to page 13 {RBK00001553/13}, please. On
 3 page 13, you will see there is a heading, "Training of
 4 staff engaged in maintenance and refurbishment work on
 5 existing building", and then it goes on to say this:
 6 "It is recommended that your authority consider the
 7 training needs of personnel who will be involved in
 8 procuring or supervising work to existing high rise
 9 residential buildings — whether maintenance,
 10 refurbishment or rebuilding of parts of buildings — to
 11 ensure that materials and products used in such work
 12 have appropriate fire protection qualities. Staff
 13 should, for example, be trained to understand the
 14 significance of the compartmentation principle and to
 15 appreciate when Building Control should be notified
 16 about work to be undertaken."
 17 Do you remember reading this particular
 18 recommendation of the coroner?
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. But can we assume that you did?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Yes.
 23 Having read it, do you remember whether you
 24 considered the training needs of personnel either in
 25 RBKC or, more pertinently, perhaps, within the TMO who

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1 were involved in procuring or supervising work to
 2 existing high—rise residential buildings?
 3 A. No, I do not.
 4 Q. Why is that?
 5 A. If I — I personally wouldn't have overseen the training
 6 needs of personnel involved in high—rise buildings.
 7 I would have assumed that the TMO would have taken
 8 action in those instances.
 9 Q. You would have assumed that. The recommendation is
 10 directed to your authority, and given the relationship
 11 with the TMO, did you not think it appropriate to at
 12 least raise with the TMO their considering their own
 13 training needs of their people involved in procuring or
 14 supervising work on high—rise residential buildings?
 15 A. I did not do that at the time.
 16 Q. No. I mean, can you account for that?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. I mean, you should have done?
 19 A. I should have raised with them — I'm perfectly happy to
 20 concede that I should have had a conversation with the
 21 TMO about training of their personnel, the people who
 22 worked for them, about how they managed the evacuation
 23 or refurbishment of high—rise buildings, and how it
 24 complied with or took the recommendations from the
 25 Lakanal House fire.

18

1 Q. And similarly, same questions in relation to training in
 2 the understanding of the significance of the
 3 compartmentation principle?
 4 A. I did discuss compartmentation with the TMO because
 5 I was particularly concerned as a result of the
 6 Lakanal House fire, because the recommendations were so
 7 clear. We had a presentation undertaken by the Building
 8 Research Establishment which I arranged following
 9 a presentation they did at the housing group at
 10 London Councils, where they talked about the causes of
 11 the Lakanal House fire, how it had spread, how residents
 12 responded to it. Attendees at that meeting were from
 13 the TMO, planning department, RBKC, and following that
 14 I was particularly aware that one of the significant
 15 issues of — from Lakanal was about how the fire spread
 16 due to lack of compartmentation, and it was a subject
 17 I raised particularly with Peter Maddison when we were
 18 undertaking — when the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower
 19 was undertaken.
 20 Q. Yes, we will come to the presentation shortly, so we'll
 21 look at that.
 22 Before we do, it's right, isn't it, I think, that in
 23 April or by April 2013, you were well aware of the
 24 nature of the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower?
 25 A. Yes.

19

1 Q. Did you yourself take any steps in accordance with these
 2 recommendations to ensure that those involved directly
 3 in the project had the training identified here?
 4 A. No, I did not.
 5 Q. Why is that?
 6 A. I suppose on reading this again now, I did not take from
 7 it at the time that it was my responsibility to then
 8 arrange the training needs of personnel on these
 9 matters.
 10 Q. I mean, really there should have been a holistic
 11 reaction to this, whether between you and the TMO or
 12 individually, to say to yourselves and together: look,
 13 we need to make sure that anybody engaged in a project
 14 retrofitting or refurbishing an existing high—rise block
 15 has the training as per this recommendation. Do you
 16 accept that?
 17 A. Yes, I accept that, but there's also an element of this
 18 part of this recommendation which is about being picked
 19 up by building control, rather than just the housing
 20 department, particularly when it comes to
 21 compartmentation.
 22 Q. Indeed, and that would require some close liaison,
 23 wouldn't it, between building control and those
 24 responsible for the project?
 25 A. Yes, it would, yeah.

20

1 Q. Did the coroner's recommendations give you particular
2 cause for concern when it came to the Grenfell Tower
3 project — I say cause for concern; cause to think about
4 the recommendations when it came to the Grenfell Tower
5 project, particularly because it involved
6 an overcladding?
7 A. It didn't necessarily give me — Lakanal House didn't
8 necessarily give me concern about overcladding, it was
9 about maintaining — what I took from it and what
10 I remembered following reading this and from the
11 presentation was about the need to ensure that there
12 weren't penetrations in the — unnecessary penetrations
13 in the concrete frame of the building which could cause
14 fire to spread, and that's what I took from it and
15 remembered from it, and spoke particularly to the TMO
16 about.
17 Q. Right.
18 A. And about ensuring that, you know, kind of — we were
19 very clear that this was one of the findings that was —
20 contributed to the spread of the Lakanal House fire,
21 although it's a different — Lakanal House is very
22 different in design and different in the way it was
23 constructed, it was a scissor block, which is part of
24 the reasons, whereas Grenfell Tower was a concrete
25 frame.

21

1 Q. Do you remember whether these recommendations and the
2 package of materials that came with them was ever sent
3 to the TMO?
4 A. I don't remember.
5 Q. Were they ever discussed with the TMO?
6 A. Yes, we definitely discussed — as I said, I discussed
7 with Peter Maddison around compartmentation, and members
8 of the TMO attended a presentation by the BRE which
9 I arranged at the council offices.
10 Q. Now, can we look at {TMO10003054/3}. This takes us into
11 July 2013. It's an email from Ms Sarah Frater, as you
12 can see from the top of the page, to you, 10 July 2013,
13 and she, although it takes some digging, was from the
14 Longlands Court Residents' Association, and it forwards
15 an email that had been sent to
16 Councillor Feilding—Mellen, if we just go to what she
17 says.
18 If you then look up, you see that you ask
19 Robert Black about an extensive response, and if we go
20 to page 2 {TMO10003054/2}, you say in the second email
21 there:
22 "Robert,
23 "We did quite an extensive response to something
24 very similar on this issue from Sarah Frater a few
25 months ago, I can't find my copy, do you have what we

22

1 wrote?"
2 He comes back to you on 12 July, just a little bit
3 above that, and he says this:
4 "Laura
5 "I have now had a chance to read this and feel again
6 she is making unfounded accusations which I would like my
7 team to comment on for your reply. If she did not go to
8 so many people which this is an example then she might
9 get response.
10 "Peter and Janice ..."
11 And that's, I'm assuming, Peter Maddison, who also
12 received this:
13 "... I would like us to review this and address the
14 accusations she is making.
15 "Enough bile for this week."
16 A little bit above that you go back to him and you
17 say:
18 "Robert,
19 "I've done a very quick response to Cllr
20 [Feilding—Mellen] directing him to Michael Clarke to
21 discuss the Good Fairy Development and gave him a couple
22 of sentences confirming that Peter had spoken to
23 Sarah ..."
24 And then you say:
25 "It may be worth at the monthly TMO Digest doing an

23

1 update on fire safety generally for Cllr FM then you can
2 [include] Grenfell, Trelick, Tower Block safety and
3 leaseholder doors, you could reference in there Sarah's
4 comments about Longlands Court. It may be timely in
5 light of the fire this weekend in Bow which looked nasty
6 but was dealt with really efficiently by the Fire
7 Service and all the press about Lakanal and how the TMO
8 has reacted. Cllr Coleridge knew all about it but
9 Cllr FM doesn't so worth an update."
10 Then if we look at the final email in the chain,
11 please, on page 1 {TMO10003054/1} — I'm sorry to take
12 so much time up looking at all this, but it's important
13 you see the context — at the very top of the page we
14 can see that Janice Wray sends to Robert Black, but not
15 to you, a briefing note by way of an attachment, and
16 it's called "Fire Safety in TMO Blocks. Briefing Note
17 for Cllr's Digest, July 2013". She says to him:
18 "I appreciate we don't yet have a date for this but
19 as I am going on Annual Leave after tomorrow I have
20 [put] together a draft for comment in case you need it
21 whilst I'm away. I am enclosing a draft briefing note
22 on fire safety and a briefing note on Lakanal House and
23 specifically the Coroner's recommendations and our
24 response to them."
25 Now, this email conversation, if I can put it that

24

1 way, took place some four months after you received the
 2 coroner's recommendations in the Lakanal House inquest.
 3 Had you provided any sort of briefing to councillors
 4 about those recommendations before that?
 5 A. I don't remember.
 6 Q. We looked at your email; what did you mean about "press
 7 about Lakanal House and how the TMO has reacted"?
 8 A. I really don't remember, to be honest.
 9 Q. Can we look at one of the attachments to Janice Wray's
 10 final email on page 1, the briefing note on the fire at
 11 Lakanal House. That's at {TMO10003056}. There is the
 12 briefing note done by Janice Wray, and we know that
 13 because at page 3 {TMO10003056/3}, if we could just
 14 scroll quickly down to that, we can see her name and the
 15 date, June 2013.
 16 Did you look at this document? Have you seen this
 17 document?
 18 A. I don't remember seeing this document, but if it formed
 19 part of a briefing note to Councillor Feilding-Mellen,
 20 then I would have seen it.
 21 Q. Right. Would you have read it and digested it, do you
 22 think?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Do you remember discussing its contents at all with
 25 Janice Wray or another officer of the TMO particularly?

25

1 A. I don't particularly remember discussing this, no.
 2 Q. You mentioned a presentation by the BRE a moment ago,
 3 and I said I'd come back to that.
 4 Can we go to your third witness statement, please,
 5 {RBK00057506/1-2} at paragraphs 3 to 5 there.
 6 If you look at page 1, question 1, you say:
 7 "I have been asked whether I am aware of
 8 a presentation that David Crowder gave to the TMO and/or
 9 RBKC staff regarding the Lakanal House fire, and whether
 10 I attended. I recall attending a presentation by
 11 David Crowder. I believe it was held at RBKC Town Hall.
 12 I do not recall the time or date this presentation took
 13 place."
 14 Can we go, please, to {TMO10040126/2}. It's
 15 an email chain from mid-November 2013, and this
 16 particular email, towards the bottom of page 2, is
 17 an email from Brian Castle of Richmond to a number of
 18 people in different authorities, as it appears — you
 19 have got Croydon, Enfield, et cetera — copied to you,
 20 and the subject is "FW: High Rise Forum". He refers in
 21 the first paragraph to the first high-rise forum.
 22 If we go to page 3 {TMO10040126/3}, please, in this
 23 email run, you can see the paragraph starts:
 24 "Yesterday I went to a presentation (hosted by
 25 LB Wandsworth), by David Crowder, from the Building

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1 Research Establishment, about all the technical failings
 2 of Lakanal, (predominantly from adaptations to the
 3 original design), and it was excellent. He has spent at
 4 least 50% of the last 4 years working on the Lakanal
 5 fire. If you haven't seen it and would like to, he is
 6 available to do more presentations."
 7 Then if we go up the chain, please, we can see that
 8 you send this email on — go to page 2
 9 {TMO10040126/2} — to Robert Black and Janice Wray at
 10 the TMO, and you say:
 11 "Interested in your thoughts as to whether you would
 12 be interested in a presentation from David Crowder,
 13 I know we don't have any block exactly like Lakanal but
 14 it may be worth—while never the less."
 15 Now, this initial email was sent, as we can see, on
 16 15 November 2013. Does that assist you about when you
 17 attended the presentation by David Crowder that you
 18 agreed you did in your third witness statement at
 19 paragraph —
 20 A. No, not particularly. It would have taken place,
 21 I presume, in December or the following year of 2014.
 22 Q. Well, I was going to ask you, was it on 10 January 2014?
 23 I know it's a bit of a specific date, but I have
 24 a reason for asking it.
 25 A. I don't remember.

27

1 Q. Why did you suggest that Janice Wray and Robert Black
 2 attend the David Crowder presentation?
 3 A. Because I thought they would find it really interesting
 4 and informative, having been to — having had
 5 a presentation or having discussed fire safety in
 6 Lakanal House at the London Councils housing directors'
 7 group, I thought it was worthwhile for people to know
 8 what he had to say about it.
 9 Q. When you said you don't have a block exactly like
 10 Lakanal, what did you mean?
 11 A. I wasn't aware of us having a block that was of the same
 12 construction type as Lakanal House.
 13 Q. Right. And what construction type was that?
 14 A. Oh, I don't remember now, but it was a scissor block, as
 15 I seem to remember, rather than a straightforward
 16 tower block, and from the presentation I remember that
 17 the way the fire penetrated was because, in terms of
 18 a scissor block, the staircases crossed like that
 19 (indicated), which meant that when works had been
 20 undertaken to that particular block, it had — the
 21 compartmentalisation had been compromised, allowing the
 22 fire to penetrate between the staircases, which meant it
 23 could travel between different flats more easily.
 24 Q. Why did you personally attend this presentation?
 25 A. Because I was interested and I wanted to know what he

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1 had to say, and it's far better to be informed than not
 2 informed about these things.
 3 Q. Yes, I understand. Interested personally rather than
 4 interested because of your role?
 5 A. No, interested professionally and personally.
 6 Q. Can we go to your third witness statement again, please,
 7 and look at page 2 {RBK00057506/2}, paragraph 7. You
 8 say there:
 9 "I have been asked whether RBKC made any changes to
 10 how it managed fire safety across the housing stock as
 11 a result of this presentation. I do not recall if there
 12 was any policy or procedural reviews with regard to how
 13 fire safety was managed and therefore any changes made
 14 as a result of the presentation either in RBKC Housing
 15 Department or at the TMO."
 16 Is that — in other words, you don't remember
 17 whether or not there were — because there weren't
 18 in fact any policy or procedural reviews?
 19 A. No, it's because I don't remember.
 20 Q. I see.
 21 Do you recall if you personally took any action as
 22 a result of having attended the presentation?
 23 A. I don't remember taking any action as a result of the
 24 presentation.
 25 Q. The presentation, as you say on page 2, if we scroll up

29

1 a little bit further, please, to paragraph 4, covered
 2 a number of topics, and you've set them out in six
 3 subparagraphs. One of those was the spread of fire,
 4 4.3, "how the fire spread".
 5 Did that give you any cause for concern or did it
 6 spark your interest or curiosity in relation to the
 7 external cladding which was being applied at Grenfell,
 8 or at least being discussed at Grenfell at this point?
 9 A. No, because the Lakanal — I don't remember it causing
 10 me any particular concern with regard to cladding
 11 because Lakanal House was quite an old building, as
 12 I understand, built in the late 1960s or 1970s, and the
 13 cladding there, the panelling type, was of that era,
 14 very much so. So it would have been very different to
 15 anything that was suggested at Grenfell Tower.
 16 Q. So in general terms, although these subtopics were
 17 covered by David Crowder in his presentation, you didn't
 18 make a link between these topics and the works then
 19 going on or projected to go on at Grenfell Tower?
 20 A. Yes, I did, as I've already explained. I made a link
 21 not in terms of cladding types, because the cladding was
 22 very different at Lakanal to whatever was proposed at
 23 Grenfell Tower, but I did make a link in terms of
 24 compartmentalisation, and I was particularly interested
 25 from that presentation in the way that I believe there

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1 had been a number of different works undertaken at
 2 Lakanal, a number of layers of paint, a number of ways
 3 that the roof spaces no longer had firestopping in them,
 4 and what I took from it was very much about the
 5 compartmentalisation being compromised and that needed
 6 to be kind of, you know, very much top priority when
 7 looking at any refurbishment programme.
 8 Q. I follow. So, just to be clear, what you have just
 9 said, is that a reference, perhaps a longer-hand
 10 reference, to paragraph 4.6 on page 2, "the structure of
 11 Lakanal House and how works that had taken place" —
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. — "contributed to a reduction in compartmentation"?
 14 Did you make any link — well, let me ask it this
 15 way: what lesson from 4.6 did you take which should be
 16 applied to Grenfell.
 17 A. That we needed to be particularly mindful that any works
 18 that were undertaken didn't compromise the
 19 compartmentation of the building.
 20 Q. And did you pass that learning back to the TMO?
 21 A. I definitely spoke to Peter Maddison about it in terms
 22 of the outcomes from the Lakanal House fire. It was
 23 probably — I remember a conversation about it, and —
 24 but it was probably unminuted.
 25 Q. Can you give us a feel for what you told Peter Maddison

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1 on the subject of your learning about compartmentation
 2 from Dave Crowder's presentation?
 3 A. I believe Peter Maddison was at that presentation.
 4 Q. Right. So —
 5 A. So he would have heard the same information that
 6 I heard, and it would have been the subject of
 7 a conversation or as a discussion.
 8 Q. Right.
 9 A. Rather than me providing Peter Maddison with an
 10 instruction, because I wouldn't presume to do so because
 11 he was head of assets, not myself.
 12 Q. No, I'm not suggesting that you would have instructed
 13 him at all, but I had rather taken from your answer that
 14 you had learned something about compartmentation, as you
 15 have identified at paragraph 4.6, and then shared it,
 16 perhaps, that's a better word, with Peter Maddison.
 17 Really what I'm after is what specifically do you
 18 remember sharing with Peter Maddison about
 19 compartmentation risks or the risks to compartmentation
 20 at Grenfell as a result of the presentation?
 21 A. I don't remember what I specifically said, but
 22 I remember a general conversation about the cause of the
 23 fire at Lakanal and about how compartmentation had been
 24 compromised.
 25 Q. Can we go to {BRE00005871}, please. This is an email

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1 from — is it Dega Salad?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Is he or she your assistant?
 4 A. She was my PA at the time.
 5 Q. It's dated 5 December to Dave Crowder, and she says:
 6 "Dear David,
 7 "Can I request the 10th January anytime in the
 8 afternoon."
 9 She goes on:
 10 "The meeting request is about the High Rise Forum
 11 ... Hammersmith and Fulham Council, Westminster Council
 12 and Royal Borough would like to invite you to discuss
 13 the presentation (hosted by LB Wandsworth), by you about
 14 all the technical failings of Lakanal, predominantly
 15 from adaptations to the original design."
 16 Did you dictate that?
 17 A. I don't remember, but I would have asked Dega to arrange
 18 a meeting and given her a form of words in order to set
 19 out in the invitation, so it is likely that I gave her
 20 that wording.
 21 Q. I see.
 22 Were you aware in December 2013 that the fire at
 23 Lakanal House arose predominantly from adaptations to
 24 the original design?
 25 A. Yes, possibly — yes, I probably was, if I asked Dega to

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1 write that, then I would have picked that up as part of
 2 the information that I had about the causes of the fire
 3 at Lakanal House.
 4 Q. Right. Did that lead you to have specific concerns, or
 5 perhaps interest is a better word, about the proposed
 6 refurbishment at Grenfell Tower?
 7 A. Yes, I was, you know, kind of aware that one of the
 8 reasons for the fire spread at Lakanal had been because
 9 they'd had a number of programmes of work, as there
 10 would be to any block of the age of Lakanal, window
 11 replacement programmes, door replacement programmes, TV,
 12 lighting, you know, all of those things had gone in at
 13 different times, and there was a risk in doing any of
 14 those kind of refurbishment projects that that
 15 compromised fire safety.
 16 Q. You said in your evidence just a few minutes ago that
 17 Peter Maddison was at the presentation.
 18 A. I believe he was.
 19 Q. You believe he was. You recall that, do you?
 20 A. Well, it's a long time ago now, and memories are not
 21 always accurate, but based on what I remember from
 22 eight years ago, I thought Peter Maddison was at that
 23 presentation. But he would be able to confirm that,
 24 not I.
 25 Q. I don't think he was, and his name wasn't on the invite

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1 list, so I'm just really exploring with you how clear
 2 your memory of that was.
 3 A. I thought he was there. He may not have — but you
 4 would have to confirm that with Peter.
 5 Q. Can we then move on to look at your communications with
 6 Rock Feilding—Mellen in July 2014, {RBK00005826},
 7 please. This is an email to you from Nicholas Holgate
 8 on 15 July 2014. Do you see that?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. He is forwarding, in turn, an email that he's received,
 11 which you can see the beginning of just below it, from
 12 Rita Dexter at London Fire, LFEPA in fact, of
 13 14 July 2014, which is entitled "Two new guides for
 14 councillors about fire safety and knowtheplan".
 15 Those two guides are attached, and in his email he
 16 says:
 17 "Subject to your views, may I suggest that before
 18 the end of July, you forward the attached guides to all
 19 Cllrs in each Council with a covering assessment of our
 20 approach to and quality of health and safety for Council
 21 housing?"
 22 Did you open the attachments, first of all?
 23 A. Yes, I would have done.
 24 Q. And read them; yes?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Can you confirm — and we'll look at the attachments
 2 shortly — that you only forwarded those briefings to
 3 Councillors Marshall and Feilding—Mellen, but not all
 4 councillors?
 5 A. I can't confirm that without documentary evidence.
 6 Q. Right. We haven't seen any documentary evidence that
 7 you forwarded it to any councillors other than Marshall
 8 and Feilding—Mellen. Are you able to explain why that
 9 is?
 10 A. In which case I only forwarded them to
 11 Councillor Feilding—Mellen and Councillor Marshall.
 12 Q. And why would that have been?
 13 A. Because Councillor Marshall was chair of the housing and
 14 property scrutiny committee, and
 15 Councillor Feilding—Mellen was the Cabinet member for
 16 housing and property at that time. So I forwarded it to
 17 the two councillors with the responsibility or oversight
 18 for housing.
 19 Q. Right. Even though Mr Holgate had asked you to send
 20 them to all councillors?
 21 A. Yes, I was clearly in error.
 22 Q. Can we look, please, at your first witness statement at
 23 page 28 {RBK00034943/28}, where you refer to an email of
 24 17 July 2014 at paragraph 111, at the foot of the page.
 25 You say:

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1 "On 17 July 2014, I emailed
 2 Councillor Feilding—Mellen and Councillor Marshall,
 3 stating that the Council and the TMO were aware of the
 4 advice coming from LFB following the Lakanal House fire
 5 and that we were reassured that the TMO were on top
 6 of it."
 7 Let's look at the email itself, {RBK00003314}. You
 8 can see it goes to Feilding—Mellen and Marshall, and
 9 it's a direct forward on of the email that had been sent
 10 by Rita Dexter to Nicholas Holgate, and you say:
 11 "The fire brigade have produced these two documents
 12 with accompanying e—mail.
 13 "I hope that we've provided Scrutiny Committee with
 14 sufficient information on fire safety and the measures
 15 that the Council and the TMO are taking to ensure the
 16 health and safety of the Council's tenants and
 17 leaseholders, but if as a result of reading the
 18 information attached would like any further updates
 19 please let me know and we can provide a further update."
 20 Now, just standing back from that for a moment and
 21 looking at where we are in the Grenfell Tower project,
 22 do you recall that at that time
 23 Councillor Feilding—Mellen was in communication with the
 24 TMO and the RBKC planners about the colour of the
 25 cladding at Grenfell Tower, July 2014?

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1 A. No, I don't recall Councillor Feilding—Mellen being in
 2 communication with either of those two organisations
 3 about the colour of the cladding.
 4 Q. Do you remember sending these guides as a result of this
 5 communication?
 6 A. I don't remember, but I must have done.
 7 Q. Did either of these councillors respond to this email,
 8 do you remember?
 9 A. I don't remember.
 10 Q. Did either of them ask you for any further information,
 11 as you had offered them?
 12 A. I'm afraid I don't remember.
 13 Q. Now, let's go to one of these documents, {LFB00001295}.
 14 That is one of the two documents that was sent to you,
 15 and it's entitled "Councillor guide on fire safety for
 16 use during council meetings", do you see that?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. There is a big tower block question mark on the right,
 19 so it's quite a memorable document. Do you remember it?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. If you look at page 2 {LFB00001295/2}, please, there is
 22 a question at the top:
 23 "What can councillors do?
 24 "Do not make assumptions that fire safety is being
 25 actively or effectively managed in purpose—built blocks

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1 of flats and masonry maisonettes in your borough.
 2 Councillors can make their boroughs safer by
 3 scrutinising how responsibilities for fire safety are
 4 met and ensuring that the fire safety in your borough is
 5 continuously being monitored and improved."
 6 Then it goes on:
 7 "Strategic and policy questions for councillors to
 8 ask.
 9 "These are questions you should ask about the
 10 fire safety of purpose—built blocks of flats and
 11 maisonettes in your borough, particularly in relation to
 12 the residential estates and properties run by the local
 13 authority, ALMO or local housing associations. They can
 14 be asked generally or in the context of specific
 15 programmes and projects."
 16 Then if you look below the box, if we scroll down,
 17 please, you can see a number of bullet point questions,
 18 and in the last one — and I could show you them all and
 19 spend time on them, but looking at the last one
 20 specifically :
 21 "Does the borough have clear policies stating that:
 22 "— before any modifications or maintenance works are
 23 carried out in purpose—built blocks of flats or
 24 maisonettes, there must be proper assessment of the
 25 impact on fire safety?

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1 "— all modifications or maintenance works will
 2 result in buildings which are equally or more
 3 fire safety compliant than they were before the works?
 4 "— once modifications or maintenance works are
 5 complete, councillors will receive confirmation that the
 6 building will meet all necessary fire safety
 7 requirements?"
 8 Did you look at and note those particular questions?
 9 A. I would have read this document, but I don't remember
 10 taking particular note of these and then doing anything
 11 as a result of them.
 12 Q. Did RBKC have clear policies, as recommended there?
 13 A. If it had policies on modification or maintenance works,
 14 then it would have been undertaken by building control
 15 or the planning department rather than housing.
 16 Q. But you aren't able, sitting there, to identify what
 17 those policies are?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Can we just go, then, to paragraph 82 of your first
 20 witness statement at page 20 {RBK00034943/20}. You say
 21 in paragraph 82:
 22 "I did not ask about the combustibility of either
 23 zinc or aluminium cladding option. It wouldn't have
 24 occurred to me to ask about the flammability of the
 25 material or health and safety considerations. I would

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1 have assumed that quality checks had been done by
2 qualified professionals the TMO employed or regulated
3 through British Safety Standards/central government
4 regulation, this is not my area of expertise."

5 And you go on about the conversation you were having
6 about cladding solution within the budget.

7 Given what you say there, but looking also at the
8 guide, why was it that you didn't at least ask the
9 questions about whether suitable checks had been done at
10 each stage of the refurbishment to ensure that
11 flammability of material or health and safety
12 considerations were being observed?

13 A. I would have expected that conversation to be undertaken
14 by building professionals rather than myself.

15 Q. Yes, but the problem with that, isn't it, is that that's
16 not what's recommended by the LFB? The LFB is giving
17 a set of questions for councillors to ask and make sure
18 that clear policies exist.

19 A. Yes, they are.

20 Q. So merely just relying on professionals engaged by the
21 TMO wasn't good enough, was it?

22 A. Well, relying on people who are professionals in the
23 building industry, who have that expertise, and also
24 RBKC's building control team who would be undertaking
25 inspections of the building as well, I think it's

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1 probably quite reasonable, actually, for me to expect
2 professionals in the building industry to be undertaking
3 those tasks.

4 Q. But you would agree with me, I think, that as per the
5 recommendations, councils had to have or should have
6 clear policies in place that there would be a proper
7 assessment on impact of fire safety essentially at each
8 stage, with a final confirmation that the building as
9 modified or refurbished meets all necessary fire safety
10 requirements.

11 A. And I would have expected that to be undertaken by
12 building control.

13 Q. But the point is that you would have had to have had
14 a policy within RBKC for making sure that that happened.
15 Was there such a policy?

16 A. I don't know.

17 Q. There should have been, though, shouldn't there?

18 A. Well, as I said, I would have expected building control
19 to pick that up.

20 Q. Using the Grenfell Tower refurbishment as the paradigm,
21 what was the system in place, can you tell us, whereby
22 RBKC or its councillors had assurances that each of the
23 three policy requirements set out in that document were
24 met?

25 A. I didn't — I did not take the leaflet that had been

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1 sent by LFB and then put together a plan about how
2 I would use those recommendations in order to be able to
3 respond to councillors.

4 Q. Why is that?

5 A. I don't know, to be honest with you. I read the
6 leaflets and I didn't take from them a series of actions
7 that I then had to undertake. I receive a lot of
8 information in my job, and if it had been a requirement
9 or I had received further information to ask me to do
10 it, then I would have done it, but I didn't take that
11 and then turn that into an action plan in order to be
12 able to inform councillors as a result of that.

13 Q. This is actually macro information. It's about
14 governance, which is why I'm asking you about it. It
15 came from Rita Dexter, who was very senior, if not the
16 most senior, in the LFEPa at the time, through your town
17 clerk/chief executive. So this is absolutely on your
18 radar.

19 A. It is on my radar and it's in the form of a leaflet to
20 give to councillors, which I forwarded to councillors
21 and asked them if they wanted any further information.
22 I was obviously not asked for any more information,
23 otherwise you would have found emails about it. And
24 I would have read the leaflet, but I then didn't take
25 from that that then I had a series of actions to

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1 undertake.

2 Q. In general, was there any reaction within RBKC to this
3 leaflet? You call it a leaflet; this guidance document.

4 A. Not by myself.

5 Q. By anybody, to your knowledge?

6 A. I don't know.

7 Q. Can we go to {RBK00048723}, please. This is an email of
8 3 February 2015 sent by John Allen to you and
9 Debbie Morris, and it attaches a letter — it's the
10 second email down, please, on the screen — to
11 Nick Paget—Brown of 15 January 2015, and a document
12 prepared by the LFB entitled "LFB Fire Safety in
13 refurbished buildings audit tool".

14 If you look, please, at the document itself, it's
15 TMO — I'm so sorry, I'm rushing on ahead a little bit
16 too fast.

17 This document comes from John Allen to
18 Michael Clark, as you can see from this email. It then
19 gets sent to you by John Allen at the top of the screen,
20 if we can scroll up to the top. Do you see that? It
21 goes to Debbie Morris and to you, and it says:

22 "Debbie/Laura, please see attached and e-mail trail
23 below."

24 In that email, you can see the attachments, "LFB
25 Fire safety in refurbished buildings audit tool report",

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1 "Letter to boroughs", et cetera.
 2 If we go to {TMO10042956}, please, we can see the
 3 audit tool report attachment. Do you remember seeing
 4 this document?
 5 A. I'm afraid I don't.
 6 Q. You don't remember seeing it.
 7 Can we assume that you would have, being your normal
 8 habit, opened the document and read the attachment?
 9 A. Yes, I would, yes.
 10 Q. It says at the beginning:
 11 "London Fire Brigade is concerned about the
 12 arrangements in place for protecting the fire safety
 13 precautions of a building, especially if it has been
 14 refurbished or if any modification or maintenance
 15 projects have been carried out."
 16 Now, this is February 2015.
 17 When you read that, did you think of any particular
 18 refurbishment project?
 19 A. I don't remember reading this document, to be honest
 20 with you.
 21 Q. You don't remember reading it?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Right.
 24 A. I would have done but, to be honest with you, I have no
 25 recollection whatsoever of reading this document.

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1 Q. I mean, it's quite an impressive document, in the sense
 2 that it has this rather fetching tower block in the
 3 shape of a question mark. It doesn't ring a bell with
 4 you?
 5 A. No, I'm afraid it doesn't.
 6 Q. Right.
 7 Look at page 2 {TMO10042956/2}, please, and I just
 8 want to show you one or two of the parts of the audit
 9 tool. This is what this document is really about. It's
 10 an audit tool.
 11 On page 2 we've got section one, which is:
 12 "... focussed on whether your organisation has
 13 exercised any policy governance around fire safety
 14 management. It is designed for local authorities, but
 15 could equally be applied to other bodies. Councillors
 16 could ask officers to prepare a report addressing these
 17 issues."
 18 Look at question 2.4, please, if we can go to page 3
 19 {TMO10042956/3}, which is under section two, which is
 20 focused on multidisciplinary working, and that says:
 21 "What were the arrangements to consult London
 22 Fire Brigade ... on any works that could impact on the
 23 fire precautions of the building (including those works
 24 that do not require a statutory consultation to LFB)?"
 25 Then a question about evidence.

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1 Then if we go on to page 4 {TMO10042956/4}, we can
 2 see a set of questions at 3.4:
 3 "How did officers guard generally against
 4 improvements which could compromise the fire safety
 5 features of the building?"
 6 3.7, incorrect materials.
 7 3.9, officers ensuring no materials that might
 8 contribute to a fire were used.
 9 And then over the page {TMO10042956/5}, please, to
 10 3.10:
 11 "Did officers consider whether the project also
 12 provided an opportunity to examine fire stopping and
 13 compartmentation in the building?"
 14 Then a sign-off at 3.14, as you can see.
 15 Now, what steps, if any, do you remember taking to
 16 ensure that these basic questions posed by the audit
 17 tool were asked and answered?
 18 A. I'm really sorry, I don't remember seeing this document
 19 or seeing this audit tool, so I can't answer that
 20 question.
 21 Q. Right. So is this the first time you've ever been shown
 22 this document?
 23 A. To my knowledge.
 24 Q. Despite having been sent it at the time?
 25 A. I don't remember being sent it at the time. I clearly

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1 was, and I would have opened it and had a look at it.
 2 But I'm really sorry, I just don't remember it at all.
 3 Q. No. People might find it surprising that you don't
 4 remember it, given that it's quite an attractive
 5 document, it compels the attention, and it's about
 6 fire safety.
 7 A. I can't account for it, because I remember a lot of what
 8 I did in the eight and a half years I was at KCTMO(sic),
 9 but with regard to this document, I just don't — it
 10 doesn't ring any bells whatsoever and I don't remember
 11 reading it.
 12 Q. No, we haven't seen any documents which would show that
 13 RBKC took this document, examined the audit tool and
 14 discussed the audit tool with the TMO or internally to
 15 check.
 16 A. Yeah, and I can't account for that, because quite
 17 honestly this is the first time I remember seeing it.
 18 Q. All right.
 19 Shepherds Court.
 20 Can I ask you, please, to look at {RBK00002385}.
 21 Now, this is an email chain that you have exhibited as
 22 LJ/43, so you have seen this document, and can we go to
 23 page 2 {RBK00002385/2}, please, where the email chain
 24 starts with an email to you from Hannah Lougher — there
 25 are varieties of different pronunciations, I imagine,

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1 and I don't think you will be able to help me with that:
 2 "Dear Mrs. Johnson,
 3 "For your information, please find attached a letter
 4 regarding our advice relating to the issue of external
 5 fire spread.
 6 "A hard copy of this letter will follow in the
 7 post."
 8 The letter itself is at {RBK00026888}, please.
 9 There it is. It's addressed to you, it's dated
 10 6 April 2017 and it's entitled "Tall buildings —
 11 external fire spread".
 12 Pausing there, can we take it you opened and read
 13 that letter?
 14 A. Yes, I did.
 15 Q. Did you do that straight away or did you do that at some
 16 point during the two weeks before you sent it on to
 17 Robert Black?
 18 A. I was on holiday for those two weeks, which is why it
 19 didn't get sent on immediately, and on return from
 20 holiday I would have been going through possibly
 21 hundreds of emails that I had received at that time, and
 22 then I would have been — I would have sent it on.
 23 Q. I understand. But did you read it —
 24 A. Yes, I would have read it.
 25 Q. — while on holiday or did you read it when you got back

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1 and went through your emails?
 2 A. I would have read it when I got back from holiday and,
 3 you know, as is custom and practice for me, not for
 4 everyone, I would have been going through my emails and
 5 seeing what I needed to — what had and hadn't been
 6 actioned in my absence, and would have seen it and
 7 thought: right, I just need to send that on to Mr Black,
 8 you know, sort of fairly quickly.
 9 Q. Can we look at the first paragraph, just to pick up the
 10 point about Shepherds Court, 19 August 2016. The last
 11 sentence, he says:
 12 "... I am also drawing this fire to your attention
 13 to highlight the external spread of the fire that
 14 occurred."
 15 Then there is a reference to the Steve Turek letter
 16 in March 2009, and then in the third paragraph he says:
 17 "We have seen a number of cases where it appears, on
 18 the basis of the information available to us, that the
 19 level of fire protection to the external face of the
 20 building did not comply with the requirements of Part B
 21 of the Building Regulations insofar as they seek to
 22 limit the speed with which a fire can travel and spread
 23 over the external face of a building or may contribute
 24 to a fire.
 25 "Testing of panels has found that the combustibility

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1 of the composition of the panels at Shepherd's Court did
 2 not meet the levels expected for conformity with the
 3 building regulations. On testing it was found that
 4 panels may deform or delaminate exposing any combustible
 5 core or constituent material resulting in the panel
 6 becoming involved in the fire and allowing the fire to
 7 spread and enter flats other than the flat of origin of
 8 the fire."
 9 Then if we turn the page, please, to the final
 10 paragraph {RBK00026888/2}, he says this:
 11 "I would therefore strongly urge that you consider
 12 this issue as part of the risk assessment process for
 13 premises under your control. I suggest that you make
 14 sure all relevant information about any replacement
 15 window and facade schemes is fully available to fire
 16 risk assessors. Where no reliable information is
 17 available for a given property, it is our general
 18 expectation that a strategy to assess the risk and where
 19 necessary implement short, medium and long term actions
 20 to address the risk. This assessment will need to take
 21 account of other fire safety measures already in place
 22 in the building as well as potential mitigation measures
 23 to ensure that any potential fire spread does not pose
 24 a risk to health and safety."
 25 Now, do you agree that that letter provides advice

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1 on the potential hazards from refurbished external walls
 2 in high-rise buildings?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Yes, and requires an assessment of such walls using
 5 reliable construction information?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. And it flags up potential mitigation measures; yes?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. Did any of this raise any concern in your mind at that
 10 time about the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower?
 11 A. Yes, and Robert Black replied to me to let me know that
 12 they had sought advice from their fire risk assessor
 13 about the cladding at Grenfell Tower, and received
 14 communication to the effect that it wasn't the same
 15 cladding that was on the fire at Shepherds Court and it
 16 was okay. So I had — so I took that to be ... so
 17 I said, "Thank you very much for the information".
 18 Q. Right. Let's look at that a bit more closely.
 19 Can we go to the email chain we were looking at
 20 a moment ago, {RBK0002385}. We can see that at
 21 page 1 — there is a longer email chain below this, but
 22 I don't think we need it — we can see at the foot of
 23 page 1 Robert Black comes back to you in response to
 24 your sending the letter to him, and says, 20 April 2017:
 25 "Hi Laura

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1 "I will review with Janice and come back to you so
2 we can clarify the position."
3 The next email up, 27 April 2017, Janice Wray to
4 Robert Black and Barbara Matthews:
5 "Hi Robert
6 "Apologies for the delay but I wanted to check with
7 our Fire Risk Assessor before I responded to you.
8 "I can confirm that it is our understanding that we
9 do not have any blocks with cladding of the nature
10 described in the LFB's letter (which was present at the
11 Shepherds Bush tower block). Grenfell Tower did have
12 external cladding panels fitted as part of the recent
13 refurbishment work, however, our assessor investigated
14 thoroughly the details of the installation with the
15 contractor (Rydons) when the works were on site and he
16 is able to confirm that this complies with the
17 requirements of the current Building Regulations.
18 "I hope this is helpful.
19 "Regards
20 "Janice."
21 That email is then sent to you at the top of the
22 chain:
23 "Laura
24 "For information. Not sure we have to do anything
25 but may be useful to update your scrutiny committee."

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1 Do you remember whether you ever followed up with
2 Janice Wray or anybody followed up with Janice Wray to
3 see if she had consulted Mr Stokes about LFB's letter in
4 general terms?
5 A. I didn't follow up with Janice Wray, but I don't know
6 whether Robert did.
7 Q. Did you take any steps to satisfy yourself that the TMO
8 had carried out an adequate survey to investigate
9 whether any TMO property was similarly clad to
10 Shepherds Court?
11 A. I did — I didn't — what did I do? I knew with —
12 the council's housing blocks were — I think there was
13 13 high-rise blocks that were across RBKC, and they were
14 in the main brick or concrete construction, and so I was
15 under the impression that there was no others that had
16 cladding in the same way that Grenfell did.
17 Q. Did you ask Janice Wray whether she'd got a formal and
18 written confirmation from Carl Stokes that the new
19 cladding at Grenfell Tower complied with the
20 Building Regulations?
21 A. No, I did not.
22 Q. Do you remember yourself at this stage having any
23 concerns about Mr Stokes' work?
24 A. No.
25 Q. Did you ever have any such concerns?

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1 A. No.
2 Q. Did you know or were ever given to understand that the
3 TMO had concerns?
4 A. No.
5 Q. Did you never wonder why the LFB had served deficiency
6 and enforcement notices on the TMO, at the very least,
7 when you had an apparently competent fire risk assessor
8 providing FRAs and an apparently functional system for
9 closing out FRA items?
10 A. Even if you have a — the most perfect functioning fire
11 risk assessment consultant, there is still the
12 opportunity to have a deficiency notice served on you,
13 because the LFB can visit and find matters that the fire
14 risk assessment consultant may not have seen or the LFB
15 may require that the fire risk assessment consultant may
16 not have been aware of. So it didn't suggest to me that
17 just because we received deficiency notices, the fire
18 risk assessment consultant wasn't competent.
19 Q. What about enforcement notices? Would that not have
20 rung an alarm bell?
21 A. I don't know how many enforcement notices we had
22 received at that time.
23 Q. Well, you had had one for Adair Tower.
24 A. We did have one for Adair Tower, but that was after
25 a fire and after the Fire Brigade had had the experience

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1 of seeing how the building performed in the case of
2 a fire.
3 Q. Yes, you said it was after the fire and I think you said
4 that yesterday as well, but in fact do you recall that
5 actually before the fire at Adair Tower, the LFB had
6 served the deficiency notice only a few days beforehand?
7 A. I don't remember that until I had seen the testimony to
8 the public inquiry, but it may well be I was notified of
9 it. But, to be honest with you, I don't remember.
10 Q. Do you remember receiving or seeing an email from
11 Councillor Blakeman in September 2016 about fire drills
12 at Grenfell Tower?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. Let's go, then, to {IWS00001489}, please. This is
15 an email chain of that date. It comes from the
16 Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association to
17 Councillor Blakeman, and it's copied to you, as you can
18 see from the third line there, so you get this.
19 If we go to page 2 {IWS00001489/2}, we can see that
20 towards the bottom of the page there is a heading, "Fire
21 Drill at Grenfell Tower", and you can see reference to
22 the 2010 fire in that paragraph there.
23 In the last sentence the author says:
24 "... since then [that's 2010] you have organised one
25 fire drill yourself NOT the KCTMO and we strongly

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1 believe that one is due NOW.”
 2 Then if we go to page 3 {IWS00001489/3}, you can see
 3 that there is a link to the Shepherds Court fire and
 4 The Guardian’s article about that.
 5 Do you remember whether that email prompted you to
 6 consider whether a fire drill was necessary at
 7 Grenfell Tower?
 8 A. I don’t remember whether it prompted me to consider
 9 whether a fire drill was necessary because it wasn’t
 10 routine for us to — it wasn’t routine for KCTMO, as
 11 I understood it, to undertake fire drills because
 12 I understood there was a stay—put policy, so it wasn’t
 13 practice for a building to be evacuated, but for people
 14 to stay put until the Fire Brigade were on site and they
 15 were organising the extinguishing of the fire and
 16 providing advice on how residents, you know, would or
 17 wouldn’t be evacuated.
 18 MR MILLETT: I’m going to turn to a different topic,
 19 Mr Chairman. This might be a convenient moment for the
 20 morning break. We’re doing well.
 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, very well.
 22 I think that sounds as if it’s a good point to have
 23 a break, Ms Johnson, so we will stop now. We’ll return
 24 at 11.30, please, and, as usual, please don’t talk to
 25 anyone about your evidence. Thank you.

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1 (Pause)
 2 Thank you, 11.30, then, please.
 3 (11.15 am)
 4 (A short break)
 5 (11.30 am)
 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, ready to carry on?
 7 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, thank you.
 9 Yes, Mr Millett.
 10 MR MILLETT: Yes.
 11 Can I ask you now some questions, please, about
 12 communications with residents.
 13 I’m going to start by taking you back, please, to
 14 what you said yesterday about the MMA, and I’ll quote
 15 from {Day129/13:6–16}. You say:
 16 “The MMA was set up to be a general document that
 17 set out the relationship between the council and the
 18 TMO, because it’s a standard document drafted by
 19 Government that set out how you would work with them on
 20 a range of quite standard housing management issues,
 21 from rent collection to housing management to ASBs, as
 22 we saw yesterday, but perhaps didn’t have any kind of
 23 specific chapters in it relating to very detailed pieces
 24 of work around a building refurbishment.”
 25 That’s what you said yesterday.

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1 Can we just look at two or three provisions in the
 2 MMA.
 3 First, {RBK00019006/165}. Under paragraph 2 there
 4 you can see, under 2.1, there was a provision as
 5 follows:
 6 “The Neighbourhood Manager and Project Manager will
 7 decide whether to establish a Client Review Group or
 8 steering group for the project. This will be chaired by
 9 a representative of the Residents Association and will
 10 include the Neighbourhood Manager and Project Manager.
 11 The role of this group will be to act as client for the
 12 project, review progress in implementing the scheme and
 13 focus on those issues which directly concern residents.
 14 Where it is decided not to establish a Client Review
 15 Group, the Residents Association will be asked to
 16 nominate a representative to join the Project Team.”
 17 That’s one.
 18 Then there is another on page 167 {RBK00019006/167},
 19 paragraph 5.2, under the heading “Appointment of
 20 consultant(s)”, and it says:
 21 “The Project Manager, Consultancy Services Manager,
 22 Neighbourhood Manager and Residents Association
 23 representatives will select suitable consultants with
 24 relevant experience. The Project Manager will chair the
 25 panel. Depending on the size and complexity of the

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1 project, consultants may be appointed from a number of
 2 disciplines.”
 3 The first one there, as you can see, is
 4 architecture. Do you see that?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. There are also other specific skills.
 7 Then if you go to page 175 {RBK00019006/175},
 8 please, let’s look together at paragraph 15.3 at the top
 9 of the page:
 10 “To ensure that tenants’ concerns are addressed the
 11 Resident Association representative can either attend
 12 the site meeting or a meeting can be held with the
 13 Residents Association prior to the site meeting.
 14 Feedback will be provided to the residents after the
 15 site meeting, where necessary.”
 16 Finally, at page 177 {RBK00019006/177}, just two
 17 pages on, paragraph 22.1, we’ve got, “Post—project
 18 review”:
 19 “All schemes will be subject to a post—project
 20 review. After completion of the project or on sectional
 21 completion, residents will be asked for their views on
 22 the way the work was carried out and what they like or
 23 dislike about the improvements to their homes. The
 24 survey will also seek to collect b.m.e data.”
 25 Now, I’ve shown you all of those.

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1 Do you know whether any monitoring of whether these
 2 provisions were complied with took place in respect of
 3 the Grenfell Tower project?
 4 A. We did not undertake monitoring specifically with regard
 5 to the provisions in the MMA for project management
 6 against the Grenfell Tower project.
 7 Q. Why was that?
 8 A. As I said, I have read the MMA on two or three
 9 occasions. I did not use it on a regular basis and
 10 therefore did not refer to it with regard to how
 11 resident engagement should be undertaken on a project of
 12 this type.
 13 Q. Can I show you something from one of your daybooks,
 14 please, {RBK00059574/125}.
 15 If we can blow this up a little bit more, this is
 16 the 23 July 2014 entry by you in your daybook, and it
 17 says "Grenfell Tower: met with" — can you help me with
 18 that?
 19 A. Team.
 20 Q. "... team @ TMO to discuss managing Eddie Daffarn &
 21 resident liaison .
 22 "Major capital projects, look @ MMA for level of
 23 monitoring required."
 24 Can you explain that entry?
 25 A. So I was in error, it looks like I did say in July 2014

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1 to check the MMA for what it said, but I don't remember
 2 saying that. And in terms of meet the team at the TMO
 3 to discuss managing Eddie Daffarn and resident liaison,
 4 it would have been about how they were undertaking
 5 resident consultation on the refurbishment project with
 6 the residents there.
 7 Q. Right.
 8 Just focusing on the MMA, looking at the MMA for
 9 level of monitoring required, do you remember looking at
 10 the MMA and asking or monitoring the TMO's performance
 11 of the obligations we've just looked at together?
 12 A. So I was asking Amanda Johnson at our one-to-one to do
 13 that. So I was asking her to go away and do that.
 14 Q. Oh, I see. How do you remember that it was
 15 Amanda Johnson particularly?
 16 A. Because it says "1 to 1 AJ" at the top, which stands for
 17 Amanda Johnson.
 18 Q. Oh, I see, underneath the purple?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Thank you.
 21 What did she do, do you remember?
 22 A. No, I don't.
 23 Q. Did you follow up, do you remember?
 24 A. I don't know whether I would have followed up
 25 specifically with her about the point on what the MMA

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1 said, but I definitely would have spoken to her about
 2 what was taking place in terms of resident consultation
 3 at Grenfell Tower by the TMO.
 4 MR MILLETT: Can I ask you some questions about the GTLA —
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Before you do, Mr Millett.
 6 You asked Amanda Johnson to go and look at the MMA
 7 to see what it said about consultation.
 8 A. Yes.
 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: It's likely, is it not, that she
 10 reported back to you what she'd done?
 11 A. Yes, she probably did, yes. I don't remember, to be
 12 honest with you, because I don't remember asking her to
 13 do that until I saw this entry in my daybook now.
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Would it be fair to infer that she
 15 did as you asked and had a look at it?
 16 A. Yes, she would. She was a very diligent officer so she
 17 would have done.
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: And reported back what she'd —
 19 A. She would have done, yes.
 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: So it follows from that, does it,
 21 that you, at least at that stage, were made aware of
 22 what the MMA said about consultation?
 23 A. I must have been, yes.
 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: But perhaps decided not to pursue
 25 it?

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1 A. Or ... quite honestly, I don't remember this particular
 2 one-to-one or the follow-up that Amanda Johnson gave me,
 3 or maybe took — I can't remember, so I don't want to
 4 kind of guess, to be honest with you.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Right, thank you.
 6 Yes, Mr Millett.
 7 MR MILLETT: Yes.
 8 Can I then turn to your communications with the
 9 GTLA, the Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association.
 10 Can we please look at {IWS00001335/76}. This is the
 11 witness statement to the Inquiry of Shahid Ahmed, who
 12 was a long-time resident of Grenfell Tower, and he says
 13 at paragraph 218 on that page:
 14 "Laura Johnson was Director of Housing at RBKC and
 15 GTLA had a lot to do with her. GTLA very often copied
 16 her in on emails. I met her a few times over the years,
 17 and I always got the impression that she didn't take me
 18 seriously and was inclined to protect the TMO."
 19 Just as a matter of fact, is it right that you met
 20 him a few times over the years?
 21 A. I don't remember. I only remember meeting Mr Ahmed on
 22 one occasion, and that would have been at a KALC project
 23 board.
 24 Q. If we go to page 79 {IWS00001335/79}, paragraph 228, he
 25 says:

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1 "At paragraph 130 Laura Johnson says that
 2 'The Council effectively placed its trust in the TMO'.
 3 My impression was always that Laura Johnson gave the TMO
 4 unconditional support."
 5 Then he makes a comment on the MMA.
 6 Were you aware that Mr Ahmed was the Chair of the
 7 Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association?
 8 A. I would have been at the time, yes.
 9 Q. Were you also aware that Mr Tunde Awoderu was
 10 a non-resident leaseholder and vice chair of the
 11 Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association?
 12 A. I would have been, yes.
 13 Q. Yes.
 14 What would be your answer to the charge that there
 15 was inadequate scrutiny by RBKC of the TMO or, as he
 16 puts it, that you gave the TMO unconditional support?
 17 A. I think that's unfair. I think — I don't think, I know
 18 that although I was supportive of the TMO because they
 19 were an organisation that were undertaking the
 20 management of the council's housing stock, we did have
 21 on occasion challenging conversations with the TMO about
 22 performance in relation to repairs or rent collection or
 23 void turnaround, and I'm certain if you spoke to the TMO
 24 they would say that the council didn't always agree with
 25 them on every point and would be happy to come back with

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1 them if there was anything that we weren't particularly
 2 happy about.
 3 It may not have been the impression that
 4 Mr Shah(sic) got, but that certainly wasn't the case.
 5 Q. Can you give us a particular instance of an occasion
 6 when you took the GTLA's side on anything raised by
 7 either Mr Ahmed or Mr Awoderu?
 8 A. I can't think of anything off the top of my head, no.
 9 Q. Now, I want to turn to the topic of the delays to the
 10 refurbishment, which you deal with in your first
 11 statement at paragraph 151 and onwards.
 12 Can I show you LJ/50, which is {RBK00003901},
 13 an email in to which you're copied from Tunde Awoderu to
 14 Paul Dunkerton of 28 February 2013. There it is on the
 15 screen.
 16 Do you remember what, if anything, you did in
 17 response generally to emails about delays on the
 18 project?
 19 A. I don't remember specifically. This email wasn't copied
 20 to me (sic), I was copied in to it, so if I was copied
 21 in to emails that were sent to KCTMO rather than myself,
 22 quite often I would check via Jon Morcom, the complaints
 23 manager, or directly that they were putting together
 24 a response to reply.
 25 Q. Did you raise delays with Paul Dunkerton or any other

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1 member of the TMO staff?
 2 A. I didn't raise delays — I don't remember raising
 3 delays — I don't really remember who Paul Dunkerton
 4 was, to be honest with you, I don't remember
 5 specifically raising it with him, but I would have
 6 discussed with the TMO over the course of 2012 to 2015
 7 why the project wasn't completed in the original
 8 timescale proposed in 2012.
 9 Q. Do you remember whether you tried to arrange meetings to
 10 discuss complaints such as this, or indeed this
 11 particular complaint?
 12 A. I don't remember whether I arranged a meeting to discuss
 13 this particular complaint. The complaint — the
 14 Grenfell Tower Leaseholders' Association were regular
 15 communicators with the KCTMO and RBKC, and I did discuss
 16 with Robert Black at one of our monthly one-to-one
 17 meetings or on a separate occasion how we were to
 18 arrange for a co-ordinated response to the many and
 19 often communications we received, and it was also
 20 difficult to sometimes discern who the Leaseholders'
 21 Association were looking to receive a response from,
 22 because so many people it was sent to or copied in to.
 23 Q. Can we go to {TMO10002731/3}, please. It sits in
 24 an email chain in early June 2013 between you,
 25 Councillor Blakeman and Peter Maddison.

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1 If we go to page 3 you will see that there is
 2 an email from Judith Blakeman dated 5 June to you,
 3 copied to others, and she says:
 4 "Dear Ms. Johnson
 5 "I am wondering whether it is possible for the
 6 Council to produce a small leaflet or formal letter for
 7 the residents of Grenfell Tower?
 8 "We believe this is necessary as a matter of some
 9 urgency because of a lot of misinformation is
 10 circulating — you are probably aware of its source. The
 11 residents of the Tower now believe that the proposed
 12 improvements for Grenfell Tower have been dropped.
 13 Furthermore, they are now also being told that the
 14 Council has no plans to replace the Grenfell Tower
 15 children's playground."
 16 There are other things in there as well.
 17 Your response we can see on page 2 {TMO10002731/2},
 18 if we scroll up to that, please. In the main paragraph,
 19 you say:
 20 "I agree that 'certain members of the community' are
 21 doing their best to spread false information and we do
 22 need to counter this, it is probably not quite the right
 23 time to send out definitive information on the works as
 24 we are still working through costs, timetable, programme
 25 and contractor/client relationship and this won't be

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1 finalised for a few weeks. However I take your point
 2 about letting people know what's going on and we shall
 3 jointly have a think about how to do this and ensure
 4 that the local residents know we are still committed to
 5 making the improvements."
 6 I've shown you all of that to give you the full
 7 context there, but I just want to ask you about the
 8 first line there where you refer to "certain members of
 9 the community".
 10 What was the false information being spread by
 11 certain members of the community?
 12 A. I believe Councillor Blakeman was referring to the
 13 non-replacement of the playground and that the council
 14 had decided that they were no longer going to fund or
 15 undertake the refurbishment to Grenfell Tower.
 16 Q. Right. Why do you refer to that as false information?
 17 A. Because we were.
 18 Q. Did you mean to imply that it was deliberately false?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. I see. Who were the certain members of the community
 21 you were referring to?
 22 A. In this case, I believe myself and Councillor Blakeman
 23 are referring to Eddie Daffarn.
 24 Q. Right. You thought he was lying to the community, did
 25 you?

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1 A. I thought he was telling people information that wasn't
 2 true, so yes, he was not telling the truth.
 3 Q. Right.
 4 If we go to page 1 {TMO10002731/1}, please, of this
 5 email string, we can see that Peter Maddison responds to
 6 Councillor Blakeman:
 7 "Further to your e-mail to Laura, I am writing to
 8 give an update on current resident engagement on the
 9 refurbishment of Grenfell Tower."
 10 Do you see that?
 11 I should have said, this email goes to
 12 Councillor Blakeman, it's copied to you.
 13 If you look at the last paragraph, he says:
 14 "We are committed to delivering the best investment
 15 for Grenfell and we will work to ensure that we
 16 communicate effectively with residents throughout the
 17 process and ensure they get accurate information and are
 18 properly consulted."
 19 Do you know, what was Peter Maddison doing at that
 20 time, June 2013, to ensure that the residents did get
 21 accurate information and were consulted properly?
 22 A. I think you probably have to ask Peter Maddison for
 23 a definitive opinion on that, but my impression would be
 24 that — my thoughts on that are that Peter Maddison
 25 would be arranging meetings with residents or sending

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1 out a newsletter, or they would be talking to residents
 2 about how they would like to be communicated with
 3 throughout the refurbishment project.
 4 Q. Yes, my question —
 5 A. Whether he did that in 2013, I can't tell you
 6 definitively.
 7 Q. My question really was: when Peter Maddison says what he
 8 says there, did you know what he was talking about by
 9 way of communicating effectively and ensuring that the
 10 residents get accurate information?
 11 A. He says, "we will ensure that we communicate
 12 effectively", so I would have presumed, on regeneration
 13 projects and refurbishment projects of this type, it
 14 would mean effectively by using a range of mechanisms in
 15 order to be able to talk to residents and tailor that
 16 communication accordingly, because different residents
 17 like to be — like to find out information in different
 18 ways.
 19 Q. Did you have a system or policy for monitoring or
 20 overseeing that work?
 21 A. The communications work?
 22 Q. The work that Mr Maddison refers to at the foot of this
 23 email.
 24 A. In 2013 that would have been undertaken by the
 25 regeneration and development team, and then from 2014

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1 Amanda Johnson's team would have followed up around
 2 the — you know, what communication was taking place.
 3 Q. Right. Did they report to you, at least in general
 4 terms, about process and progress?
 5 A. They would have reported in general terms, and on
 6 occasion I got sent copies of newsletters. I didn't
 7 routinely get invited or notified of when the meetings
 8 were taking place that were held, and I did understand
 9 at a later date that there was a meeting held, and then
 10 I did know that they had decided to move to more
 11 individual meetings because that was expressed as
 12 a preference by residents about how they would like to
 13 be informed about the Grenfell Tower update.
 14 Q. Right.
 15 Can we then move to the end of 2015.
 16 You deal with a number of other complaints in your
 17 statements, but I want to focus on the petition
 18 presented to the council on 3 December 2015 next, in
 19 which the HPSC, the scrutiny committee, was asked to
 20 undertake a review of the TMO's and Rydon's management
 21 of the refurbishment project.
 22 Now, you refer to this and deal with it at
 23 paragraph 156 of your first witness statement
 24 {RBK00034943/40}.
 25 Can we please go straight into a document,

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1 {RBK00000109}. This is an email of 7 December 2015 that
 2 you sent to Councillor Feilding—Mellen, as you can see,
 3 and to Councillor Marshall, and I'm assuming you sent it
 4 to those gentlemen because of their roles that you
 5 identified earlier: chairman of the scrutiny committee
 6 and the Cabinet member.
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Yes.
 9 You say there in that email:
 10 "A petition was handed into Council on Tuesday night
 11 by Cllr Blakeman ..."
 12 Then you go on to say in the next paragraph:
 13 "If you would like to discuss with Robert Black or
 14 Peter Maddison what they have done with regard to
 15 communicating with residents, Cllr Blakeman, Eddie and
 16 how they think Rydon have performed I'm sure they would
 17 be only to happy to discuss this with you. I think it's
 18 fair to say Peter is exhausted from the amount of
 19 time/responses Eddie and Cllr Blakeman have taken on
 20 this project, the TMO will of course be happy to assist
 21 in whatever way they can but I don't think either myself
 22 or Robert have the resources to undertake a full scale
 23 review with interviews of residents to meet the demands
 24 of the petitioners.
 25 "I would like your guidance on how you wish to

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1 respond to the petition."
 2 Then what lies below that, I think, is an outtake,
 3 I think, from the petition itself, "We, the
 4 under—signed".
 5 A. It was the prayer, as we described it.
 6 Q. It's the prayer?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. I see. You say "the following prayer", but it's an
 9 outtake, is it, it's a cut and paste?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Let's just look at that. In the third line it says:
 12 "Time and again residents' views have been ignored
 13 or down played."
 14 Did you agree with the effective charge that the TMO
 15 had ignored or downplayed the residents' views during
 16 the refurbishment?
 17 A. No, I did not.
 18 Q. Now, it says, as I've shown you, at the top:
 19 "... the prayer and petition organisation has
 20 clearly been organised by Eddie Daffarn."
 21 Why did you think that the petition and the prayer
 22 particularly had been organised by Eddie Daffarn?
 23 A. Because he was our most regular correspondent.
 24 Q. So it was an assumption you made, was it?
 25 A. Yes, it was.

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1 Q. Why did you not have the resources to conduct a review
 2 that the petition sought?
 3 A. Because, as we discussed earlier, there was only
 4 Amanda Johnson and Celia Caliskan in the housing
 5 commissioning function, and I couldn't identify anybody
 6 at that time who would have been available to undertake
 7 something of that level of detail within my team.
 8 If I had been instructed to by the councillors then
 9 I would have found the resources, but I was just saying
 10 I don't think I have anybody available to undertake this
 11 at the present time.
 12 Q. Did you ask the councillors, "Can we please have the
 13 resources to undertake the review that's sought"?
 14 A. No, what I said is, "Please can I have your advice". So
 15 if they had come back to me and asked me to do that,
 16 then I would have gone back and had a discussion, not
 17 with the councillors, I would have had a discussion with
 18 Mr Holgate.
 19 Q. Yes, I see. So when you say, "I would like your
 20 guidance on how you wish to respond to the petition",
 21 you were essentially taking a neutral line here, were
 22 you?
 23 A. Yes, I was saying, "What would you like to do about
 24 this? How would you like to respond to this petition?"
 25 Q. Right.

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1 A. "This is my view, these are the resources I have
 2 available, how would you like to respond?"
 3 Q. I follow.
 4 At this stage, did you remember the provisions of
 5 the MMA that I read to you earlier, just after the
 6 break, and ask yourself: "I wonder how come it happens
 7 that the residents are so dissatisfied with the
 8 engagement in respect of the Grenfell Tower project,
 9 given those provisions"?
 10 A. I can categorically state I never thought to myself,
 11 "I wonder how this relates to the provisions in the
 12 MMA", and I did think about why the residents were
 13 unhappy and why we had received those signatures.
 14 Q. Yes. As part of that thinking, I think you have just
 15 confirmed you never linked that to the TMO's contractual
 16 obligations under the MMA?
 17 A. No, I didn't have that thought process about how it
 18 related to the MMA. My thought process would be much
 19 more about what was good practice in terms of consulting
 20 residents on a project of this type and this nature.
 21 Q. So can we take it that you never thought a thought along
 22 the lines of, "Something has gone badly wrong with the
 23 TMO's performance of those obligations"?
 24 A. No, I did not think anything had gone badly wrong.
 25 Q. In the course of time, it's right, isn't it, that the

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1 TMO working board did investigate complaints that were
 2 raised during the project?
 3 A. Yes, they did.
 4 Q. And Grenfell Tower was one of the first major projects
 5 undertaken by the TMO, I think?
 6 A. Yes, it was.
 7 Q. Why were you not keen to see the lessons learned from
 8 the refurbishment by undertaking a full review so that
 9 other projects later could benefit from that?
 10 A. A full review was undertaken by the TMO board and the
 11 results of that review were then fed back to myself and
 12 to scrutiny committee.
 13 Q. Well, if you look at the last two sentences of the
 14 prayer, what is asked for is:
 15 "... it is vital that all the lessons from the
 16 Grenfell Tower project are learned, so that the terrible
 17 daily living conditions inflicted upon us for so long
 18 are not replicated elsewhere. As part of this
 19 investigation, the residents of Grenfell Tower ask that
 20 their views and experiences be canvassed and included in
 21 the scrutiny report'."
 22 Now, what they're after, you can see at the start of
 23 the prayer, is an "urgent scrutiny of the TMO and
 24 Rydon's management of the refurbishment project
 25 currently underway at Grenfell Tower". They're not

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1 asking for scrutiny of the TMO by the TMO, are they?
 2 A. No, they're not, but that — the petition was brought to
 3 scrutiny committee and the residents of
 4 Grenfell Tower — well, a small number of residents from
 5 Grenfell Tower came to scrutiny committee to present
 6 their report and were given the opportunity to speak by
 7 the Chair, Councillor Marshall, at scrutiny committee
 8 about their experiences of the refurbishment project.
 9 Q. To cut a long story short, what the residents were after
 10 was an independent investigation and analysis of the
 11 project so that lessons could be learned; did you
 12 understand that that's what they wanted?
 13 A. Did I understand that they wanted somebody independent
 14 or whether they would like the council to do it?
 15 I don't remember having that thought process at the
 16 time.
 17 Q. Let's look at LJ/61, then, please, which you refer to
 18 paragraph 160 of your statement, {RBK00000116/2},
 19 please. Email from David Collins to Victoria Borwick,
 20 at the foot of the page, 3 January 2016. So this is
 21 a month after the presentation of the petition and
 22 three days ahead of the scheduled meeting before the
 23 scrutiny committee:
 24 "Dear Victoria,
 25 "Thank you for visiting Grenfell Tower ..."

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1 It's quite a long email, but it starts on page 2 in
 2 substance and continues down, and if you go to page 3
 3 {RBK00000116/3} at the foot of the page, you can see
 4 that it says in the last paragraph:
 5 "Specifically, we would like you to support in
 6 writing our call for an independent investigation, one
 7 carried out within a structure of change which would
 8 ensure the findings are implemented so the experiences
 9 of residents never have to be as they are again. We
 10 believe this independent investigation is the only way
 11 to bring about meaningful change within the existing and
 12 proper channels."
 13 There is much else in this email I could read to
 14 you, but my next document is at page 1 {RBK00000116/1}.
 15 We can see that this comes up to you, on page 1, from
 16 Robert Black. Can you see that?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. On 4 January. Then you send that on to Celia Caliskan
 19 and Amanda Johnson:
 20 "More information if you scroll down to the e-mail
 21 from David Collins."
 22 So can we take it that by this time,
 23 3/4 January 2016, you understood that David Collins was
 24 after an independent investigation?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And that he had said, in fact — and I haven't taken you
 2 to it — that 90% of the residents had signed this
 3 petition?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. So you knew by that point that it was important to the
 6 residents that the investigation that take place be
 7 an independent one.
 8 A. It was important to David Collins that it was
 9 an independent one.
 10 Q. Well, it was important to the signatories of the
 11 petition.
 12 A. Whether the signatories of the petition fully had the
 13 opportunity to read the prayer, I can't answer that
 14 question, but all I can say is that it was important to
 15 David Collins that there was an independent
 16 investigation.
 17 Q. Are you suggesting that the signatories to the petition
 18 might not have read the prayer or understood it?
 19 A. I think all of the people in Grenfell Tower are
 20 perfectly capable of reading the petition and
 21 understanding the prayer.
 22 Q. Quite, yes.
 23 A. But I didn't know how the signatories of the petition
 24 were collected.
 25 Q. That's not the point, is it? There is a large body of

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1 people, not just David Collins, calling for
2 an independent investigation.
3 A. There is a petition with signatories on it from members
4 of the Grenfell Tower calling for an independent
5 investigation into the TMO, that is correct.
6 Q. Was a decision not to order an independent review
7 revisited in the light of what I've just shown you?
8 A. I don't remember the timeline, to be honest with you.
9 Q. Well, was a decision not to order an independent review
10 ever revisited, notwithstanding the message I've shown
11 you from David Collins that made its way up to you?
12 A. Does the message — I'm afraid I don't have the dates in
13 front of me. Does the email from David Collins come
14 before or after the scrutiny committee?
15 Q. Before. The dates are: the petition is 3 December,
16 David Collins' email is 3 January 2016 and the
17 scrutiny committee meeting was on 6 January 2016.
18 A. Okay. So at the scrutiny committee meeting there was
19 a presentation, from memory, and a discussion held about
20 the petition and the presentation given, and there was
21 questions and answers provided, and then I don't
22 remember exactly when the offer was made and/or the
23 decision was made to have the investigation undertaken
24 by the TMO, by a working party from the TMO, chaired by
25 Paula Fance, who was an RBKC nominee to the TMO board,

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1 and she was an expert in regeneration.
2 Q. Let's see how this unfolds.
3 Can we go to {TMO00852704}, please, an email chain
4 between you and Robert Black which starts on
5 5 January 2016.
6 If we scroll down, please, to page 4
7 {TMO00852704/4}, we can see his email to you of
8 5 January, and halfway down — this is the day before
9 the meeting — it says:
10 "In terms of outcomes the Board agreed
11 "— We needed to finish the project.
12 "— Carry out a review to see what has worked and
13 not — ie lessons learned.
14 "— Usually this would be officers doing it but they
15 want to be involved which is fine and adds the challenge
16 and independence. Paula Fance wants to be involved and
17 adds value to her regeneration work, she was very
18 supportive, Kush will get involved and a few others as
19 could Judith — they can listen to the issues.
20 "— The Board feels this is a TMO matter and wants to
21 deal with it itself. I imagine they will be happy to
22 share the outcomes with Scrutiny.
23 "Not sure what TCC will be like, it's a hell of
24 a week to come back to."
25 Just on that, what was TCC?

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1 A. Tenants' consultative committee.
2 Q. Right.
3 You respond to that the next day, page 3
4 {TMO00852704/3}:
5 "Robert,
6 "Pleased the board went well always a good idea to
7 get off to a good start in what is a hideous week."
8 Just pausing there, what was so terrible?
9 A. The first week in January —
10 Q. Apart from that.
11 A. I know. The first week in January is always a number of
12 evening meetings that always took place in that week.
13 They were scheduled every year, scrutiny committees,
14 Cabinets, TCC, and you came back straight after
15 Christmas and then had to do a number of papers and
16 meetings.
17 Q. So it wasn't just the looming 6 January —
18 A. Oh, no, it was every year, without doubt, that first
19 week was always — you were working until 10/11 o'clock
20 at night attending meetings.
21 Q. Right.
22 Then we go on:
23 "Board recommendations seem very reasonable, RBKC
24 has no desire to be involved in the review I shall echo
25 this point Cllr Mackover so that the recommendations the

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1 Board has made are supported at Scrutiny Committee."
2 Why did RBKC have no desire to be involved in the
3 review?
4 A. Because at this stage we wanted the Grenfell Tower
5 project to be completed. It wasn't quite finished at
6 that stage. As I've said previously, we didn't have the
7 resources available at that time to undertake it, and we
8 were looking for the TMO to, you know, sort of as any
9 organisation would that had undertaken a piece of work
10 of this nature, then take responsibility for looking at
11 it to see if there was any lessons learned or anything
12 that they could do in order to be able to assess the
13 performance of the project.
14 Q. Yes. Was it not the role of RBKC to scrutinise the TMO,
15 and particularly to oversee the performance of the
16 refurbishment project?
17 A. We were, and we were doing that day to day.
18 Q. Yes. In the role of scrutineer, why did RBKC not want
19 to be involved in the review?
20 A. Well, we don't want to be involved in the review at this
21 stage. We were happy to let the TMO, particularly with
22 the board involvement, to get on with it.
23 Q. Why did RBKC not itself want to investigate the concerns
24 raised by the residents about the TMO's management of
25 such a significant project?

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1 A. Because at the time I — we — I had understood that the
 2 TMO had done a door-knocking exercise to establish what
 3 the — following the petition, the TMO had been
 4 particularly concerned about the issues that had been
 5 raised, and they decided that they would go and speak to
 6 the residents directly to see if those concerns were
 7 supported, and they had found a very different outcome
 8 on the doorstep to the one that had been presented at
 9 the petition.
 10 Q. Did you speak to Councillor Mackover, as identified
 11 here, or suggested by —
 12 A. I probably did, yes.
 13 Q. Do you remember what he said?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. Did he agree to support the TMO board at the
 16 scrutiny committee?
 17 A. I don't know, but if he did then it would be set out in
 18 the minutes of the scrutiny committee meeting.
 19 Q. Right.
 20 What was the purpose of getting Councillor Mackover,
 21 as it were, onside so that the recommendations the board
 22 has made are supported at scrutiny committee?
 23 A. Because I thought it was a sensible suggestion that the
 24 TMO undertake a review of the refurbishment project and
 25 it be led by a board—led — it seemed like a very

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1 sensible way forward for a small working party to be set
 2 up, chaired by Paula Fance, who was, as I say, an RBKC
 3 nominee on to the board with expertise in regeneration,
 4 to undertake the review. It just seemed like a very
 5 sensible suggestion at that time.
 6 Q. Sensible maybe, but isn't it trying to get a member of
 7 the scrutiny committee to support the TMO, rather than
 8 independently scrutinising whatever it is the TMO has
 9 done?
 10 A. Well, I spoke to Councillor Mackover and explained my
 11 point of view, but Councillor Mackover is perfectly
 12 entitled to disagree with me.
 13 Q. Well, maybe, but what I'm interested in really is what
 14 you were trying to do.
 15 Were you trying to get Councillor Mackover onside as
 16 a member of the scrutiny committee so that he would
 17 support the recommendations of the TMO board?
 18 A. Yes, because I thought it was a very sensible
 19 suggestion.
 20 Q. Yes, it may be sensible, but how is it independent? How
 21 is it rigorous? How is it ruthlessly robust?
 22 A. Well, I'm advising Councillor Mackover, as a role as an
 23 officer in the council, of my opinion, and as I said, he
 24 is perfectly entitled to disagree with me.
 25 Q. Can we go to {RBK00030744}, please.

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1 Now, the email we've just been looking at is at
 2 16.36 on 5 January. This is an email from you to
 3 Councillor Mackover and Councillor Marshall at 16.46,
 4 ten minutes later, 4.46 pm.
 5 You say:
 6 "Cllr Mackover,
 7 "The TMO Board met on Monday night, one of the items
 8 on the agenda was Grenfell Tower and the impending
 9 discussion at Scrutiny Committee on the 6th Jan.
 10 "The Board agreed:
 11 "— TMO needed to finish the project.
 12 "— TMO to carry out a review to see what has worked
 13 and not — i.e. lessons learned.
 14 "— Usually this would be officers doing it but Board
 15 Members wanted to be involved which adds the challenge
 16 and independence. Paula Fance (independent Board Member
 17 appointed by RBKC) wants to be involved and adds value
 18 to her regeneration work, she was very supportive, Kush
 19 will get involved and a few others as could Judith —
 20 they can listen to the issues.
 21 "The Board feels this is a TMO matter and wants to
 22 deal with it itself.
 23 "They will then share the outcomes of their report
 24 with Scrutiny later in the year."
 25 Just pausing there, that's not entirely a cut and

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1 paste but extremely similar to the email that we saw
 2 earlier between you and Robert Black of 4 January,
 3 wasn't it?
 4 A. Yes, because I'm telling him what the board agreed.
 5 Q. Yes. I'm not criticising you for that, I'm just getting
 6 the facts right.
 7 Then you say:
 8 "I'm sure Mr Black will raise this as on Wednesday
 9 but if not I thought I would share it with you as it
 10 would be useful if a suggested outcome of the discussion
 11 at Scrutiny Committee could support the TMO and the due
 12 process they are undertaking."
 13 Why did you send this email to these councillors?
 14 A. Well, Councillor Mackover is — I believe he is now
 15 the Chair of scrutiny committee, he may have taken over
 16 from Councillor Marshall at that stage, and I was, as
 17 an officer, advising councillors about what I thought
 18 would be a good outcome in these circumstances.
 19 Q. And a good outcome would be the scrutiny committee
 20 supporting the TMO?
 21 A. Supporting the TMO to undertake the review, because
 22 I thought it was a good idea.
 23 Q. Why didn't you just leave it to the scrutiny committee
 24 to decide for themselves, rather than making
 25 a suggestion about the outcome?

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1 A. I could have done, but it's also my role as director of
2 housing to provide information to the scrutiny committee
3 and advise them of conversations that I've had in order
4 to help the functioning of the scrutiny committee.
5 Q. But you're not just providing them with information, are
6 you, you're actually making a suggestion about an
7 approach that the scrutiny committee should take, which
8 was to support the TMO and the due process that they're
9 undertaking?
10 A. Yes, I am, and I'm perfectly entitled to do that in my
11 role as director of housing, and Councillor Mackover is
12 perfectly entitled to come back to me and say,
13 "Laura Johnson, you have overstepped the mark and I do
14 not want to take your advice".
15 Q. Yes. Why were you so keen that the scrutiny committee
16 support the TMO and the due process which did not
17 involve an independent investigation?
18 A. Because I thought it was a perfectly sensible suggestion
19 that a small working party from the TMO board undertook
20 the review of the work that had taken place at
21 Grenfell Tower.
22 Q. If we then go back, please, to the email we were looking
23 at, the "hideous week" email, at {TMO00852704}, and go
24 up in that email chain, above where we were.
25 If you look, please, at the bottom of page 2 in

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1 that, please, Robert Black to you, 6 January, at the
2 foot of the page, over to page 3 {TMO00852704/3}. He
3 says:
4 "Well done last night. Close working between both
5 teams, [Barbara] has picked up the double act with
6 Steve.
7 "Last push for tonight. Will you let Cllr Marshall
8 know my Board decision, might be worth reminding him
9 they have 4 appointees and Pauline has confirmed she is
10 happy to be on the review."
11 Then you respond above that on page 2
12 {TMO00852704/2} at 11.38:
13 "Robert,
14 "Thanks yes I thought it went as well as can be
15 expected.
16 "I've emailed Cllr Marshall the Board outcomes so he
17 is aware and in that e-mail I reminded him that Paula
18 was a RBKC nominee, we can make this point again tonight
19 if a Scrutiny committee member is suggested as being on
20 the review of the Grenfell Tower refurbishment."
21 So was your aim to make sure that there was no
22 suggestion that a scrutiny committee member was on the
23 review?
24 A. No, I had no problem whatsoever if a scrutiny committee
25 member wanted to be on the review. I was just making

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1 the point that Paula Fance was an RBKC nominee,
2 you know, sort of to remind the scrutiny committee who
3 would probably not remember routinely who the four
4 nominees from RBKC were on to the TMO board. It was not
5 intended to say we would object if a scrutiny committee
6 member was on it, it was just saying RBKC already has
7 somebody on this working party, and just to remind them
8 that she was a nominee.
9 Q. Did you seek to persuade Councillor Marshall that the
10 scrutiny committee should not be involved?
11 A. No, if the scrutiny committee wanted to be involved, it
12 was fine by me.
13 Q. Let's just finish this email chain off because it fills
14 in a chronological spot in the story.
15 If we go up to page 1 {TMO00852704/1}, foot of
16 page 1, Robert Black comes back to you same day:
17 "Thanks Laura.
18 "Just met the borough commander FB Rob. We now have
19 the enforcement notice for Adair the other to follow.
20 The key issue is door closers on both which we agreed
21 and will now work out a plan and timescale.
22 "Bigger picture is Rebecca (FB Safety) wants us to
23 do this to all 10,000 properties and have a plan to
24 check including leaseholders! But that is for [later]."
25 Then you respond:

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1 "Robert,
2 "Bearing in mind this is in the public domain now as
3 it's on the LFB website, I think it may be wise to put
4 together a joint press release setting out our position.
5 "We should also mention this at Scrutiny tonight, it
6 helps to pre-empt any muck raking which may take place
7 on social media and shows that we are dealing with it
8 and working with the LFB."
9 What was "muck raking", what was that a reference
10 to?
11 A. Oh, I don't remember exactly, but I should imagine that
12 there was, as you know, a number of — there was
13 a regular blog undertaken criticising the work of the
14 TMO and the council, and if there was anything that was
15 published that was critical or could be construed as
16 critical, then it made its way, as it does now, on to
17 social media.
18 Q. Was your concern really here to stop the arrival of the
19 enforcement notices in relation to the Adair Tower fire
20 being grist to the mill of those residents who were
21 going to make a presentation to the scrutiny committee
22 that night?
23 A. No, not grist to the mill, it was about saying we've got
24 a plan to deal with this and this is the way that the
25 TMO plan to respond to the enforcement notices, and they

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1 were — and so they were informed that this matter was
 2 being dealt with.
 3 Q. Can we then look at the minutes of the housing and
 4 property scrutiny committee from that night,
 5 6 January 2016, {RBK00032130}.

6 On page 1 you can see who was there, and
 7 Quentin Marshall is now chairman, with Sam Mackover as
 8 vice. Councillor Blakeman is there, and others in
 9 attendance include Robert Black, you, Amanda Johnson,
 10 Peter Maddison as well, and Barbara Matthews. We've got
 11 a cast list.

12 If we go to page 2 {RBK00032130/2}, there is
 13 a verbal item in relation to Grenfell Tower, which is
 14 quite long, I won't read it all to you. In essence,
 15 it's minuted that you give an oral summary on the scope
 16 of works at Grenfell Tower.

17 Do you know why it was you who gave that report when
 18 both Robert Black and Peter Maddison were in attendance?

19 A. I would have been asked by the Chair.

20 Q. Where did the summary come from? Was it provided to you
 21 by somebody?

22 A. No, I would have wrote it.

23 Q. You wrote it yourself?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. From what information?

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1 A. From information that I had over the number of years
 2 I had been working with — as a director of housing at
 3 RBKC.

4 Q. Did anybody from the TMO assist you with preparing this
 5 presentation?

6 A. I don't believe they did, no.

7 Q. If you look at the second paragraph, you can see that
 8 you explain that the boilers were originally planned for
 9 the kitchens, and then you say:

10 " ... but it had then been considered easier to place
 11 these boilers in the hallways which had been conveyed to
 12 residents."

13 That's right, isn't it, the decision had been made
 14 to put the boilers in people's hallways and then
 15 afterwards you told them about it?

16 A. I didn't tell them about it —

17 Q. Not you personally, but they were told about it?

18 A. In terms of the timeline of communication, I understand
 19 there was a general communication sent out to residents
 20 about the refurbishment and what was due to take place,
 21 and in that communication would have stated about where
 22 the intention of the boilers was to go, and then there
 23 may well have been follow-up discussions about — with
 24 Rydens, no doubt, and the TMO — Peter Maddison is
 25 better able to answer this than I am — about the

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1 engineering of where the — they weren't necessarily
 2 boilers, actually, they were heat exchange units —
 3 where they were going to be placed.

4 Q. Well, you wrote boilers.

5 A. Yes, I did write boilers, yes, but —

6 Q. You wrote this, and this is your original work.

7 A. It is, yes, I'm now correcting myself.

8 Q. You're quite right about that.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. My point is really: can we take it that what you wrote
 11 here accurately reflects your understanding at the time,
 12 which was that the decision had been made to site the
 13 heat exchange units in the kitchens, but then thought
 14 easier to put them in the hallways and then the
 15 residents were told about it?

16 A. Yes, but I couldn't, you know, hand on heart say in
 17 terms of writing this that I was seeking to ...
 18 I couldn't hand on heart say that I was saying that
 19 I was — conveyed the message to residents after or
 20 before, because I don't think I would have known that
 21 definitively.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. I wrote this as a general statement, as in this wasn't
 24 a presentation that the scrutiny committee then took
 25 from me and then copied out verbatim. This was a note

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1 of what I said in the meeting.

2 Q. Now, indeed, this point about the council or the TMO
 3 making a decision about what should happen within
 4 people's homes and then telling them about it afterwards
 5 was a point that turned into a major item in
 6 Mr Daffarn's complaint when he got to his feet very
 7 shortly after your presentation, isn't it?

8 A. Yes, I take it it is, yes.

9 Q. Was that factor — in other words the process here, that
 10 the council or the TMO had made a decision about what
 11 should happen within people's homes and then told them
 12 about it — not a serious concern for you?

13 A. I didn't take it as a serious concern, if I'm honest
 14 with you, about ... I didn't know the timeline of events
 15 about whether the TMO told residents after the heat
 16 exchange units were proposed to be in the kitchen and
 17 then moved to the hallway, or whether they told
 18 residents that they were moving the heat exchange units
 19 into the hallway and then took place afterwards.
 20 I presume that they took that decision not — and they
 21 may have updated them before or after. They may have
 22 updated them on an individual basis when they went round
 23 to customers' homes and informed them about where they
 24 were proposing to place the heat exchange units.
 25 I wasn't sufficiently cognisant in detail about exactly

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1 when the TMO communicated the movement of the heat
 2 exchange units from the kitchen to the hallway.
 3 Q. The short point is the concern was, as reflected by what
 4 you're saying as a matter of fact, that residents were
 5 told about what should happen within their homes and not
 6 asked. That was the point.
 7 A. I understand what the point is, and on any refurbishment
 8 project there are always decisions that are made as the
 9 project goes along and it always — it changes,
 10 you know. It's just people — you know, you're looking
 11 at a project, you decide at the outcome(sic) about where
 12 you think radiators are placed or where you think you
 13 can put a boiler or where you think you can — how you
 14 can fit the taps or where you think the extractor fan
 15 may go, and then when the actual builder turns up on the
 16 day, that may change. It's just a reality of how you
 17 manage to fit something in.
 18 Q. Now, can we go a little bit further down, the next
 19 paragraph. You refer to the heating system being a big
 20 issue, and then:
 21 "She said that the new cladding improved the look of
 22 the building ..."
 23 What was your point there?
 24 A. That it made the building look nicer.
 25 Q. Yes. Was the aesthetics of the building ever one of the

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1 matters of serious historic complaint by the residents?
 2 A. I don't remember ever it being a matter of serious
 3 historic complaint, but I do remember having discussions
 4 with — particularly with Mr Daffarn, actually, at
 5 a KALC meeting about how shabby the tower block looked,
 6 and especially in an area as nice as Notting Hill is,
 7 where they live, where Grenfell Tower is, and about,
 8 you know, kind of wouldn't it be nice if it didn't look
 9 quite so dated.
 10 Q. Yes. You see, there is no mention here of the new
 11 cladding improving the thermal efficiency of the
 12 building. Was that because, in your mind, the purpose
 13 of the cladding was to make it look nicer?
 14 A. I was making a very general statement to
 15 scrutiny committee about the refurbishment of the
 16 tower block, and it wasn't a forensic exam — it wasn't
 17 a forensic presentation about the pros and cons of why
 18 the refurbishment had taken place, just a general
 19 statement that the cladding made the building look nice.
 20 Q. Does it not reveal your thinking, which was the new
 21 cladding improved the look of the building, which was
 22 its purpose, rather than actually making the building
 23 more thermally efficient?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Right, okay.

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1 Now, the committee resolved in principle to set up
 2 a working group to examine the issues raised by the
 3 petition, and I'm assuming you were supportive of that
 4 working group being set up?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Why were you not supportive of an independent and
 7 impartial review when you were initially sent the
 8 petition?
 9 A. I didn't have any experience of setting up
 10 independent — it wasn't my custom or experience that
 11 independent organisations came in and undertook reviews
 12 of pieces of work that had been undertaken of this
 13 nature, and I was very satisfied that the board would do
 14 a very thorough examination of the pros and cons and
 15 what had happened, and satisfied that they would
 16 exercise due diligence.
 17 Q. Can we look at page 5 {TBK00032130/5}, please, the very
 18 last paragraph under section A4, just above A5:
 19 "In conclusion the Chairman agreed that a Working
 20 Group would be commissioned at some point in the future
 21 but that this was dependant on a number of factors
 22 including the conclusion of existing Working Groups and
 23 the review work conducted by the TMO."
 24 Now, first, what were the existing working groups?
 25 A. I don't remember, you would have to see the minutes of

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1 the scrutiny committees. But at any one time there was
 2 normally one or two working groups set up to look at in
 3 detail specific items that had been raised at
 4 scrutiny committee, and they were chaired by a member of
 5 the scrutiny committee and they focused — so,
 6 for example, a working group could be to look at how
 7 the council applied garage rent inflations.
 8 Q. Well, you don't know, is the answer to my question?
 9 A. No, that's correct.
 10 Q. Second, what was the review work being conducted by the
 11 TMO?
 12 A. So I think the — I don't know. I presume it was —
 13 they're referring to the proposition of the — for the
 14 board to set up a review.
 15 Q. But again, you don't know?
 16 A. No, I don't know exactly.
 17 Q. Right.
 18 It looks, just from the reader's perspective, that
 19 this was kicking the residents' concern into the long
 20 grass. Is that right?
 21 A. No.
 22 Q. When you say —
 23 A. I completely refute that.
 24 Q. You say no.
 25 " ... a Working Group would be commissioned at some

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1 point in the future ... dependent on a number of
 2 factors ... "
 3 Is that not long grass?
 4 A. No, that's the Chairman acknowledging the fact that
 5 there are already working groups being undertaken,
 6 there's only so much resources that both officers and
 7 members have in order to be able to commit towards these
 8 working groups, and that the scrutiny committee would
 9 have a look at the outcomes of the review of the TMO
 10 and, if required, they would commission a further
 11 working group. I don't think that's kicking it into the
 12 long grass, I think it's just stating a point.
 13 Q. Well, Ms Johnson, help me then: when would the working
 14 group to examine the refurbishment be set up?
 15 A. It says —
 16 Q. Was it the next day or the next week or when?
 17 A. It wasn't at my gift to set up the working group.
 18 Q. No, but this was a note of a meeting you were at and
 19 a presentation that you made. I'm not sure you
 20 necessarily made this, but here is the conclusion. You
 21 were there. When did you think that this working group
 22 would be commissioned?
 23 A. If there was — if, following the outcome of the working
 24 group from the board and the reports of that which
 25 were — would come back to scrutiny committee, if

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1 the Chair at that time, on reviewing the outcome of that
 2 working group's — the TMO board—led working group
 3 outcome, then they would take a decision at that time.
 4 Q. Which time?
 5 A. At the time that the report came back from the TMO
 6 working group.
 7 Q. But you don't know what the working group was, you've
 8 just told us?
 9 A. No, so the TMO had a working group to look at this
 10 petition. They would then report, which would go to the
 11 TMO main board, and then it would come to
 12 scrutiny committee. At that time, the scrutiny
 13 committee would have a look at that, and if, on review
 14 of that, they would decide that there needed to be
 15 further work undertaken, then the Chair of the
 16 scrutiny committee would then decide if there was a need
 17 to set up a working group and if indeed there were
 18 resources to do so.
 19 Q. What would that working group do?
 20 A. Well, I don't know, because it wasn't set up.
 21 Q. No, but the Chairman's agreeing that a working group
 22 would be commissioned at some point in the future; what,
 23 at that stage, was it intended or contemplated that that
 24 working group would do?
 25 A. Well, if they reviewed the report from the TMO board and

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1 they found that there were deficiencies or areas that
 2 they had concerns about, it would be my expectation that
 3 the working group would have a terms of reference which
 4 would seek to explore that in further detail.
 5 Q. The work being done at this point would not be impartial
 6 or independent, would it, it was just going to be looked
 7 at by the TMO itself?
 8 A. That's correct.
 9 Q. Did you genuinely believe that the residents would be
 10 satisfied with that response that's summarised in
 11 the Chairman's conclusion I've just read to you?
 12 A. I don't know.
 13 Q. Well, you don't know. Do you remember having a thought
 14 one way or the other whether the residents would be
 15 satisfied with the conclusion?
 16 A. It would be my expectation, based on experience, that
 17 the residents would have had a preference to set up —
 18 would have had a preference to set up an independent
 19 organisation, I don't know who they would be, and that
 20 would have been their preference.
 21 Q. Yes. Did you realise at the time — and I have to
 22 suggest to you you must have done — that the residents
 23 would not have been satisfied with that conclusion?
 24 A. I would have thought they would have preferred to have
 25 an independent organisation, I don't know who that would

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1 be, and so you can infer that they may be dissatisfied.
 2 Q. Now, we know that the TMO board group reported its
 3 findings at the end of March 2016. Let's go to that,
 4 {RBK00003513}. You can see it there:
 5 "The purpose of this report is to provide the Board
 6 with information and recommendations from the Board
 7 Member review of the Grenfell Tower regeneration
 8 project."
 9 It doesn't bear a signatory at the bottom, page 6.
 10 First of all, did you see this document at the time?
 11 A. I would have done, yes.
 12 Q. Who would have provided it to you?
 13 A. I would have been provided with a copy either in the
 14 board papers or, if it went — because it went to TMO
 15 board, or I may have been sent a copy of it separately.
 16 Q. Do you know who wrote it?
 17 A. No, I don't remember.
 18 Q. You don't remember? Did you know at one point?
 19 A. I would have done, yes, but I don't remember now.
 20 Q. Okay.
 21 So just to see what it is, it looks as if it's
 22 a report to the TMO board by a group within the TMO or
 23 seconded to that group. Is that right?
 24 A. Er ... It looks like it was written by a member — it
 25 was either written by a member of the review group or

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1 written by an officer in the TMO who was, you know, kind
 2 of, as you say, seconded to work with them and then
 3 provide a written report, but I don't remember. You
 4 would have to ask the TMO, to be honest.
 5 Q. We will look a little bit into the detail in a moment.
 6 Can I proceed on the basis that this was not intended to
 7 be an independent or impartial review?
 8 A. This was intended to be a review by a working party of
 9 the TMO board. It was not an independent — I'm not
 10 saying impartial, because it could well be impartial,
 11 but it was not independent of the TMO.
 12 Q. Right.
 13 It was six pages long. Were you surprised by the
 14 short length of that report? Or let me rephrase the
 15 question: were you surprised that the report was only
 16 six pages?
 17 A. No. I did not have an opinion at the time about the
 18 length of the report.
 19 Q. Can we look at paragraph 2.8, please, on page 2
 20 {RBK00003513/2}. I can probably give you a bit of
 21 a run—up to that.
 22 At paragraph 2.6 you see that:
 23 "All members of the TMO Board were invited on the
 24 19th January to express an interest in joining the
 25 review group."

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1 And you can see who put themselves forward, and you
 2 can see Councillor Condon—Simmonds, who was an RBKC
 3 councillor nominee presumably, was on that, or at least
 4 put themselves forward.
 5 Then there was a scoping meeting on 24 January to
 6 define the scope of the review, and it was agreed — and
 7 you can see the bullet points there — what would be
 8 covered, six matters.
 9 Then there was a review day on 12 March commencing
 10 with a presentation covering background information to
 11 the project and detailed information on each area of the
 12 review as set out in 2.7 above.
 13 Just pausing there, do you know who gave that
 14 presentation on the review day?
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. Do you know who provided the review group with the pack
 17 of information?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. You can see in the next sentence it says:
 20 "The Group was then taken on a tour of Grenfell
 21 Tower to view; the construction works, the show flat,
 22 the boxing club and the hidden homes."
 23 Do you remember who took the group on that tour?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Was there any information that the review group was

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1 given that didn't come from the TMO, do you know?
 2 A. I don't know.
 3 Q. Do you know if residents were able to have any input
 4 into the scope of the review?
 5 A. I don't know.
 6 Q. Do you know whether the residents were able to have any
 7 input into the information to be provided to the review?
 8 A. I don't know.
 9 Q. Do you know whether any residents were interviewed as
 10 part of the process?
 11 A. I don't know.
 12 Q. Did you ask any of the questions I've just asked you at
 13 the time when you got this report?
 14 A. I don't believe I did.
 15 Q. Now, this review concludes, if we see, under the heading
 16 "Complaints", if I can find that ... forgive me for one
 17 moment.
 18 If you look at page 3 {RBK00003513/3}, it's one
 19 place we can find what I'm after, paragraph 3.9, under
 20 the heading "Resident Consultation and Engagement":
 21 "The Group concluded that resident engagement and
 22 consultation during the project has been very
 23 comprehensive and it was noted that a variety of
 24 different methods were utilised."
 25 Then at 3.10 there is some detail there about the

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1 Rydon consultation.
 2 My question there is: when you saw that, did you
 3 have any particular thoughts about that? Did you think
 4 that that was a fair conclusion, given what you had
 5 known about the complaints about resident engagement?
 6 A. I thought that was a fair summary of the resident
 7 engagement and consultation methods that had been
 8 undertaken at Grenfell Tower.
 9 Q. Looking at page 4 {RBK00003513/4}, section 6, "Response
 10 to Complaints", 6.3:
 11 "The Group reviewed all of the complaints and
 12 enquiries and were satisfied that KCTMO had responded
 13 adequately. The Board could find no evidence that
 14 substantiated the allegations of 'threats, lies and
 15 intimidation' by either Rydon or KCTMO staff."
 16 Did you agree with that conclusion?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Were you able to agree with that conclusion by reference
 19 to any material that you had seen?
 20 A. My reference point was the door—knocking exercise that
 21 the TMO undertook following the petition, which sought
 22 to get views of the residents personally about whether
 23 there had been — how people were — whether people were
 24 satisfied with the consultation undertaken.
 25 Q. Did you have any part in framing the questions for the

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1 door—knocking exercise?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. Do you know who did?
 4 A. It was undertaken by the TMO.
 5 Q. Right. But you were just presented with the outcome?
 6 A. Yes, I was.
 7 Q. Right.
 8 You then produced a report for the benefit of the
 9 housing and property scrutiny committee on 11 May 2016,
 10 {RBK00032438}, please. Can we look at that.
 11 This is your document, and we can see that if we go
 12 down to the very bottom, please, page 5 {RBK00032438/5}:
 13 Laura Johnson, director of housing.
 14 The contact person there is Celia Caliskan. Does
 15 that tell us that she drafted it and you reviewed it and
 16 signed it?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Do you know what the basis of her drafting was?
 19 A. Could I just go back and have a look up at the report,
 20 please?
 21 Q. Of course, I'm so sorry, yes, page 1 {RBK00032438/1}.
 22 Sorry.
 23 A. What do you mean by basis?
 24 Q. Well, do you know what material Celia Caliskan had in
 25 front of her when she created this document for you to

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1 sign?
 2 A. Not exactly, no.
 3 Q. Not exactly.
 4 We've seen the TMO board report of 31 March 2016.
 5 Perhaps we will put this document side by side with
 6 that, for the purposes of my next question. That
 7 report, as I've shown you, was at {RBK00003513}. If we
 8 can just have that up at the same time as this.
 9 I'm not sure this question will take too long to
 10 ask, but just compare the two pages. You've got the
 11 board review report, 31 March, on the right of your
 12 screen, and on the left of your screen you have the
 13 report that you signed. They're not entirely identical,
 14 but they are very closely similar, aren't they, just
 15 looking at them?
 16 A. Yes, they are, because they're a description of the work
 17 that took place, so there's no need to rewrite it
 18 because it is what it is.
 19 Q. It is, but do you accept that, in substance, your report
 20 was the same as the contents of the review document and,
 21 in places, is copied verbatim?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Do I take it that you didn't actually yourself
 24 investigate to what extent the TMO's review was properly
 25 sourced from information outside its own organisation?

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1 A. No, I did not.
 2 Q. No. Did you consider how the recommendations could
 3 influence RBKC's role in any future projects?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And you can see the recommendations on page 3 of this
 6 document, if we just go to those {RBK00032438/3}
 7 {RBK00003513/3}. Those were the recommendations that
 8 were the outcome.
 9 You did consider those, did you?
 10 A. Yes, because there was a project that had already
 11 started to take place with — we were looking to spend
 12 around £7 million on Trellick Tower, and the outcomes of
 13 these recommendations were fed into that consultation
 14 exercise.
 15 Q. If we then move on in time, 7 September 2016,
 16 {RBK00030865}. This is an email from David Collins that
 17 is forwarded to you which relates to a meeting that you
 18 had had with him in July 2017 after the TMO board
 19 review, and at the moment we're looking higher up in the
 20 email string.
 21 Could we please go to page 2 of that
 22 {RBK00030865/2}, where we can see Mr Collins' message.
 23 It's 6 September 2016, and this is to
 24 Rock Feilding—Mellen, copied to Judith Blakeman, and it
 25 does come to you. He says:

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1 "Dear Rock,
 2 "I hope you have had a good summer ...
 3 "It was a pleasure to meet with Laura, Judith and
 4 yourself back in July."
 5 Just pausing there, do you remember the meeting with
 6 David Collins?
 7 A. Yes, I do.
 8 Q. "Thank you for taking the time to discuss the
 9 Grenfell Tower improvement works, the TMO, and the role
 10 of checks and balances in maintaining a transparent
 11 culture which represents both sides of the story.
 12 "I am very curious to know if anything has changed
 13 in your thinking, or in the Council's approach to
 14 regeneration or the operations of the TMO, as a result?"
 15 That email comes to you, if we look up, please, to
 16 the bottom of page 1, over to the top of page 2, the
 17 next day, 7 September, and he says:
 18 "Please see below.
 19 "Can you think of any small concession that we can
 20 think of offering?"
 21 Then you reply about a month later, if we go up
 22 page 1 {RBK00030865/1}, on 4 October 2016:
 23 "Clr FM,
 24 "I am struggling to think of something hence the
 25 time it has taken for me to respond and because

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1 I actually think the TMO managed this pretty well in
 2 difficult circumstances."
 3 Then you make a suggestion about larger programmes
 4 in the next paragraph.
 5 Had RBKC actually changed any of its policies and
 6 procedures following the TMO board review and the
 7 meeting with Mr Collins in July?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. No.
 10 Were you really of the view that the TMO had handled
 11 the project well?
 12 A. Yes, I thought they'd managed the project well in
 13 difficult circumstances.
 14 Q. Why do you think Mr Feilding—Mellen asked you for
 15 a small concession as opposed to one of substance?
 16 A. You'd have to ask him that.
 17 Q. I'm asking you why you thought he did. What was your
 18 understanding of what he was about?
 19 A. Well, I presume that — I can only presume that
 20 Councillor Feilding—Mellen also thought that the
 21 consultation was managed fairly well and there was no
 22 need to make — you know, that it didn't lend — it
 23 didn't suggest that there needed to be a radical
 24 overhaul of how resident consultation was undertaken on
 25 refurbishment projects of this type.

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1 Q. You clearly understood what he meant because you said,
 2 "I'm struggling to think of something". You didn't say
 3 to him, "What are you talking about?" So can we proceed
 4 on the basis that you did understand what he meant?
 5 A. Yes, as I've just said.
 6 Q. Right.
 7 A. I thought he would mean that he also thought that the
 8 consultation was undertaken in very difficult
 9 circumstances and was there something we could say in
 10 response.
 11 Q. Right. Did you understand that he was looking really
 12 just to fob Mr Collins off?
 13 A. I don't think he was looking to fob him off, I think he
 14 was looking to provide him with a response that
 15 acknowledged his email but also, you know, kind of said,
 16 "Well, you know, thanks very much, Mr Collins, for
 17 taking the time to write to me", we met him, "and this
 18 is what we'll seek to do on future projects".
 19 Q. So by "small concession", what did you think he meant?
 20 A. You know, "Do you think there's something that we could
 21 say that, you know, kind of shows that on future
 22 regeneration projects, we've heard what the residents
 23 have said?"
 24 Q. But you just told us that RBKC didn't change its
 25 policies and procedures and you thought that the TMO had

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1 handled the project well. If that was the purpose, why
 2 not just tell him that, rather than offering him
 3 a "small concession"?
 4 A. Well, I thought that the TMO had handled it well, but
 5 that doesn't mean to say that, as we saw in the previous
 6 scrutiny committee report, there wasn't things that we
 7 could learn from that, and so, as I said, we were moving
 8 on to Trellick Tower at that time and I remember
 9 speaking to my officers about that and about,
 10 you know — because was there anything that we should do
 11 differently, particularly.
 12 Q. Did you really believe that there were no learning
 13 points at all for RBKC from the refurbishment of
 14 Grenfell Tower?
 15 A. Of course not, there's always learning points from every
 16 refurbishment and how it's undertaken, and nothing goes
 17 perfectly.
 18 Q. What were the learning points for RBKC from the
 19 refurbishment that you drew?
 20 A. I can't remember now, to be honest with you.
 21 Q. But not such as to prompt RBKC to change any of its
 22 policies and procedures?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. No. And an impartial, independent review of the
 25 refurbishment was in fact never undertaken, at least not

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1 until now?
 2 A. That's correct.
 3 Q. Can I ask you to look, please, at {RBK00000501}.
 4 This is your report to the housing and property
 5 scrutiny committee dated 5 July 2017, that's the date it
 6 bears, and on page 3 {RBK00000501/3} we see your name.
 7 Contact: Celia Caliskan. It concerns the TMO's
 8 performance in 2016 and 2017.
 9 If we look at paragraph 3.1 {RBK00000501/2},
 10 "Conclusion for 2016/17", it says this:
 11 "3.1 The TMO continues to be an effective partner in
 12 delivering the Council's objectives and aspirations for
 13 the housing stock and residents across a range of
 14 strategic functions.
 15 "3.2 As well as delivery against the agreed
 16 performance indicators the pro—active asset management
 17 ensures that the Borough's stock, both residential and
 18 commercial, is being maximised in terms of use and
 19 rental income; compliance with audit and health and
 20 safety legislation protects both residents and
 21 the Council's standing ..."
 22 Then in paragraph 4.2 {RBK00000501/3}, looking ahead
 23 to the performance agreement for the following year,
 24 2018/19:
 25 "The challenge remains to continue to provide high

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1 standards of housing management ..."

2 We can see that the date of this date on page 1 is

3 5 July 2017. That was the date, it seems, of the

4 projected housing and property scrutiny committee.

5 Do you remember whether this report was finalised

6 before the fire on 14 June 2017?

7 A. I don't remember. It was custom and practice to

8 normally have scrutiny committee or any committee report

9 completed around two weeks before in order to meet the

10 committee timetable.

11 Q. To be fair to you, the metadata that we've seen on this

12 document suggests that it was drafted on 6 June 2017 and

13 then last modified on 12 June 2017. We can't find any

14 evidence that the report was circulated itself. But

15 given what I've just said, would it be fair to say that,

16 even as at 12 June 2017, so days before the

17 Grenfell Tower fire, the words in this report reflect

18 the thinking within the housing and property scrutiny

19 committee, or at least your thinking — your thinking —

20 at the time?

21 A. My thinking at the time to be presented to the housing

22 and property scrutiny committee.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. Which I don't believe took place on 5 July.

25 Q. I was going to ask you: did that take place?

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1 A. I don't believe it did. It was a very busy time after

2 the fire, but I shouldn't imagine that it took place.

3 Q. Do you know whether this report was ever finalised?

4 A. I don't know.

5 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I've come to the end of my

6 prepared questions. There may be one or two others that

7 I need to ask.

8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes.

9 MR MILLETT: But it's appropriate to take the break now.

10 Looking at the time, might it be convenient to you

11 and to the witness to elide the break for the extra

12 questions with the lunch break and come back at 1.45,

13 1.50?

14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I'm sure that Ms Johnson would quite

15 like to finish giving evidence. I'm just wondering

16 whether we might push lunch back a bit.

17 MR MILLETT: Happy to do that.

18 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I haven't consulted my colleagues.

19 (Pause)

20 I think we would probably prefer to try and finish

21 with the witness before we break for lunch.

22 MR MILLETT: Understood.

23 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: So if we break now — and I don't

24 know how long you think we need.

25 MR MILLETT: Can I just mention one thing. I have no doubt

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1 that there will be people watching and listening to the

2 evidence who would like a little more time to examine

3 the transcript for this morning. So if I could ask for

4 20 minutes or so — and I'm sure that that won't be

5 regarded as enough, but it's probably the best I can do

6 in the circumstances — will that be inconvenient?

7 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, we will do that. We will break

8 now.

9 You probably know the routine. When counsel gets to

10 the end of his questions, we have to have a break, first

11 of all to enable him to check that he hasn't left

12 anything out, and also to allow questions from others

13 who are not in the room to be considered and perhaps put

14 to you later on.

15 So we'll stop now. We will break until 1.10.

16 I hope at that point it will be possible to deal with

17 any further questions there may be fairly swiftly, and

18 that will enable you to get away a bit earlier.

19 All right?

20 THE WITNESS: Thank you, I appreciate that.

21 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.

22 And while you're out of the room, no talking about

23 your evidence, please. All right?

24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

25 (Pause)

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1 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: 1.10, then, please. Thank you.

2 (12.50 pm)

3 (A short break)

4 (1.10 pm)

5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, Ms Johnson. Well, we

6 will see whether there are any more questions for you.

7 Yes, Mr Millett.

8 MR MILLETT: Yes.

9 Ms Johnson, first of all, I was asking you this

10 morning about document {RBK00030060}, if we could have

11 that up, please, and if we turn in that document,

12 please, to the proposal at page — well, let me try it

13 this way: do you remember that in fact this document

14 expressly says that it was all flat entrance doors in

15 enclosed blocks that was to be the subject of the plan?

16 A. I don't remember that specifically, to be honest with

17 you.

18 Q. Right. I think I put the questions to you on the basis

19 that all flat front doors in the TMO stock would be

20 inspected and made safe by 2014, but in fact it was in

21 relation to all flat entrance doors in enclosed blocks.

22 With that correction, have you any further evidence

23 to give?

24 A. No.

25 Q. The next question by way of correction is — and I'm

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1 sorry to keep you in suspense ...
 2 (Pause)
 3 Yes, the coroner's Rule 43 letters, I think I put it
 4 to you that the recommendation was directed to your
 5 authority. In fact, none of the coroner's Rule 43
 6 letters were addressed to RBKC, and what I was doing was
 7 reading from a letter addressed to the London Borough of
 8 Southwark, so I'm not sure that it's right that it was
 9 addressed directly to RBKC.
 10 Again, does that make a difference?
 11 A. No, I understood what you were trying to say.
 12 Q. Yes. I apologise for trying to dodge between my emails
 13 and the document, but that's what I've been doing.
 14 Can I go back to an exchange that we had this
 15 morning about the email where you said that Mr Daffarn
 16 was spreading false information.
 17 I'd like to show you the raw transcript from this
 18 morning, {Day130/68:20}. I quoted:
 19 "'I agree that 'certain members of the community'
 20 are doing their best to spread false information and we
 21 do need to ... about how to do this and ensure that the
 22 local residents know we are still committed ...'"
 23 My question at {Day130/69:16}:
 24 "Question: Why do you refer to that as false
 25 information?"

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1 "Answer: Because we were.
 2 "Question: Do you mean to imply that it was
 3 deliberately false?
 4 "Answer: Yes."
 5 And I ask you who you were referring to, and if we
 6 turn the page, please, we go to your identification of
 7 Mr Daffarn, and my question:
 8 "Question: You thought he was lying to the
 9 community, did you?
 10 "Answer: I thought he was telling people
 11 information that wasn't true, so yes, he was not telling
 12 the truth."
 13 Just first of all, to be clear, when you say
 14 "I thought he was telling people information that wasn't
 15 true, so yes, he was not telling the truth", were you
 16 intending to convey the idea that not only was he
 17 telling people information that wasn't true, but that he
 18 knew he was telling people information that he knew
 19 wasn't true?
 20 A. I wouldn't know that.
 21 Q. So are you accusing him of lying or are you accusing him
 22 of saying things which, true or aren't true --
 23 A. I was saying that he was telling people information that
 24 wasn't true.
 25 Q. So are you accusing him of lying or are you just

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1 accusing him of spreading information that happened not
 2 to be true, not knowing whether he knew it to be true or
 3 not?
 4 A. I didn't know whether he knew it to be true or not, but
 5 he was spreading information that it wasn't taking
 6 place.
 7 Q. Right, I see.
 8 Now, you say it wasn't true. Let me just show you
 9 one document, please, {IWS00002148}.
 10 Now, the email I've shown you was 5 June 2013. Here
 11 is a blog of 14 May 2013, and it gives a chronology of
 12 the delays in the planning application.
 13 Then if you go to page 2 {IWS00002148/2}, it goes on
 14 and it says, "Something is wrong here and there's a bad
 15 stink about it".
 16 In fact, the blog expresses concern that the project
 17 may not go ahead and there have been inadequate
 18 communications.
 19 First of all, do you remember seeing this blog at
 20 all?
 21 A. I saw the blog on occasion but I didn't regularly look
 22 at it, no.
 23 Q. Right. Did you know that this blog was actually making
 24 the point that there were delays in the project and that
 25 in fact now works on site couldn't commence until some

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1 time in 2014?
 2 A. I don't remember reading this particular entry in the
 3 blog, but I can see that that statement is being made in
 4 this blog.
 5 Q. Yes, and that was true, in fact, wasn't it? It was a
 6 true statement.
 7 A. Yeah, it's true that there were delays to the
 8 Grenfell Tower refurbishment project, that's absolutely
 9 true.
 10 Q. And therefore it was reasonable for a resident to
 11 espouse the belief and indeed articulate the belief that
 12 a project may not go ahead or may be delayed.
 13 A. It's reasonable to say that the project was delayed but
 14 it wasn't reasonable to suggest that the project may not
 15 go ahead.
 16 Q. Yes.
 17 A. It was a statement of fact that the project was delayed.
 18 Q. Yes. Thank you very much. Having clarified that,
 19 that's very helpful.
 20 Would you just give me a moment, please?
 21 (Pause)
 22 Yes, thank you very much.
 23 Ms Johnson, I have one more question for you which
 24 I must ask you, given your position.
 25 We have now been looking at the past over the last

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1 two and a half days. We have gone through a lot of
2 material and I've asked you a lot of questions.

3 Looking back on all of that and looking back on the
4 entirety of your time at RBKC, and in particular your
5 role or otherwise in the Grenfell Tower refurbishment,
6 is there anything that you would like to tell us that
7 you would have done differently?

8 A. Gosh. Of course. You know, sort of you look back on
9 your time there and you think: if only we had had more
10 due diligence in relation to sort of the cladding that
11 was placed on the tower, if only we had understood
12 better what was happening internationally around
13 cladding, if only we had, you know, sort of had the
14 ability to, you know — sort of to really understand
15 better, you know, kind of all the ins and outs of
16 a refurbishment project of this nature, then ... the
17 list is actually rather endless in terms of kind of —
18 because you would never want anything of this type of
19 incident to happen ever, I mean, it's just awful. So
20 of course I look back and think, you know, what could
21 I have done differently to make sure that this didn't
22 happen?

23 MR MILLETT: Well, thank you very much.

24 It only remains for me to thank you very much for
25 coming to the Inquiry, Ms Johnson, and giving us your

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1 assistance and your evidence. Thank you.

2 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

3 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Ms Johnson, I should thank you very
4 much on behalf of all three of us on the panel for the
5 time you've given to share your evidence with us. It's
6 been quite a long ordeal, I know that, and not an easy
7 one, and we're very grateful for the time you have given
8 us and for telling us all about your involvement in this
9 matter. So thank you very much indeed, and you are now
10 free to go.

11 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much, Chair.

12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.

13 (The witness withdrew)

14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Right, thank you.

15 Well, we'll break at that point. Although it won't
16 give us quite a full hour for lunch, I think we ought to
17 start again at 2.15.

18 MR MILLETT: Very well, Mr Chairman.

19 Can I say thank you for allowing us to use up some
20 of the precious lunch break for that, even if it only
21 amounts to five minutes in the end.

22 The next witness will be Amanda Johnson at 2.15.

23 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, good. Thank you very much.

24 2.15, then, please.

25 (1.21 pm)

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1 (The short adjournment)

2 (2.15 pm)

3 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier, you have another
4 witness for us.

5 MR KINNIER: Afternoon, sir. Yes, I do. May I call
6 Amanda Johnson.

7 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.

8 MS AMANDA JOHNSON (sworn)

9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you very much. Sit down and
10 make yourself comfortable.

11 (Pause)

12 All right? There's some water there if you need it.

13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier, when you're ready.

15 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

16 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.

17 First of all, would you mind confirming your name
18 for the record?

19 A. Amanda Johnson.

20 Q. Ms Johnson, thank you very much for coming to give
21 evidence today, it's much appreciated.

22 Now, if at any time you have any difficulty
23 understanding the question I've asked, please say so and
24 I'll either repeat it or rephrase it.

25 Secondly, if at any stage you would like to break,

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1 please don't hesitate to say so.

2 Thirdly, if you could keep your voice up for the
3 transcriber, so that she can capture everything you say
4 and capture it accurately.

5 The final thing I should say, it helps not to nod or
6 shake your head, the reason being the transcriber has to
7 catch your words "yes" or "no".

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You have given a number of statements to the Inquiry,
10 but I would only like to ask questions in relation to
11 two of those statements, and they'll appear in sequence
12 on the screen in front of you.

13 The first one is {RBK00033719}. The second one is
14 {RBK00054464}.

15 Have you read both of those statements recently?

16 A. Yes, I have.

17 Q. Can you confirm that their contents are true?

18 A. The content is true.

19 Q. Have you discussed your statements, your evidence, with
20 anyone else before coming here today?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Thank you.

23 Now, the first questions I'd like to discuss with
24 you today relate to your professional background and
25 your training.

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1 Now, first of all, looking at your qualifications
 2 and training before you joined RBKC, is it right that
 3 you have a Master's degree in housing from the LSE?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Did the course cover overseeing tenant management
 6 organisations?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. Did the course cover any aspects of health and safety
 9 and, in particular, fire safety in high-rise residential
 10 buildings?
 11 A. No, there was a maintenance section, repairs, but not
 12 compliance.
 13 Q. Am I right in thinking that you have had a 29-year
 14 career in housing?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Before joining RBKC in 2005, did you have any role
 17 overseeing an arm's length management organisation?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Have you ever had any oversight or a role in exercising
 20 oversight over an ALMOs fire safety or health and safety
 21 remit?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Before coming the head of housing commissioning at RBKC
 24 in 2011, you had been a supporting people manager at the
 25 London Borough of Barking and Dagenham; is that right?

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1 A. That's correct.
 2 Q. And thereafter you held the same role at RBKC between
 3 2005 and 2010.
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Now, what were your responsibilities as a supporting
 6 people manager at RBKC?
 7 A. It was commissioning and performance and contract
 8 management, so scrutiny of providers in the supported
 9 housing sector.
 10 Q. Did you have any dealings with the TMO at all before
 11 becoming head of what was then called performance and
 12 partnerships?
 13 A. Yes, I did. I was a member of the housing management
 14 team, so I was aware of the TMO and what they were
 15 doing. I also commissioned the community alarm service,
 16 which is provided by the TMO — was provided by the TMO.
 17 Q. Now, were you appointed the temporary head of
 18 performance and partnerships in 2010?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. During the appointment process, were you asked if you
 21 had any experience in overseeing tenant management
 22 organisations?
 23 A. I cannot remember.
 24 Q. Can you remember whether you were asked any questions
 25 about your health and safety or fire safety expertise?

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1 A. I don't believe I was.
 2 Q. When you were appointed the temporary head of
 3 performance and partnerships, were you given any
 4 training to assist you to carry out your obligations
 5 overseeing the TMO?
 6 A. Governance training, I can remember that.
 7 Q. What did that involve?
 8 A. That was just looking at the governance arrangements
 9 with organisations such as the TMO, how the board
 10 worked, that type of thing. I also did some health and
 11 safety training in which — which was done at
 12 a corporate level by the council.
 13 Q. Were you given any fire safety training?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. Did the general health and safety training involve any
 16 aspect of fire safety, or the management of fire safety?
 17 A. It would involve some aspect of fire safety.
 18 Q. Can you remember what that was now?
 19 A. It would be about evacuation plans, it would be about
 20 responsibilities under the Reform Order, legislation.
 21 I also did quite a lot of practical training when I was
 22 a frontline manager in terms of managing fire alarms,
 23 testing, smoke detectors, that type of thing. So some
 24 of the training was operational and some of it was more
 25 legislation based.

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1 Q. Can you remember now when you were trained on evacuation
 2 plans whether that subject matter caught personal
 3 emergency evacuation plans?
 4 A. No, it did not include that.
 5 Q. Did you attend a presentation concerned with the
 6 Lakanal House fire provided by David Crowder of the BRE
 7 on 10 January 2014?
 8 A. No, I was on leave that day.
 9 Q. Had you heard of the fire at Lakanal House on
 10 3 July 2009?
 11 A. Yes, I have.
 12 Q. Were you aware of the coroner's recommendations arising
 13 from the inquest following the fire at Lakanal House?
 14 A. I would have seen them at the time, legal would have
 15 informed us.
 16 Q. Did your review of the recommendations made by
 17 the coroner at Lakanal cause you to change your
 18 practices or your approach to exercising oversight over
 19 the TMO?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. And why not?
 22 A. I think that was an error on my part. I think we should
 23 have reviewed the schedule to the MMA that focused on
 24 health and safety, and reviewed that document to take
 25 into account those recommendations.

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1 Q. Thank you. We'll come on to that later.
 2 Can you help us as to why the team's name changed
 3 from performance and partnerships to housing
 4 commissioning?
 5 A. I don't think there was anything specific, it was just
 6 we commissioned across a range of housing services.
 7 Q. Did the substance of the team's role change with the
 8 name?
 9 A. No, I don't believe that it did.
 10 Q. When did your role as head become permanent?
 11 A. Including management of the TMO contract, that was at
 12 the end of 2010.
 13 Q. Thank you.
 14 When you were appointed to the temporary or
 15 permanent position, did you receive any briefing,
 16 whether in the form of a handover or otherwise,
 17 regarding historic issues and concerns relating to the
 18 governance at the TMO?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. And who gave that briefing?
 21 A. Pam Sedgwick did a handover, and also Laura Johnson, who
 22 was my manager.
 23 Q. Dealing with the briefing that Pam Sedgwick gave, can
 24 you give the gist of that handover to the panel now,
 25 what did she say to you?

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1 A. I can't remember a lot about it. I can remember
 2 a particular focus on the EMB, because there had been
 3 issues with governance in the EMB.
 4 Q. That's the estate management board?
 5 A. That's correct, and also there had been issues of
 6 governance with the TMO board and they'd been served an
 7 improvement notice —
 8 Q. And can you remember now —
 9 A. — and a breach.
 10 Q. Apologies, I spoke across you.
 11 A. It was around the governance, that was the main concern,
 12 governance with the TMO board.
 13 Q. Can you remember now in a more detailed way what the
 14 precise concerns were about the governance of the TMO
 15 board?
 16 A. I understand that the former chief executive had left
 17 and there was a new temporary chief executive that
 18 covered another borough as well. I understand there
 19 were some personality clashes between that person and
 20 the board, and that they got played out in the board
 21 meetings.
 22 Q. Can you recall any concerns regarding the handling of
 23 complaints, for example, or resident engagement matters?
 24 A. Not at that stage, no.
 25 Q. You also referred to a handover given to you by

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1 Laura Johnson. Can you now remember the gist of what
 2 she said to you?
 3 A. It was at the same meeting, it was Laura Johnson and
 4 Pam Sedgwick, and again the things that stick in my mind
 5 are the governance issues in relation to the EMB and the
 6 TMO.
 7 Q. Were you given any particular instructions or direction
 8 as to any particular areas they wanted you to
 9 concentrate on in your role?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Can I now turn to the housing commissioning team itself,
 12 and the structure of the department and team.
 13 If we could go, first of all, to some organograms
 14 which just set out who was where, and first of all I'd
 15 like to go to {RBK00000278}.
 16 This is a series of organograms provided by RBKC
 17 showing the structure of the housing department from
 18 2010 to 2017, and we see there the department as at
 19 2017.
 20 Could we turn to page 8 within this clip of
 21 documents {RBK00000278/8}, which is the organogram from
 22 2010.
 23 Now, the organogram shows the structure of the
 24 housing department in 2010, so when you were appointed
 25 interim and then permanent head of housing

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1 commissioning. We can see you on the far left—hand side
 2 in the centre. Is that right?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. And we can see that your role as head of supporting
 5 people is separate to and distinct from the other teams.
 6 Is that a fair comment to make?
 7 A. Yes, that's correct.
 8 Q. Looking at that scheme, you supervised
 9 Christopher Scott; is that right?
 10 A. Yes, I did.
 11 Q. Just to the right of the centre of the organogram there
 12 is a box entitled "VACANT", with the title "Strategy and
 13 Regeneration Manager", and we can see that that role
 14 supervised Celia Caliskan, Jane Tretheway and
 15 William Hogan.
 16 Is it right that Celia Caliskan was responsible for
 17 managing the contract with the TMO?
 18 A. Yes, it is.
 19 Q. Before the creation of the housing commissioning team,
 20 was it Caliskan, Tretheway and Hogan who were primarily
 21 responsible for managing that contract with the TMO?
 22 A. No, it was Celia.
 23 Q. We can see on the extreme right of this organogram that
 24 the head of housing position is vacant, and in the
 25 centre we can see that the position of chief housing

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1 officer is also vacant.
 2 The head of housing, Amanda Gill, who is on the next
 3 left box to yours, seems to have the same level of
 4 seniority as you, Amanda Gill, and Pamela Sedgwick; is
 5 that right?
 6 A. That's correct.
 7 Q. Now, can we turn back now to page 7 {RBK00000278/7},
 8 which is the 2011 version of the organogram.
 9 I'll just let you have a quick read of that, and ask
 10 you the question whether that organogram correctly
 11 reflects the structure in 2011.
 12 A. Celia should be reporting to me.
 13 Q. That's the question I was going to ask you. There was
 14 no time when she wasn't reporting to anyone?
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. Now, we don't need to go to it unless you would like to,
 17 but you say at paragraph 11 of your first witness
 18 statement {RBK00033719/2} that you took on the role of
 19 head of performance and partnerships when the officer
 20 went on sabbatical in September 2010, and you took up
 21 that role temporarily; is that right?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. We can see that Pamela Sedgwick now appears as the head
 24 of housing performance and partnerships.
 25 Is it therefore correct that for a time you were the

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1 head of housing commissioning and, temporarily at least,
 2 the head of performance and partnerships?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Can you remember for how long you were holding those two
 5 portfolios?
 6 A. Approximately one year.
 7 Q. As we see in the centre there, Laura Johnson is now the
 8 head of housing. Was it her decision to restructure the
 9 department to create the housing commissioning team?
 10 A. Yes, it was.
 11 Q. Can you help us as to why that decision was made?
 12 A. I think Laura felt there was synergy between what my
 13 team did in terms of contract and performance management
 14 and what was needed with the TMO, which again was about
 15 managing performance and the contract.
 16 Q. Was the decision prompted in any way by concerns
 17 regarding the effectiveness of supervision of the TMO at
 18 that stage?
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. Now, can we go back to page 6 in this clip
 21 {RBK00000278/6}, which shows the structure of the
 22 department in 2012, and we see you there on the far
 23 left, head of housing commissioning.
 24 Is that organogram correct?
 25 A. There are two or three officers missing, supported

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1 housing commissioners.
 2 Q. Who reported to you?
 3 A. Yes, there were three of them.
 4 Q. We see here that Celia Caliskan now appears to be
 5 reporting to you, along with Christopher Scott.
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Just to make it clear, she had been reporting to you
 8 before 2012?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. It appears that a decision had been made to transfer
 11 Celia Caliskan from the regeneration team to housing
 12 commissioning.
 13 First of all, is that assumption correct, and if so,
 14 why was she moved?
 15 A. I don't think she was moved, I think that's incorrect.
 16 Q. Is it fair to say that, as you were Celia Caliskan's
 17 line manager, ultimately you were responsible for
 18 monitoring the performance of the TMO?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Now, if we can go to page 5 {RBK00000278/5}, which is
 21 the 2013 organogram, again you see yourself, same
 22 position, head of housing commissioning, and
 23 Celia Caliskan, Christopher Scott and Jonathan Morcom
 24 report to you, and next to you on the organogram is
 25 Roberto Cusano.

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Is that organogram accurate?
 3 A. Apart from the three commissioning posts for supported
 4 housing that are missing that report to me as well.
 5 Q. Was that the basic structure that stayed in place up
 6 until June 2017?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Thank you.
 9 Now, the next topic I would like to discuss with you
 10 is the role of housing commissioning.
 11 First of all, who defined your team's role?
 12 A. That would have been Laura Johnson. It evolved over
 13 time in terms of its responsibilities.
 14 Q. We haven't been able to find anything in writing, but
 15 was the precise role of your team ever reduced to
 16 writing?
 17 A. Sorry, can you say that again, please?
 18 Q. We've tried to find a document in which your team's role
 19 was set out, and we can't. Was it ever set out in
 20 writing?
 21 A. Yes, we had a service plan and there'd be a short
 22 introduction on each of the departments in that service
 23 plan.
 24 Q. Now, at paragraph 15 of your first witness statement,
 25 which can be found at {RBK00033719/3}, you say this:

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1 "The Housing Commissioning Team has evolved over the
 2 years. We do quite a cross-cutting role and in some
 3 respects we pick up various things which do not fit
 4 neatly elsewhere in the Housing Department. Mainly our
 5 role involves specifying services, procuring services
 6 and contract and performance management."
 7 Now, by contract performance and management, are you
 8 referring there to management of the contract with the
 9 TMO?
 10 A. One of the contracts, yes.
 11 Q. Can you help us, why did performance management of the
 12 TMO sit with your team?
 13 A. Because it was seen as aligned with contract management.
 14 My team were responsible for performance, so Celia led
 15 on the KPIs and collected those from the TMO, so there
 16 was synergy in terms of that piece of work.
 17 Q. Did performance of the TMO go beyond commissioning
 18 housing?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. In what respects?
 21 A. Well, you had other officers involved. So, for
 22 instance, Steve Mellor from the finance department would
 23 liaise with the TMO on the finances. You had health and
 24 safety, that went bi-borough. They linked back into the
 25 TMO. There was also the audit team that carried out the

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1 audit service. So there wasn't just my team linking
 2 into the TMO.
 3 Q. Did you think or do you think it was unusual that there
 4 was not a team within the housing department that dealt
 5 solely with the TMO and its supervision?
 6 A. I think the team could have been bigger. I think it's
 7 good for staff to work across different areas to gain
 8 experience and skills and different knowledge, so
 9 I don't know that you have to have the same staff
 10 dedicated to one contract all the time, but I think the
 11 issue was probably around the size of the team rather
 12 than who was in it.
 13 Q. What particular skills or experiences do you think you
 14 were missing in your team to deal with the management of
 15 the TMO?
 16 A. The TMO is the only borough-wide TMO in the country, and
 17 with that we'd delegated all of our responsibilities
 18 under the MMA, and I think that was too big, given our
 19 responsibilities as a landlord. And when the capital
 20 programme team left the council, and went over to the
 21 TMO, we lost some of our technical expertise, and
 22 I think we should have retained some of that for
 23 oversight of the TMO.
 24 Q. Do you think you lacked any expertise or experience in
 25 the team in health and safety and, in particular,

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1 fire safety matters?
 2 A. I think it would have been useful to have had more
 3 training. We did have a health and safety corporate
 4 department that we could go to if we wanted advice. So
 5 that resource was available in the council to supplement
 6 our knowledge.
 7 Q. Did you ever have cause to ask for greater resources to
 8 allow you to manage the TMO effectively and efficiently?
 9 A. No, I did question whether or not we should bring the
 10 capital programme back in-house, because of the changing
 11 work of the TMO, but no, I didn't question that.
 12 Q. Were there any instances where you felt the need to seek
 13 the specialist advice of your in-house health and safety
 14 team?
 15 A. I think the issue with the leaseholder fire doors we may
 16 have asked for some input for that area.
 17 Q. Anything more than that that you can remember now?
 18 A. I can't remember anything else.
 19 Q. Now, we don't need to go to it unless you would like to,
 20 but between paragraphs 20 and 25 of your first statement
 21 {RBK00033719/4} you set out the particular strands of
 22 work that the housing commissioning team did. I think
 23 it would be useful if we go through each of those five
 24 strands.
 25 Now, first of all, there was the general needs

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1 commissioning which was delegated to the TMO; is that
 2 right?
 3 A. That's correct.
 4 Q. That entailed overseeing implementation of the MMA; is
 5 that correct?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. You say in the fourth line of paragraph 113 of your
 8 first statement {RBK00033719/23} that the TMO was the
 9 only borough-wide TMO, and I think you have just
 10 confirmed the accuracy of that.
 11 A. Yeah.
 12 Q. Was Celia Caliskan the only officer specifically tasked
 13 on the general needs housing function which had been
 14 delegated to the TMO?
 15 A. Historically there had been two officers, and in 2016
 16 the second officer requested voluntary redundancy and
 17 wasn't replaced.
 18 Q. And presumably wasn't replaced for financial reasons?
 19 A. Yes, it delivered a saving in the department.
 20 Q. Did you press for a replacement officer to assist and
 21 support Celia Caliskan in her duties?
 22 A. Not at that point. I mean, I supported Celia a lot with
 23 the MMA.
 24 Q. Did you ask for a second person at all before the fire?
 25 A. No.

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1 Q. Did you have any concerns whether Celia Caliskan was
 2 overburdened or struggling in any way with her workload
 3 and managing the TMO?
 4 A. There was nothing to indicate she was struggling.
 5 Q. She never said anything to you?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Do you think the fact that, from 2016 onwards at least,
 8 she was the only officer placed significant practical
 9 limitations on the level and detail of the scrutiny that
 10 could be brought to bear to the TMO's actions?
 11 A. While she was the only dedicated officer, there was also
 12 myself and other colleagues working with the TMO. So,
 13 again, Steve Mellor had input through the HRA business
 14 planning and through the asset management meetings, and
 15 the regeneration team were then working closely with the
 16 TMO on feasibility studies and stock condition data to
 17 inform future plans. So I think the resources had moved
 18 more over to the regeneration side.
 19 Q. Turning now to the second strand of your work, which was
 20 supported housing commissioning; is that right?
 21 A. That's correct.
 22 Q. Is it right that this aspect covered hostels, refuges,
 23 those with mental health needs and offender provision?
 24 A. That's correct.
 25 Q. Is it correct that supported housing commissioning was

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1 not delegated to the TMO?
 2 A. No, it's not, it was delegated to — it is delegated to
 3 a range of external providers.
 4 Q. Did they include the TMO?
 5 A. There was the community alarm contract with the TMO and
 6 there was a contract for two support officers.
 7 Q. The third strand was temporary accommodation
 8 procurement; is that right?
 9 A. That's correct.
 10 Q. And did that primarily concern the housing of homeless
 11 people?
 12 A. Yes, that was temporary accommodation for people who had
 13 made a homeless application.
 14 Q. Am I right in thinking that the duty to house homeless
 15 people had not been delegated to the TMO under the MMA?
 16 A. No, it had not been delegated to them. They did manage
 17 some temporary accommodation in HRA stock, but,
 18 you know, it was housing management.
 19 Q. Now, you say in the first sentence of paragraph 23 of
 20 your first statement {RBK00033719/4} that there were
 21 four members of staff concerned with the procurement of
 22 temporary accommodation.
 23 Does it follow that the procurement of temporary
 24 accommodation was a large part of your team's work?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Did you see the provision of temporary accommodation as
 2 being a more substantial area of your remit compared to
 3 management of the TMO?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Even though there was a considerably greater number of
 6 staff dedicated to temporary accommodation?
 7 A. I mean, it was a bigger portfolio in that we procured
 8 accommodation for up to 2,000 households, so the team
 9 needed to be bigger, but I didn't feel that my input was
 10 disproportionate.
 11 Q. Now, the fourth strand was housing and employment
 12 manager; is that right?
 13 A. Yes, that's correct.
 14 Q. Did that element primarily concern working with people
 15 claiming benefits and helping them back to work?
 16 A. That's correct.
 17 Q. Is it right that one member of the housing commissioning
 18 team worked on that area of work?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. And the fifth and final strand is — and you say this at
 21 paragraph 25 of your first statement {RBK00033719/5} —
 22 that Jon Morcom, the complaints officer, he reported to
 23 you?
 24 A. Yes, he did.
 25 Q. Why did complaints sit within housing commissioning?

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1 A. Erm ... I'm trying to think. Jon didn't always report
 2 to me. I can't remember why he moved to me.
 3 Q. To the lay eye, it looks a bit odd, given that
 4 Mr Morcom's prime dealings presumably would have been
 5 with the director of housing or the director of housing
 6 needs. What would you say to that lay observation?
 7 A. I would agree, in that Jon Morcom reported directly to
 8 Laura and Amanda Gill on complaints, as most complaints
 9 related to temporary accommodation, and I line managed
 10 Jon Morcom. So we had one-to-ones, appraisals, that
 11 type of thing, but in terms of his day-to-day work, he
 12 had more dealings with Laura Johnson and Amanda Gill.
 13 Q. So it flows from that that you had a limited role in
 14 dealing with the day-to-day and the practicalities —
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. — and the substance of complaints? Thank you.
 17 If I could now turn to ask you some more detailed
 18 questions about Celia Caliskan.
 19 A. Yeah.
 20 Q. At the time of the fire, is it right that she had worked
 21 for RBKC for something like more than 20 years?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Is it right that she had the role of monitoring the TMO
 24 for some five years before you assumed your position as
 25 head of housing commissioning in 2010?

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1 A. I believe so.
 2 Q. In practice, was much of the day—to-day work of
 3 supervising the MMA left to her?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Now, we don't need to go to it unless you would like to,
 6 but at paragraph 40 of your first witness statement
 7 {RBK00033719/7} you say this in relation to key
 8 performance indicators:
 9 "... Celia would meet with the TMO to work through
 10 the KPIs and agree renewed targets in each area."
 11 Did you ever attend those type of meetings, KPI
 12 meetings, with the TMO?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Would you attend them regularly as a matter of routine
 15 or only occasionally?
 16 A. We had regular meetings with the TMO, we called them HRA
 17 meetings, where we looked at key performance indicators.
 18 We'd also meet with them to discuss the mid-year review
 19 and the final review, also a five-year review, and
 20 another one was due in 2018. So I would be — Celia
 21 would do the background work, but I would be at those
 22 meetings.
 23 Q. Can you help us, what was the detail of your role in
 24 ensuring that KPIs and targets in each area had been set
 25 appropriately?

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1 A. I would be ultimately responsible for making sure the
 2 performance agreement was in place and that's where the
 3 KPIs were set for the TMO.
 4 Q. What training had Celia Caliskan received to allow her
 5 to do her job of supervising the TMO?
 6 A. I cannot recall from the time that I started to manage
 7 her. She did a lot of training around coaching and
 8 mentoring. That's what her focus was on during the time
 9 that I line managed her. That's what I can remember.
 10 Q. Did she ever ask you to secure resources to get her
 11 supplemental training to allow her to do her job in
 12 relation to supervision of the TMO?
 13 A. We wanted the additional training on governance, which
 14 we did commission.
 15 Q. And can you remember when you wanted that additional
 16 training on governance?
 17 A. It might have been around 2012.
 18 Q. Did you get it?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. And did you receive that additional training each year
 21 or was it a one-off event in 2012?
 22 A. That was a one-off event. Celia did do some training
 23 around being a company secretary as well, because we had
 24 a council-owned company, so she did some training around
 25 that.

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1 Q. Was there any particular need or concern that prompted
 2 the one-off training in 2012?
 3 A. I think initially, I think it was the governance
 4 concerns that existed in relation to the EMB.
 5 Q. And thereafter Celia Caliskan never sought additional
 6 training to allow her to do her job supervising the TMO?
 7 A. Celia would attend routine mandatory training, but
 8 I don't recall her seeking additional training. She did
 9 do a procurement qualification as well, now I remember.
 10 Q. Okay.
 11 Now, can I turn to the MMA now, and in particular
 12 the difficulties with the MMA that you discuss in your
 13 statement.
 14 Now, if we can go to paragraph 33 of your first
 15 witness statement, which is at {RBK00033719/6}, in the
 16 second line of that paragraph, you say this:
 17 "Commenting only on the document itself, I didn't
 18 think the MMA was very helpful or constructive ... It
 19 wasn't user-friendly for landlords, and I don't think it
 20 defined clearly enough the responsibilities between the
 21 two parties in the front of the document."
 22 Can you help us, in what respects did the MMA not
 23 clearly define the parties' respective responsibilities?
 24 A. I just don't think it was a useful document. It hadn't
 25 been updated regularly, although we did update it twice

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1 ourselves. It was unwieldy to use. If you wanted to
 2 end an arrangement with a TMO it was a difficult
 3 process, you would need the board approval, so it was
 4 very difficult to deal with emergency situations. And
 5 this is what we found when we ended the arrangement with
 6 the EMB; it took us several years to end that
 7 arrangement.
 8 I think under the right to manage legislation it
 9 favoured ALMOs over landlords in respect of
 10 responsibilities. That was the main problem I had
 11 with it.
 12 I think ultimately what was more important in the
 13 MMA is the schedules themselves. The schedules set out
 14 the TMO's operating procedures.
 15 Q. And —
 16 A. And actually that was what was more useful.
 17 Q. Now, you go on to say in paragraph 33, and it's seven
 18 lines down from the top of the paragraph, this:
 19 "In the event of any concerns on the part of a local
 20 authority about how a TMO is exercising its functions,
 21 the process prescribed by the MMA involves a long series
 22 of steps which are both onerous and slow moving."
 23 Are those the problems which you've just adverted
 24 to?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Between 2010 and 14 June 2017, were you ever concerned
2 that there was no proper mechanism or no proper
3 arrangements for RBKC to raise performance—related
4 concerns with the TMO?
5 A. No. The MMA was clear on that, around the improvement
6 plan and serving the breach notice.
7 Q. At any point, did you consider it necessary to take any
8 of the steps identified or prescribed in the MMA?
9 A. Not since I took up the post, no.
10 Q. Was there any time when you were deterred from taking
11 action under the MMA because of the onerous and
12 time-consuming nature of the arrangements in place?
13 A. Absolutely not.
14 Q. Now, could we turn to an email. I'm afraid it's from
15 2011. It can be found at {RBK00050408}. It's an email
16 chain from 2011 which started on 4 January 2011, between
17 Celia Caliskan and Bryony Willett and Anthony Jonas of
18 Islington Council. You're not copied in to the email
19 chain.
20 I'll just let you cast your eye over the email at
21 the bottom of the page, and if necessary you can see the
22 other page, but probably not.
23 A. I'm familiar with this.
24 Q. You are?
25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Now, if we go to page 2 {RBK00050408/2}, you can see at
2 the bottom of that page the initial email.
3 First of all, were you aware that Celia was talking
4 to other local authorities about dealing with the
5 practical difficulties encountered in managing the MMA?
6 A. I asked Celia to do this.
7 Q. Were there any particular concerns or needs that
8 prompted that request to Celia?
9 A. 2011 — again, I think it was the governance problems we
10 were having with the EMB.
11 Q. And was this just after you took over as the head of the
12 team?
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. Now, you will see in the original email it says in the
15 penultimate line:
16 "We are renewing the K&C TMO's MMA and I have been
17 asked to look at the best practice and what else other
18 councils/TMOs are doing."
19 So, first of all, you would have been the request
20 she is referring to there?
21 A. Yes.
22 Q. Now, was RBKC considering a review of the MMA in 2011,
23 can you remember?
24 A. Yes, we wanted to review the clauses and we needed to
25 update some of the schedules. There was another

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1 formal — we commissioned a consultant to look at the
2 MMA to advise on changes.
3 Q. What was his name or her name?
4 A. I'm sorry, I can't remember his name.
5 Q. Am I right in thinking that the revised MMA was not put
6 into effect until 2015?
7 A. Yes.
8 Q. Can you help us, then, as to why the process took what
9 appears to be four years plus?
10 A. There was a protracted process between ourselves and the
11 TMO company secretary. There were a number of key
12 legislation changes that came in around 2012, around
13 self-financing and around the Localism Act, so I had to
14 do quite a lot of work in the background in terms of
15 updating the MMA. We would have updated it earlier, but
16 as we became aware of new legislation coming in, we
17 delayed updating it again. So it was quite a protracted
18 business, and it took some substantial time.
19 Q. Thank you.
20 Now, if we go back to the first page of this email
21 {RBK00050408/1}, we can see hopefully Mr Jonas' response
22 there in the bottom half of that page, dated
23 5 January 2011 at 9.55. It says in the third paragraph:
24 "The MMA, even the latest version, is a very poor
25 document and does not handle the relationship between

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1 the parties well. It has caused us a lot of
2 difficulties. I would have thought that for the K&C TMO
3 you would want a much better contract, more on the lines
4 of an ALMO agreement."
5 Now, did Celia Caliskan report Mr Jonas' opinion
6 back to you, can you remember?
7 A. Yes, and that's when we agreed to commission an expert
8 to look at the MMA.
9 Q. We've got your views, we have Mr Jonas' views here; was
10 a negative view of the template MMA a widely-held view
11 amongst local authorities at that time?
12 A. I believe so.
13 Q. Now, Mr Jonas refers there to a much better contract
14 along the lines of an ALMO agreement.
15 Did RBKC have any bespoke contract or access to
16 a precedent for an ALMO agreement?
17 A. We could have had access to an agreement. It would have
18 needed to have been substantially different because of
19 the level of delegation to the TMO.
20 Q. Can you remember, did you ever seek one out?
21 A. Yes. Celia would have sought one out. But ultimately
22 in this case we took the — we commissioned the expert
23 to look at the document and make recommendations.
24 Q. Did you evaluate the option of adapting an ALMO
25 agreement during the course of this review process

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1 between 2011 and 2015?
 2 A. Celia would have shared this with him and made him aware
 3 of the research that we'd done.
 4 Q. Can you help us as to why the decision was made not to
 5 go down the ALMO route, if I can put it like that?
 6 A. I cannot remember the explicit decision.
 7 Q. Now, it was noted by Mr Jonas that Islington's TMO were
 8 very different and managing a limited amount of
 9 property.
 10 If we could go back to your first statement, in
 11 particular paragraph 112. That can be found at
 12 {RBK00033719/23}, and paragraph 112 starts with these
 13 words:
 14 "It is an open question whether a borough-wide TMO
 15 is the best model for managing social housing, and
 16 whether this structure made it too difficult for us as
 17 a landlord to effectively monitor the exercise of all
 18 its functions."
 19 Did you have — and it may well be this is obvious,
 20 the answer, flowing from earlier answers — and hold
 21 those concerns about the size of the TMO before
 22 14 June 2017?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Did you express those concerns to anyone at RBKC?
 25 A. I spoke to Laura Johnson about: should we bring the

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1 capital programme back in—house because of the increase
 2 in work we were doing around regeneration, but that was
 3 not because I perceived there was a specific risk;
 4 I just didn't think the model was particularly good, and
 5 as the council was going to be investing major money on
 6 its estates, I just wondered if the capital programme
 7 would be best with us.
 8 Q. Can you remember now when that conversation with
 9 Laura Johnson took place?
 10 (Pause)
 11 A. I'd be guessing.
 12 Q. Don't guess, if you can't remember.
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. Can you remember the gist of her response?
 15 A. That there wasn't an appetite to bring it back in—house
 16 at the moment.
 17 Q. Was that due to the administrative inconvenience, cost?
 18 Did she specify the particular reasons why there was
 19 an absence of appetite?
 20 A. I think people wanted the TMO to succeed.
 21 Q. Were your concerns shared with anyone else within your
 22 department, in particular Celia Caliskan?
 23 A. Yes, we talked about it.
 24 Q. And was there a consensus view about the benefits of
 25 bringing back the capital project team?

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1 A. I don't think we talked about it in great detail, to be
 2 honest with you.
 3 Q. So is it fair to say there wasn't a groundswell of
 4 concern?
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. Could I move away and deal with a separate topic, and
 7 that's really Mark Anderson's workload.
 8 If I could go to {RBK00045642}, and it's an email
 9 exchange between you and Celia Caliskan on 17 July 2012.
 10 If I could ask us to go to page 7 in this chain
 11 {RBK00045642/7}, you will see that it was initiated by
 12 a letter from the Grenfell Tower Leaseholders'
 13 Association written to Mr Paul Dunkerton of the TMO, and
 14 it concerned the appointment of Studio E.
 15 Now, do you recall this email?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. We can see that the letter complained about a number of
 18 matters about lack of communication from the TMO in
 19 relation to the appointment of Studio E.
 20 Mark Anderson responded to the email on 17 July 2012
 21 at 10.12, and that can be found at the bottom of page 5
 22 {RBK00045642/5}. We see that there. Jane Tretheway,
 23 who reported to you, is copied in.
 24 Now, if we can go up to the bottom of page 2 of this
 25 chain now {RBK00045642/2}, we see that Jane Tretheway

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1 emailed you and Celia Caliskan expressing
 2 dissatisfaction with the lines of communication with the
 3 Grenfell residents.
 4 She concluded, over the page at page 3
 5 {RBK00045642/3}, and in the final paragraph of this
 6 email, with these words:
 7 "All of this rather adds to the impression of Mark
 8 being overloaded, and perhaps promising things that the
 9 TMO are not currently structured to deliver."
 10 My first question is this: did you think at the time
 11 that Mark Anderson was overloaded with work?
 12 A. I didn't specifically have that as a concern.
 13 Q. Did you have it as a general concern?
 14 A. No. I didn't deal with Mark Anderson a lot. Jane dealt
 15 with him more.
 16 Q. Did you have many conversations about this issue with
 17 Jane?
 18 A. There was frustration on behalf of Jane in relation to
 19 comms, and not responding to leaseholders. She was
 20 concerned about the impact on the relationship with the
 21 leaseholders, and with communications more general with
 22 residents at that point in time.
 23 Mark Anderson also wasn't responsive to Jane or
 24 myself.
 25 Q. Dealing with her concerns about the communications with

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1 residents, in particular leaseholders, did those
 2 concerns persist throughout Mark Anderson's time at the
 3 TMO?
 4 A. I think Jane did push for some improvement. During that
 5 time we met with Yvonne Birch, and I can't remember who
 6 else from the TMO, but we looked at setting out
 7 a protocol for communications on major works. So that
 8 was one of the ways that we managed that situation.
 9 Q. Was that protocol enacted?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. In relation to Mr Anderson's lack of responsiveness to
 12 you, did you press him on the need for responsiveness
 13 and did he mend his ways thereafter?
 14 A. Jane very much pressed him in relation to her work
 15 areas. As I said, I didn't have that much to do with
 16 him. It appeared to us that his preference was to
 17 liaise with Laura Johnson primarily and not ourselves.
 18 We did make some inroads, there was some improved
 19 communications with leaseholders. They particularly
 20 wanted to know if they would be recharged for
 21 improvement works, and we did get clarity on that
 22 matter, but Jane very much had to push for that.
 23 Q. Was there a consensus to the best of your knowledge at
 24 RBKC that the TMO was not structured to deliver projects
 25 such as Grenfell?

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1 A. I think at the time that I became involved with the TMO,
 2 the capital programme had transferred over a number of
 3 years before. When I first got involved with them there
 4 were a number of interim heads of assets, so there
 5 wasn't any permanency, and Mark Anderson was an interim
 6 as well. So I felt there was a lack of structure.
 7 Robert Black certainly recognised that when he came
 8 in, and Laura certainly worked more closely with the
 9 TMO, and that's when they started to restructure and
 10 went out for Peter Maddison's post. Then I saw a clear
 11 improvement in the structure of that part of the
 12 organisation.
 13 Q. Did that improvement continue until the time of the
 14 fire?
 15 A. I think sometimes there was issues with one of the posts
 16 that used to report to Peter Maddison. It was kind of
 17 a strategic manager post. We did recruit a couple of
 18 times to that post and we had difficulty keeping people
 19 in post on a permanent basis.
 20 Q. Sorry to cut across, can you remember why you had those
 21 difficulties?
 22 A. I think possibly people thought that the TMO would be
 23 doing wide-scale regeneration and that wasn't the case.
 24 Q. Now, can we go back to this email chain and go back to
 25 page 2 {RBK00045642/2}. Celia emails you at 1.10 pm,

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1 just below the halfway point of that page, and says
 2 this:
 3 "I think we need to be having a word with Yvonne and
 4 Sacha [Yvonne Birch and Sacha Jevans, presumably] on
 5 this as there needs to be the joint working between the
 6 teams. How shall we handle? Shall I draft something to
 7 them both?"
 8 Were the teams working effectively before this
 9 issues was raised, do you think?
 10 A. This exposed the issue.
 11 Q. Did you want to see more joint working? Did you think
 12 there was a need for more joint working between the TMO
 13 and the RBKC teams?
 14 A. I think as they started to undertake major projects such
 15 as Grenfell, or some of the smaller development projects
 16 such as Hidden Homes, we needed to work more closely
 17 with them as the landlord.
 18 Q. Can we now go to the top of page 2, and it's your
 19 response at 1.18. You say:
 20 "I have been thinking — do you think the mma covers
 21 us enough for these types of projects?"
 22 If we go to the first page of this chain
 23 {RBK00045642/1}, you email again at 1.40, and you say
 24 this in the second paragraph:
 25 "Let's still look at the mma and set up the

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1 [meeting] with Yvonne to take forward the resident
 2 engagement issues in general — as we were intending to.
 3 We'll chat tomorrow."
 4 Celia responds almost immediately at 1.41,
 5 immediately above that:
 6 "Ok. The MMA just wasn't designed for this sort of
 7 thing. When we start looking at the new arrangements
 8 then we'll need to do quite a bit of work about getting
 9 the new agreement right."
 10 Did you agree with that opinion?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. Are there any other reasons that you can give to the
 13 panel above those you've already given as to why you
 14 held that view?
 15 A. It might not have been the MMA in retrospect, it might
 16 have been the schedules which set out the operational
 17 procedures. So we didn't have one around resident
 18 engagement side in terms of comms on major works, and
 19 also we didn't have — whilst we delegated all the
 20 capital programme management to the TMO, we didn't have
 21 a specific reporting mechanism in the schedules. So
 22 I think it was a mixture of the schedules needed to be
 23 updated as well as looking at the MMA itself.
 24 Q. And those are the principal deficiencies that you
 25 considered at the time?

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1 A. At the time, yes. I also think a deficiency was that we
 2 didn't update it after the 2005 legislation on
 3 fire safety.
 4 Q. Now, if we can go to the very top of this page, it's
 5 an email from you sent at 1.42, and you say:
 6 "That's what I've been thinking — you would have a
 7 much more specific contract — after the EPG matter we
 8 need to be careful."
 9 Does EPG refer to Elm Park Gardens?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. And very briefly, can you give the panel the gist of the
 12 matter and the concerns that motivated that email?
 13 A. There were major works carried out over a number of
 14 years, the works were quite protracted. Legislation
 15 changed during the time of the works, and as the works
 16 were done, we uncovered more issues with the building.
 17 That led to us having concerns around the recharges to
 18 leaseholders, and we had to sign off — write off about
 19 £1.2 million.
 20 Q. Now, we're still on 17 July 2012, but I'd like you to
 21 look at a separate document, and it's another email to
 22 Jane Tretheway. It can be found at {RBK00045643/1}. We
 23 see the email at the top there. You say, third
 24 paragraph:
 25 "I have also spoken to Celia and we do not think the

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1 MMA covers this type of project sufficiently.
 2 "Given the ongoing concerns should we start to treat
 3 them as we would an external contractor in relation to
 4 any major capital programme where we are providing the
 5 funding — perhaps this will give us more checks and
 6 balances — given the pending writing off of £1.9m of
 7 leaseholder payments in relation to EPG — we and the TMO
 8 cannot allow for anything like this to go wrong again in
 9 the future. EPG will be fresh in our Councillors' minds
 10 for a long, long time. A helpful context for our
 11 discussions with the TMO on how things can be improved."
 12 Now, when you talked about treating the TMO as
 13 an external contractor, what additional checks and
 14 balances did you have in mind beyond those you
 15 identified in the answer earlier?
 16 A. Formal reporting in to the council on major projects.
 17 Q. Can you help us now as to how and perhaps why RBKC was
 18 treating the TMO differently to an external contractor?
 19 A. Because we'd never commissioned those types of works
 20 from them before. The capital programme team went over,
 21 it had been part of the council. At that point in time
 22 we should have reviewed the MMA and looked at what the
 23 schedules said.
 24 Q. Can you help the panel, did you put in place any
 25 additional checks and balances to address the

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1 deficiencies you'd identified?
 2 A. Well, here it was concern around communication with
 3 leaseholders and that had been an issue with
 4 Elm Park Gardens, so we put in place the resident
 5 engagement protocol. The resident engagement continued
 6 to be delegated to the TMO, but we monitored that and
 7 were kept aware of that.
 8 In terms of the major works, we developed a protocol
 9 which focused on exception reporting on major works, and
 10 we also set up monthly asset management meetings with
 11 the TMO. So we worked much more closely with them on
 12 the capital programme and highlight reports for all the
 13 major projects.
 14 Q. Thank you.
 15 How did you monitor performance of the protocol in
 16 relation to resident engagement?
 17 A. We'd do it through the asset management meetings. There
 18 was a communications part in the highlight report. But
 19 also we were in close conversation with the TMO all of
 20 the time, so we knew about how they were communicating
 21 with the residents.
 22 Q. Is it right that the revised MMA which came into force
 23 in 2015 made no changes to the oversight of major
 24 projects beyond those you have identified?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Can you help us why, given the background of concerns
 2 you had had going back to 2011 or thereabouts?
 3 A. I thought the two protocols set things out clearly.
 4 They weren't huge documents, they needed to be simple.
 5 The highlight reports seemed to be working. We could
 6 have put more in there, I would acknowledge that.
 7 Q. What would that more be, can you help the panel?
 8 A. Possibly — I mean, there was quite a lengthy schedule
 9 in there around delegating major works to them and
 10 procurement, but it would have been good to have
 11 a technical review of the document.
 12 Q. Can I now turn to perhaps the next topic, which is
 13 linked, and that's monitoring the TMO performance.
 14 The first aspect of this is the annual performance
 15 reports and agreement.
 16 If I could ask us to go to paragraph 38 of your
 17 first witness statement, {RBK00033719/7}. You say, in
 18 paragraph 38, this:
 19 "Turning to the ways we sought to implement the MMA,
 20 the key document was an Annual Performance Agreement
 21 which we drew up every year with the TMO."
 22 First of all, what was your role in drafting the
 23 mid-year and annual performance review?
 24 A. Celia Caliskan drafted that document, I would review it.
 25 Q. How deep was your review before the drafts were put

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1 before the housing and property scrutiny committee?
 2 A. I'd see several drafts.
 3 Q. What steps did you take to ensure that the information
 4 provided by the TMO to you was accurate?
 5 A. A lot of the information was known to me already through
 6 my working arrangements with them. We were in contact
 7 with them on a regular basis. We had regular meetings
 8 with them. I would review it and if there was something
 9 that wasn't familiar to me then I would ask about it.
 10 But we did meet with them an awful lot on a lot of
 11 subject matters.
 12 Q. To what extent was RBKC's health and safety adviser
 13 involved in the setting and monitoring of KPIs which
 14 involved health and safety?
 15 A. The high-level KPI we had for health and safety was the
 16 gas tests. That wouldn't have sat with health and
 17 safety, that would have sat with contract management in
 18 the property side of the business. Any other KPIs were
 19 dealt with internally by the TMO.
 20 Q. Did RBKC's health and safety adviser ever suggest that
 21 fire safety generally or any element of fire safety
 22 management should be the subject of a KPI?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. Did you ever suggest that fire safety generally or any
 25 element of fire safety management should be the subject

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1 of a KPI?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. Can you explain why fire safety was never the subject of
 4 a KPI?
 5 A. I think it wasn't just fire safety, I think there were
 6 a number of compliance indicators which should have been
 7 subject to a KPI. A lot of the KPIs we reported through
 8 the performance agreement were quite high level. We
 9 would review them on an annual basis with the
 10 performance manager in the TMO. We would look at what
 11 HouseMark, the benchmarking club, was putting forward.
 12 At that time the industry wasn't collecting compliance
 13 KPIs widely, so we would compare what we were
 14 collecting.
 15 Q. You said fire safety ought to have been the subject of
 16 a KPI. Are there any other matters relevant to health
 17 and safety which now you think ought to have been
 18 subject of a KPI before the fire?
 19 A. Asbestos management, Legionella.
 20 Q. Was there any discussion as to whether specific elements
 21 such as closing down significant actions arising out of
 22 fire risk assessments ought to be the subject of a KPI?
 23 A. No, there wasn't, but that should be another KPI going
 24 forward.
 25 Q. Were you aware of the long-running concerns regarding

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1 the closing out of significant actions arising out of
 2 FRAs?
 3 A. No, I wasn't.
 4 Q. Can you help us, what process was followed in broad
 5 terms by which a KPI was identified and then set?
 6 A. Well, initially you would have KPIs set by central
 7 government. You had best value KPIs, several years ago,
 8 you would then have corporate KPIs which would have
 9 oversight. So we would liaise between the corporate
 10 centre and the TMO and agree those KPIs.
 11 After the Cameron government came in, a lot of that
 12 was rolled back in terms of performance management, so
 13 it slimmed down substantially. Going forward, we would
 14 look at benchmarking and we would liaise with the
 15 performance manager, who was very knowledgeable in the
 16 area.
 17 Q. What evidence would RBKC use to decide whether a KPI had
 18 been met and, if so, to what extent?
 19 A. We received a dashboard, targets were set, and the
 20 achievements were set out on that dashboard. The
 21 direction of travel was set out. There would be
 22 commentary, if there were key issues. At our meetings
 23 with the TMO we would review the documentation. In the
 24 past there had been audits with KPIs, that was another
 25 requirement that stopped when there was a change in

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1 government.
 2 Q. Who actually decided whether a KPI had been met or not?
 3 A. The TMO used their reporting system, so ultimately we
 4 relied on their information. In the past we did do the
 5 data audits where we could have tested that data more.
 6 Q. So RBKC's health and safety adviser wouldn't be involved
 7 at all in the process of determining whether a KPI had
 8 been met or not?
 9 A. He would have liaised directly with Janice. The main
 10 one we were collecting was on gas safety, and I was also
 11 copied in to emails from Robert Black to Laura Johnson
 12 where he was commenting on the achievement under that
 13 KPI.
 14 Q. What was the extent of your involvement, if any, in the
 15 process which considered the evidence regarding
 16 compliance?
 17 A. There was just that one gas one, and again that would be
 18 reviewed under the dashboard arrangement.
 19 Q. Would it be fair to say that Laura Johnson was
 20 ultimately responsible for approving the annual review?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Now, can we turn to one of the annual performance
 23 reviews and it's for the year 2013/14, and that can be
 24 found at {RBK00032466}.

25 If we go to the bottom of page 3 {RBK00032466/3}, we

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1 see Laura Johnson's name in the centre at the bottom of
2 that.
3 Would it have been Celia Caliskan who would have
4 drafted the report though?
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. If we could go to page 15 {RBK00032466/15}, section 3.9,
7 and the bottom right-hand box, it states at the end of
8 the second line:
9 "The programme of communal area Fire Risk
10 Assessments (FRAs) and their reviews continue. Further
11 significant progress has been made to address the
12 recommendations made by these FRAs."
13 Now, can you help here, what was meant by
14 significant progress?
15 A. There would be a range of different actions that came
16 out of the FRAs. Some of them would be quite
17 straightforward, like removal of rubbish; others may be
18 more in-depth, such as if any of the ventilation system
19 needed works or anything like that. That is a TMO
20 report back.
21 Q. Now, the phrase "further significant progress" there may
22 be read as implying that there had been a pre-existing
23 problem regarding recommendations made by these FRAs.
24 Would that be a fair reading of that last sentence at
25 the bottom of page 15?

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1 A. My understanding is that around 2009/2010 there had been
2 concerns raised around the FRA process, and the TMO were
3 asked to commission an independent adviser, a fire risk
4 assessor, and my team were involved in the procurement
5 of that person. So all the fire risk assessments were
6 redone and we agreed a priority with the LFB.
7 In reality, the fire risk assessments are an ongoing
8 document. As soon as you've finished reviewing them you
9 need to start to review them again because things
10 changed on the ground. So I'm assuming there that
11 that's what that relates to.
12 Q. Even though it's 2013/14 and the problems had been
13 identified some two or three years before then?
14 A. Yes, but also, you know, if it was a brand new programme
15 of fire risk assessments, it would take a substantial
16 amount of time to do all of those fire risk assessments.
17 Q. And would that be a reason why you weren't unduly
18 concerned at this stage that there were clearly
19 continuing issues regarding FRAs?
20 A. That was my understanding, yes.
21 Q. What information was available to RBKC to enable it to
22 make the statement that significant progress had been
23 made?
24 A. The health and safety report was annual to the corporate
25 health and safety committee. Celia may have reviewed

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1 that.
2 Q. Again, the information would have come from the TMO,
3 would it?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. Can you help us with the detail of RBKC's oversight of
6 the progress with FRA recommendations, was it something,
7 for example, that was a regular and consistent topic of
8 consideration within the housing commissioning team?
9 A. No, it wasn't. Once we'd established the
10 re-commissioning of those FRAs, we felt that it was
11 embedded in the organisation, and that they were on top
12 of things there, so we didn't — it wasn't a concern at
13 that time, no.
14 Q. Did it become a concern at any time before the fire?
15 A. No.
16 Q. To put it even more starkly, is your evidence that at no
17 time before the fire did Celia Caliskan raise with you
18 any concerns about progress in implementing FRA actions?
19 A. Not — no.
20 Q. Could we now go to the 2014/2015 annual review, which
21 can be found at {RBK00003649/13}.
22 We have paragraph 3.7.1, and that referred to the
23 introduction of a health and safety plan in the opening
24 sentence of the right-hand column, which had been
25 introduced to "facilitate monitoring of compliance with

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1 legislation and good practice by the KCTMO [Health and
2 Safety] Committee".
3 Now, does that mean that the health and safety plan
4 provided the framework under which RBKC monitored the
5 TMO's health and safety committee, or did it refer to
6 the TMO's health and safety committee monitoring the
7 TMO's compliance with its health and safety obligations?
8 A. It's the TMO monitoring its own compliance.
9 Q. Did the TMO health and safety committee report to you
10 their findings regarding compliance and best practice?
11 A. No, there was one annual report to corporate health and
12 safety.
13 Q. Now, can we look at the third bullet point in that
14 right-hand column, and it says in relation to the four
15 areas relating to fire safety described as areas where
16 progress had been noted.
17 Now, did you accept that statement at face value and
18 without challenge?
19 A. Could you ask me that again, please?
20 Q. Yes, of course. See the third bullet point, it says:
21 "The closer scrutiny of fire safety issues on the
22 estates ..."
23 A. Yes.
24 Q. Did you accept that statement at face value and without
25 challenge?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 MR KINNIER: Now, can we now go to the 2015/2016 TMO
 3 performance agreement, and that can be found at —
 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I'm just wondering, Mr Kinnier,
 5 whether we're reaching a convenient point.
 6 MR KINNIER: I was going to push my luck for five more
 7 minutes, sir, but I don't want to be pushing my luck
 8 dangerously.
 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, no, that's quite all right,
 10 but you know whether we're going to a new document, a
 11 new topic or what.
 12 MR KINNIER: We're going to a new document and we can break
 13 here. It'll be as convenient a place as any.
 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: You're sure?
 15 MR KINNIER: I'm sure.
 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right.
 17 Ms Johnson, we have a break during each session, and
 18 I think this would be a good time to take it, so we'll
 19 stop now.
 20 We'll resume at 3.35, please. I'm going to ask you,
 21 as I've asked everybody else, please don't talk about
 22 your evidence or anything to do with it while you're out
 23 of the room.
 24 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right? Thank you very much.

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1 Would you like to go with the usher.
 2 (Pause)
 3 All right, 3.35, then, please.
 4 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.
 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Thank you.
 6 (3.21 pm)
 7 (A short break)
 8 (3.35 pm)
 9 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right, Ms Johnson, are you ready
 10 to carry on?
 11 THE WITNESS: Yes, I am.
 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes, good. Thank you.
 13 Yes, Mr Kinnier.
 14 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.
 15 Ms Johnson, could we go to the 2015/16 TMO
 16 performance agreement, which can be found
 17 {RBK00000589/29}.
 18 If that could be expanded, if possible, we have
 19 paragraph 3.6, and in the right-hand column, third
 20 bullet point, it says:
 21 "The programme of Fire Risk Assessments & reviews to
 22 continue and more work to ensure actions and
 23 recommendations from these are consistently completed in
 24 a timely manner."
 25 Would that text have been drafted by Celia Caliskan?

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1 A. In conjunction with Janice Wray.
 2 Q. Did you read this report in draft?
 3 A. I would have.
 4 Q. Would that third bullet point flag to you, or did it
 5 flag to you at the time, that there were issues
 6 regarding the timely completion of actions and
 7 recommendations arising out of FRAs?
 8 A. I wasn't aware of that, no.
 9 Q. So would you have read each page of it and the detail of
 10 the report or would you have skim—read the report?
 11 A. No, I would have read it in detail.
 12 Q. But that particular bullet point didn't strike you as
 13 important at the time?
 14 A. I knew it was an ongoing programme.
 15 Q. Were you provided with any information about what was
 16 being done about actions that were necessary to deal
 17 with works arising from FRAs?
 18 A. I can't recall any information. I knew there was a fire
 19 risk assessment done during the works on Grenfell Tower.
 20 I knew there was an ongoing programme.
 21 Q. Given that the purpose of a risk assessment is to
 22 identify, eliminate or at least mitigate risk, can you
 23 explain why this particular point didn't strike you as
 24 important at the time?
 25 A. Because it was part of an ongoing programme of works

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1 which would be a rolling programme. We should have
 2 given compliance more scrutiny than we did.
 3 Q. If you had scrutinised the subject matter of this third
 4 bullet point in more detail, what action would you have
 5 taken or asked Celia Caliskan to take?
 6 A. To do a data audit.
 7 Q. Essentially to look at the log of outstanding repairs,
 8 for example?
 9 A. Or to liaise with Richard Buckley, who was the corporate
 10 health and safety manager, and get his view on things.
 11 I remember I did speak to him on a number of occasions
 12 around health and safety and fire safety and I know he
 13 was always happy with Janice's work. I do recall
 14 speaking to him.
 15 Q. And you never had cause to discuss FRAs and actions
 16 arising with him?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. Can we turn to a separate but linked topic, and that's
 19 scrutiny beyond KPIs.
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. What was the extent to which the TMO was obliged to
 22 provide information to RBKC beyond the KPIs?
 23 A. There was the performance agreement which was
 24 qualitative information. There would be financial
 25 performance information that would be provided by the

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1 TMO to the housing finance team. There were the
 2 highlight reports from the asset management meeting.
 3 I met with the TMO and corporate property on a regular
 4 basis to review the commercial portfolio of HRA
 5 properties, and there were KPIs there that were separate
 6 to being discussed through the performance agreement.
 7 Q. Now, if we can look at this in slightly more detail, if
 8 we can go to paragraphs 51 through to 53 of your first
 9 witness statement, which is at {RBK00033719/9}.

10 You say there the council would receive
 11 information — I'm talking about information here — in
 12 scheduled bi-monthly called the housing revenue account
 13 meetings or HRA meetings, and you say the purpose was to
 14 manage and review performance.

15 You say in these meetings that you only scrutinised
 16 those high-level KPIs which the council had agreed to
 17 collect as part of the annual performance agreement.
 18 Does that remain your evidence?

19 A. Yes. What I haven't put in that statement is that there
 20 was a standard agenda where there was a number of items
 21 that we would cover, such as complaints, resident
 22 issues, health and safety was on there. So there was
 23 also qualitative minutes taken of those meetings and the
 24 actions would be monitored.

25 Q. Now, in the opening sentence of paragraph 53, which is

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1 over the page at page 10 {RBK00033719/10}, you say that
 2 the HRA meetings had, as you have just said, a standard
 3 agenda, and that did include health and safety.

4 Now, we know that there was no KPI set by RBKC in
 5 relation to health and safety, so why was it then
 6 a standing item on the agenda?

7 A. Because we wanted to be made aware of any issues.

8 Q. And in that regard, can we take it that FRA action
 9 points were not a significant feature?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Was any element of fire safety a feature in those
 12 meetings to the best of your recollection?

13 A. I remember we got updates following the Adair and
 14 Hazlewood fire, there was updates through the HRA
 15 meeting there.

16 Q. Were you aware of the deficiency notice that was served
 17 and later the enforcement notice that was served in
 18 relation to Adair Tower in —

19 A. Yes. Yes, I was, and those would be reported in the
 20 performance agreement as well.

21 Q. Did the fact and content of those notices prompt you to
 22 initiate any further enquiries or investigations into
 23 how effectively the TMO was managing fire safety, at
 24 least in relation to Adair?

25 A. We met with them following the Adair fire and had

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1 a review, and that was when the issue of the
 2 door—closers came up. I met with Janice Wray and other
 3 staff from the TMO, I can't recall who, and some of our
 4 own council staff to review our response in terms of the
 5 escalation process, and it was agreed that we would
 6 review our escalation.

7 From that, I spoke to our emergency planning manager
 8 about what would happen in terms of decanting, because
 9 whilst the TMO oversaw the response, they were RBKC
 10 tenants, so our residents, and we initiated an emergency
 11 scenario exercise plan. I wasn't involved in that, but
 12 I asked for it to be completed, and that focused on one
 13 of our supported housing schemes that was managed by
 14 a third-party contract and the TMO, and that operational
 15 exercise did take place.

16 They kept us updated in terms of the deficiency
 17 notice, I remember receiving regular updates, and
 18 I remember Councillor Feilding—Mellen also wanting
 19 regular updates, which I helped with. So I was
 20 constantly being updated by the TMO after that fire.

21 Q. Can you remember now what the particular issue was in
 22 relation to door—closers at Adair?

23 A. They wanted us to install the door—closers where they
 24 were missing.

25 Q. And what was Janice Wray's report to you on that

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1 particular topic?

2 A. Janice Wray I don't think did do a report, I believe
 3 that Barbara Matthews did a report and took it to the
 4 joint management meeting with ourselves and the TMO.
 5 There was also another separate meeting where I recall
 6 we looked at the budget, because we would have to
 7 increase the budget, so we met with Laura, Barbara,
 8 Steve Mellor from finance, and we agreed to increase the
 9 budget.

10 Q. Did you have any discussion with Janice Wray regarding
 11 the topic of door—closers at Adair?

12 A. No, no, it was all done through those formal meetings.

13 Q. You mentioned there an exercise in relation to supported
 14 housing. Was there any discussion of personal emergency
 15 evacuation plans arising from that exercise that you can
 16 remember?

17 A. I wasn't involved in the exercise. I could make the
 18 assumption that there would be because Burgess Field was
 19 a supported housing scheme known as an extra care
 20 scheme, so you would expect to have PEEPs in place for
 21 all the tenants there.

22 Q. But you —

23 A. But I wasn't involved in that particular exercise. You
 24 know, I would be very disappointed if they weren't
 25 there.

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1 Q. Okay.
 2 Could I now turn to a separate document,
 3 {TMO00849347} and it's the minutes of an HRA meeting on
 4 29 April 2013.
 5 Now, you did not attend, but a number of
 6 representatives of RBKC did, and if we can go to page 4
 7 {TMO00849347/4}, paragraph 9.1 in particular, you will
 8 see there, under "H&S", health and safety, "Nothing to
 9 report".
 10 If the TMO had nothing to report in relation to
 11 health and safety, did RBKC have any arrangements for
 12 scrutinising the accuracy of that report?
 13 A. Not sufficiently so, no.
 14 Q. You say "Not sufficient"; in what respects were the
 15 arrangements lacking?
 16 A. I think Janice Wray should have been invited to this
 17 meeting.
 18 Q. Would you have asked, for example, the RBKC health and
 19 safety adviser to attend these meetings to press TMO on
 20 the accuracy and detail of the information they were
 21 giving to you?
 22 A. With hindsight, we should have had a specific meeting
 23 between the corporate safety manager and Janice.
 24 Q. Now, if I could go back to your first statement and
 25 paragraph 64, and that can be found at {RBK00033719/12}.

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1 It's the fourth line which says:
 2 "The Council did not have access to the [Keystone]
 3 database."
 4 You go on in the next paragraph to say this:
 5 "I found this was a bit cumbersome at times, because
 6 it meant that the Council was reliant on the TMO for
 7 information about its own housing stock. The
 8 information included data on the layout and
 9 characteristics of properties, which was used to
 10 identify buildings in need of refurbishment or
 11 regeneration and so on. However at the same time it was
 12 a question of who had the technical expertise to
 13 interrogate or interpret that information. Those
 14 technical functions had been delegated to the TMO's
 15 Asset Management Team, so they had staff (or at least,
 16 access to specialists) who could carry out those
 17 functions."
 18 Why was RBKC unwilling or unable to arrange for you
 19 to have access to the Keystone database?
 20 A. We'd started — they gave us demonstrations to the
 21 Keystone database, and we were — the regeneration team
 22 were starting to talk to the TMO about getting access,
 23 so it wasn't ever off the table, so as to speak. What
 24 was happening at that time was there were increasing
 25 requests coming from the regeneration team for stock

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1 condition data, so it just seemed cumbersome that we had
 2 to go to the TMO for everything and it would have been
 3 preferable to access that ourselves. But we would have
 4 needed someone with the skillset in the regeneration
 5 team.
 6 Q. Did the TMO ever refuse you access to that database?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. Did it ever concern you that — it flows from the answer
 9 you have just now given — RBKC was reliant on the TMO
 10 for all this information?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. Were those concerns that you voiced before the fire, and
 13 if so when and to whom?
 14 A. There was a general discussion. Myself and Laura met
 15 with Peter Maddison and Sacha Jevans about access to
 16 information that the regeneration team were requesting.
 17 We asked if there was a resource issue and we were told
 18 no. Again, I think it was just cumbersome that we had
 19 to go to them for data on our own stock.
 20 Q. Did you sense any resistance from Sacha Jevans or
 21 Peter Maddison to giving you access to Keystone?
 22 A. Not at all.
 23 Q. Can you explain for the panel what the consequence was
 24 for you of complete reliance on the TMO for the
 25 information, for the exercise of your scrutiny

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1 functions?
 2 A. Well, all the functionality for housing management was
 3 delegated to them. They delivered the service, so they
 4 reported on the service, and we had to have a level of
 5 trust with them, with any contractor. It's the same
 6 with any contract that you commission. You have
 7 a specification for the service, a contract, an MMA,
 8 performance management information. We've got methods
 9 of self-assessment by providers. There has to be
 10 a certain amount of trust about what they're telling
 11 you.
 12 I think some of the things that we used to do, like
 13 the data audits, would be good in retrospect. I think
 14 we should have had someone with more technical
 15 experience in the team around specifically compliance
 16 and building management.
 17 And I was going to say something else.
 18 (Pause)
 19 There was another thing ...
 20 Q. Don't worry, it may come back to you.
 21 A. That's annoying.
 22 Q. Health and safety?
 23 A. Oh, the Audit Commission was disbanded by Government.
 24 Q. In your view, what gap did the Audit Commission leave in
 25 the arrangements for your monitoring of the TMO?

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1 A. They'd done a review of the TMO I think about — I can't
 2 remember, 2006.
 3 Q. I think that's right.
 4 A. Yes, and it was just helpful to have that kind of
 5 inspection regime. I had gone through
 6 an Audit Commission inspection and it was really robust
 7 and tough, and you really had to demonstrate what you
 8 were delivering in terms of your service, and I just
 9 think that was a very helpful concept, and I think
 10 especially in an area like housing management, where
 11 compliance is so important, I think, you know, more
 12 regulation would help.
 13 Q. Would the Audit Commission look at the effectiveness of
 14 resident engagement?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Would it look at discharge of health and safety
 17 responsibilities?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And as part of that, would it have looked at discharge
 20 of fire risk assessment and fire safety
 21 responsibilities?
 22 A. It would have, yes.
 23 Q. Can you help me as to why RBKC didn't put in place
 24 arrangements which replicated the Audit Commission's
 25 functions?

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1 A. I think at the time a lot of the performance management
 2 functions in local government were scaled back.
 3 Q. Did you ever suggest replicating or reflecting the
 4 Audit Commission's arrangements as a mechanism for
 5 keeping check on the TMO when you were wholly reliant
 6 and taking on trust all the information from them in
 7 discharging your scrutiny function?
 8 A. No, I didn't.
 9 Q. Did anyone suggest that?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Now, can we turn to the RBKC corporate health and safety
 12 management committee, and can we go to paragraph 43 in
 13 this statement, which is at page 8 {RBK00033719/8}, so
 14 just back four pages.
 15 Paragraph 43 says this:
 16 "The TMO also reported to the RBKC Corporate H&S
 17 Manager with copies of H&S Committee minutes and an Exec
 18 Summary of their Annual H&S Report for inclusion in his
 19 annual report to Committee. The TMO Health and Safety
 20 Manager also attended corporate health and safety
 21 meetings."
 22 Were you sent copies of the reports?
 23 A. They would be on our website.
 24 Q. Did you ever read them?
 25 A. I recall reading them, yes.

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1 Q. Would you do that routinely?
 2 A. If I — if they were sent to me or I went on to the
 3 website and found them, yes. I would never not read
 4 anything that was sent me.
 5 Q. Did the reports form part of the process of identifying
 6 KPIs for the annual performance agreement purposes?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. Can you explain why not? Was it just custom and
 9 practice that they weren't?
 10 A. It was custom and practice. Again, we would look at
 11 what was being collected in the sector, we would look at
 12 what the priorities were for the TMO and for
 13 the council, we'd look at where there was areas for
 14 improvement. So it would be a range of activities.
 15 Q. Now, we don't need to go to it unless you would like to,
 16 but Janice Wray in her first witness statement — and
 17 it's at paragraph 183 {TMO00000890/41} — said this:
 18 "The health and safety performance of the TMO was
 19 monitored primarily by the RBKC. We welcomed this
 20 scrutiny and were always looking to improve health and
 21 safety for the sake of the residents and staff."
 22 Was health and safety performance of the TMO
 23 primarily monitored by RBKC?
 24 A. Through this mechanism, yes.
 25 Q. Janice Wray says at paragraph 164 of that first

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1 statement {TMO00000890/37} that monitoring was carried
 2 out by the RBKC corporate health and safety advisers; is
 3 that right?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. That was Gary Mann until 2015, and then his successor,
 6 Somayya Yaqub, thereafter; is that right?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. What was the role of the housing department in
 9 monitoring health and safety as it was applied in the
 10 TMO's housing stock?
 11 A. We ... the annual review we would look at health and
 12 safety key issues that we were looking at. We
 13 collected — they collected for us the KPI on access to
 14 do gas checks, and health and safety was a regular
 15 meeting. I also had — you know, I would also go to
 16 Janice Wray on a day-to-day basis if things came across
 17 my desk. I was also involved on the ground with
 18 residents when they raised concerns. We had the
 19 Good Fairy plot concerns raised by residents at
 20 Portobello — at Longlands Road. I was involved in
 21 discussions around access to Frinstead House, which is
 22 one of our tower blocks on the Silchester Estate. So
 23 I would get involved operationally if residents came
 24 with particular concerns.
 25 Q. In your view, was there a potential gap between the

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1 scrutiny exercised by your department on the one side
 2 and the joint corporate health and safety committee on
 3 the other?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. How was the risk of a gap or information falling between
 6 the two entities mitigated or eliminated?
 7 A. I don't think it was mitigated. I also think that
 8 environmental health became a bi-borough service and
 9 I think that that made that more of a possibility.
 10 Q. Can you recall any specific health and
 11 safety/fire safety issues that were missed because it
 12 fell between the housing department and the joint
 13 corporate health and safety committee?
 14 A. Not that I can recall.
 15 Q. Can we now turn to the asset management protocol.
 16 If we can go to paragraph 86 in your first
 17 statement, which is at page 17 {RBK00033719/17}, you say
 18 this:
 19 "As the TMO began to work more actively on Hidden
 20 Homes and the nature of its capital spending was
 21 changing, I still felt we needed more oversight of
 22 projects once the build was underway on site (as opposed
 23 to when it was at the capital planning stage as
 24 described above). I tasked Celia to look at the MMA
 25 about reporting to the Council on capital works. There

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1 wasn't any particular process prescribed by the MMA, so
 2 we began to develop a protocol to use instead."
 3 First of all, what led you to develop a protocol?
 4 A. Because we looked at the MMA and there was nothing in
 5 there about reporting to the council on key capital
 6 projects.
 7 Q. Was that a result of the email correspondence you had
 8 had with Jane Tretheway in July 2012?
 9 A. It was one of the results, yes.
 10 Q. Now, could we look at {RBK00045677/3}.
 11 Now, the email chain, if we just go up to page 2
 12 {RBK00045677/2}, starts with an email dated
 13 3 September 2012 from Mark Anderson to Keith Mott, and
 14 it copied in Laura Johnson and others.
 15 Jane Tretheway, if we go further up, then responds
 16 to you and Laura Johnson on 4 September, that's just up
 17 this page, "AJ/LJ", expressing her dissatisfaction with
 18 Mr Anderson's response. The email says this:
 19 "Regarding the below, I just don't think this is a
 20 good enough answer to the leaseholders' queries.
 21 Essentially, as they made clear in their emails, and
 22 most recently on 5 August: 'We request you to be more
 23 direct to our question. So to say YES it will be an
 24 IMPROVEMENT so therefore there will be NO recharges to
 25 the leaseholders.'

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1 "I feel as though these repeated rebuffs to them,
 2 and a claim not to understand what it is that they are
 3 asking for, risks damaging the relationship between the
 4 TMO and leaseholders, and make the delivery of this
 5 project more difficult. Efforts to get the TMO to
 6 consider a more open approach fell on deaf ears ...
 7 "I understand the TMO has been seeking a final
 8 position before clarifying it to leaseholders, but there
 9 is no reason to avoid clarifying the process and likely
 10 timetable in writing to them. As I am not receiving
 11 updates on Grenfell directly, I am now unsure how or
 12 whether to take this matter further, and would welcome
 13 any views."
 14 If we go on to page 1 of this chain {RBK00045677/1},
 15 on 4 September as well, you respond. Again, I'll read
 16 it out:
 17 "I think we need to develop a formal protocol with
 18 the TMO on how they manage any
 19 development/regeneration/major capital projects — this
 20 would include a specific section in managing
 21 communication. Celia has suggested that the work done
 22 on car parks could form a useful basis for developing
 23 the communication element.
 24 "Once we have this (and we will prioritise this)
 25 then we should develop formal reporting arrangements

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1 with highlight reports that link to the HRA
 2 [meetings]/Regen Board as appropriate. I suggest we
 3 also include terms of reference which set out the
 4 Council's and the TMO's respective roles and
 5 responsibilities. We can then also link any performance
 6 measures into the Capital Business Plan and overall TMO
 7 Performance Plan.
 8 "Whilst this may not resolve all ongoing issues it
 9 will provide us with a formal framework for overseeing
 10 these more complex areas of work that cannot be
 11 effectively picked up under the current MMA. Any
 12 framework once developed can be a variation to the MMA."
 13 Now, presumably this is part of the measures you
 14 were describing earlier to the panel?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Now, can we now look at a separate document, which is
 17 {RBK00046083}. It's another email chain, and at the
 18 bottom of the page it sets out an email from
 19 Celia Caliskan to you and Roger Keane on 30 July 2014,
 20 sent at 10.03.
 21 I should have asked you this earlier: you referred
 22 to a second officer working with Celia; was that
 23 Roger Keane?
 24 A. Yes, it was.
 25 Q. As we've just discussed, we know that you suggested

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1 a protocol in September 2012.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Why had it taken until July 2014 for a draft protocol to
 4 be produced, can you help us?
 5 A. I think that would be about the time, I believe, that
 6 the monitoring came over to my team. We had drafted
 7 a protocol and we had distributed it. I know that there
 8 was some backward — there was some to—ing and fro—ing
 9 with the TMO on the document.
 10 Q. Now, you exhibit a copy of the final protocol to your
 11 witness statement, and you say in your first witness
 12 statement — for reference it's paragraph 87
 13 {RBK00033719/17} — that this was minuted at an asset
 14 management meeting and circulated but you weren't too
 15 sure whether it had been formally adopted. Is that
 16 a fair summary of your view?
 17 A. Yes, but it would be something I would go to if I had
 18 concerns raised with me.
 19 Q. Can we look at {RBK00002368/14}. There we go,
 20 schedule 9, "Asset Management Principles and Processes
 21 for Asset Management Projects and Hidden Homes". That's
 22 one of the embedded documents in the MMA.
 23 Did you know that the process had been incorporated
 24 within the 2015 version of the MMA?
 25 A. I cannot recall. There was a list — there was a long

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1 list of changes we made to the MMA in 2015. Certainly
 2 I would have asked Celia to incorporate it in there.
 3 Q. Now, can we go to the protocol itself, which can be
 4 found at {RBK00050409/2}. You see there section 2,
 5 "Site identification", where it says just above the
 6 header for section 3:
 7 "The Council will assign a lead officer from the
 8 Housing Department and they will be invited to join the
 9 scheme project group and will act as the main interface
 10 between the TMO and the Council on the project."
 11 Was Roger Keane appointed as that officer?
 12 A. Yes, in relation to Grenfell I asked him to attend the
 13 project meetings.
 14 Q. If we turn over the page in this document to page 3
 15 {RBK00050409/3}, you see roughly halfway down the page
 16 the heading "Project monitoring", and the third bullet
 17 point says that the protocol required provision of
 18 regular highlight reports, risk register and providing
 19 information on project as requested.
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. The penultimate bullet point on that page also provides
 22 for:
 23 "Specific exception reports will be required where
 24 there are significant changes i.e. changes to the
 25 specification, budgets, delays or new risks arise."

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1 Can you remember, was that ever done?
 2 A. If that's the Hidden Homes one, yes, it was. Is it
 3 possible to look at the document?
 4 Q. I don't think it is via this link.
 5 A. At one point we had separate reporting for Hidden Homes
 6 and then we combined that with the asset management
 7 meetings and reported there. We also had an Excel —
 8 I think it was an Excel spreadsheet, it might have been
 9 Word, I'm not sure, but we had a highlight report that
 10 we were using for Grenfell that was quite detailed and
 11 picked up on areas of risk, communication, budget,
 12 stages, health and safety, things like that. So I think
 13 initially there was a separate Hidden Homes document and
 14 then we developed the highlight report.
 15 Q. That was developed, and is your evidence that there were
 16 bespoke versions for the Grenfell project?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. If we can go back to your first statement at
 19 paragraph 86 {RBK00033719/17}, you refer there to these
 20 reporting requirements we've just considered. You refer
 21 to them collectively as risk and exception reporting.
 22 Now, did that risk and exception reporting rely on
 23 the TMO itself identifying any matters which were
 24 unusual or problematic?
 25 A. Yes, as the technical experience would sit with them, we

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1 might pick up on any communications issues, residents
 2 would often email Laura, we'd also pick up on the comms
 3 side of things as well. But in terms of the technical
 4 information, we would rely on the TMO to complete that
 5 and send it to us.
 6 Q. So did that risk and exception reporting rely on the TMO
 7 to then choose to report those matters to RBKC?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. Now, if we can stay in your first witness statement but
 10 go forward to paragraph 91 {RBK00033719/18}, you say
 11 there:
 12 "In developing the Protocol, I didn't want to burden
 13 the TMO with multiple reporting obligations when it was
 14 also required to report to its own Board and other
 15 internal structures. To avoid this we initially
 16 suggested that they could pass on their own internal
 17 reports to us, but this never really happened
 18 consistently or systematically."
 19 Who suggested that the TMO could pass on their own
 20 internal reports?
 21 A. I did.
 22 Q. And when?
 23 A. Oh, it was when we first started to talk about the
 24 protocol, because if they were reporting in to their
 25 exec team or their board and the report covered the key

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1 areas that we wanted to know about, they could be copied
 2 to us. In the end that never happened and we developed
 3 a separate template which they completed.
 4 Q. So you first raised the prospect of a protocol in
 5 September 2012, so it would have been the last quarter
 6 of 2012 that this was discussed?
 7 A. I believe so, yes.
 8 Q. What was the TMO's response to this suggestion?
 9 A. There was an exchange of the protocol between Celia and
 10 I think David Burns was there at the time, he raised
 11 concerns around the reporting to be too onerous. At the
 12 end of the day, David Burns left and the TMO completed
 13 those highlight reports for us as requested, and they
 14 were discussed at the monthly asset management meetings.
 15 Q. The consistent and systematic provision of those
 16 internal reports, it would have given RBKC greater
 17 access to a greater range of information, wouldn't it?
 18 A. Potentially.
 19 Q. When reports were not provided consistently or
 20 systematically, did Celia challenge it?
 21 A. Yes, she would.
 22 Q. She would or she did?
 23 A. She did.
 24 Q. And did you challenge it?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And with whom did you challenge it?
 2 A. Specifically it was around the asset management
 3 information, where there had been specific requests for
 4 information from the assets team, and that's when Laura
 5 and myself met with Peter Maddison and Sacha Jevans.
 6 Q. And what was the Maddison/Jevans position in response to
 7 the challenge?
 8 A. Again, they were recruiting, there had been a vacancy,
 9 I think another member of staff was going into the role,
 10 Alex Bosman, and they had enough resources. Again,
 11 I think it was this going to the TMO for information
 12 just complicated things.
 13 Q. Ultimately, did you just drop the proposal?
 14 A. The proposal for?
 15 Q. The request for the provision of this information?
 16 A. Well, we used the highlight report, which I was happy
 17 with.
 18 Q. Can I now turn on to the monitoring of the Grenfell
 19 project itself.
 20 Staying in your first statement, could we go to
 21 paragraph 132 at page 26 {RBK00033719/26}. In broad
 22 terms, you describe there that it became clear that
 23 Grenfell had to be treated as an asset management
 24 project rather than a regeneration project and
 25 responsibility for the project eventually moved to your

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1 team.
 2 Who made the decision that responsibility for the
 3 project should be transferred to housing commissioning?
 4 A. I believe it was Laura Johnson.
 5 Q. Can you remember why that decision was made?
 6 A. Because the regeneration team were focusing on wider
 7 scale refurbishments of estates and building new
 8 housing. This was seen as a major capital project. It
 9 was replacing windows, communal heating systems, that
 10 type of thing. So the regeneration team were going to
 11 focus more on the Silchester Estate, Barlby and
 12 Treverton, there was a small blocks programme, there was
 13 an older persons programme, and as I was monitoring
 14 asset management, I would monitor the capital programme
 15 and I would work with Steve Mellor on the HRA business
 16 plan working with the TMO and what the funding
 17 priorities were, so I think that was probably the
 18 rationale behind that decision.
 19 Q. Do you know why responsibility for monitoring wasn't
 20 decided before such a major programme was started?
 21 A. I think it just kind of evolved. Jane Tretheway had
 22 been involved in those initial discussions.
 23 Jane Tretheway had been involved in considering what to
 24 do with the receipts from Elm Park Gardens. So Jane in
 25 her regeneration role took on the initial responsibility

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1 for the Grenfell Tower, and then Kitty Mortimer, who was
 2 a regen officer, took on the day-to-day development.
 3 I think it was just a change in focus for the team.
 4 Q. Could we stay in your first statement but turn over the
 5 page and look at paragraph 134 {RBK00033719/27}, where
 6 you say:
 7 "Although there were several capital projects
 8 ongoing in the Borough, and there had been other capital
 9 projects with the TMO in the past, Grenfell Tower was
 10 the Council and TMO's first major capital spending
 11 project. Really it was the biggest project carried out
 12 on the Council's housing stock in many years."
 13 Would you agree that the combination of the size of
 14 the project and the TMO's lack of experience called for
 15 particular and close scrutiny of the project by RBKC?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. What were your priorities and the priorities of your
 18 department in exercising oversight over the project?
 19 A. Roger worked very much on an operational level, he
 20 attended the project meetings. As I've said in my
 21 statement, I wanted him to be my eyes and ears. He also
 22 liaised with Laura Johnson, who was the SRO for KALC, so
 23 he looked at the interface between the two sites on
 24 that. The asset management meetings were the main forum
 25 whereby we scrutinised through the highlight reports.

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1 We didn't do things such as site visits, it was mainly
 2 through the highlight reports.
 3 Q. Was your concern primarily budget rather than anything
 4 else?
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. What were the principal concerns then?
 7 A. Delivery within timescales. There was a lot of feedback
 8 from residents in terms of communications. We wanted to
 9 improve the building for the residents.
 10 Q. Would you agree that delivery within timescale is the
 11 flipside of the delivery within budget coin?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Now, in his witness statement to the Inquiry,
 14 Roger Keane dealt with highlight reports and said this
 15 at paragraph 63 {RBK00033566/16}. We don't need to go
 16 to it, but I'll read it out to you:
 17 "The dashboard reports provide project updates and
 18 were used for strategic purposes only, although the TMO
 19 would sometimes include some more detailed technical
 20 information. We were only scrutinising the implications
 21 for the Council: is it going to cause delays, and is it
 22 going to impact the cost?"
 23 Bearing in mind what Mr Keane says there, do you
 24 agree with him that the priorities for the council were
 25 delays and cost?

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1 A. They were certainly two concerns but that wasn't the
 2 only priority. We wanted to deliver an improved
 3 building for the residents.
 4 Q. Is it fair to say, based on your answers thus far, that
 5 the purpose of closely monitoring this project had
 6 nothing to do with health and safety concerns?
 7 A. Not at that point, no.
 8 Q. Did you ever share the contents of the highlight reports
 9 with Laura Johnson?
 10 A. We may have discussed them at our one-to-one meetings,
 11 the minutes would have been available. I cannot
 12 specifically recall when I shared them with her.
 13 Q. Are you sure that you did?
 14 A. I cannot recall.
 15 Q. Now, you describe in your statement, and again today,
 16 Mr Keane as your eyes and ears on the project. Is it
 17 right that Mr Keane was the most junior member of your
 18 team?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Did Mr Keane have any technical expertise or experience
 21 that particularly qualified him for the role in relation
 22 to Grenfell?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. Why did you choose him then?
 25 A. Because he — I didn't have anyone with technical

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1 experience and he was a reliable, hard-working member of
 2 staff who had formed good relationships with the TMO.
 3 He worked closely with Claire Williams, the project
 4 manager, and worked on the interface with KALC.
 5 Q. And he was the individual who wasn't replaced when he
 6 took voluntary redundancy?
 7 A. Yes. Yes.
 8 Q. Did you try and identify someone who did have the
 9 technical expertise to fill his role in relation to
 10 Grenfell after he left?
 11 A. He left in 2016. The regeneration team was then
 12 expanding at that time. That's where the resources were
 13 going.
 14 Q. I now want to move on to a separate topic, which is fire
 15 risk assessments, and in particular the relationship
 16 with Janice Wray.
 17 Staying in your first statement, could we turn to
 18 paragraph 162, which is at page 33 {RBK00033719/33}.
 19 You say this:
 20 "When matters relating to fire safety did cross my
 21 desk, the usual path was to contact or coordinate with
 22 Janice Wray, Health and Safety Manager at the TMO ...
 23 There was a lot of confidence within the Council in
 24 Janice — she was very responsive and you always got
 25 a thorough reply from her, although I note that I had to

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1 rely upon the veracity of her responses as I didn't have
 2 the expertise to contradict her."
 3 Did anyone in the housing department have the
 4 expertise or experience to question Janice Wray
 5 knowledgeably or, where necessary, to contradict her?
 6 A. No, the health and safety function had gone to
 7 corporate, and all of our technical teams had gone over
 8 to the TMO under the capital programme.
 9 Q. Are the reasons you set out in paragraph 162 the same
 10 reasons why RBKC had confidence in Janice Wray's
 11 abilities?
 12 A. Janice Wray was an extremely responsive officer.
 13 Whenever anything came across my path to do with
 14 fire safety, and it didn't that often, or any health and
 15 safety matter, Janice would always be very responsive
 16 and very clear about the action that she was taking.
 17 Q. Did you ever mention to Laura Johnson the utility of
 18 having a health and safety specialist within your team
 19 to double check, to verify, the robustness, the
 20 reasonableness of the responses given by Janice Wray?
 21 A. I focused more on my concerns around the capital
 22 programme. I should have also included compliance in
 23 that.
 24 Q. Could I now turn to your second witness statement and
 25 paragraph 15, which is at {RBK00054464/4}. You say:

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1 "Within the annual reports, there was a section on
 2 health and safety which summarised health and safety
 3 issues arising from that year and changes made by the
 4 TMO in respect of health and safety."
 5 Is that right?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Now, if we can go to {RBK00002395/15}, which hopefully
 8 is a draft version of the TMO performance report for
 9 2016/2017, and in particular paragraph 3.6. We see
 10 there the health and safety section of the report.
 11 Looking at the column on the left—hand side of
 12 paragraph 3.6, we can see Janice's name written in red.
 13 Do you agree?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. Were the health and safety elements of the report
 16 drafted by Janice Wray?
 17 A. In conjunction with Celia, yes.
 18 Q. Are you able to give us an idea of the respective
 19 contributions of Celia Caliskan and Janice Wray to the
 20 health and safety sections?
 21 A. Celia would rely on Janice for the content.
 22 Q. Entirely?
 23 A. Celia may be involved through other areas as well, such
 24 as the leaseholder fire doors, so she would get involved
 25 in specific issues where we needed to work with the TMO.

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1 She would be aware of the issues relating to the fire at
 2 Adair and Hazlewood.
 3 Q. Would it be fair to say that Celia Caliskan greatly
 4 relied upon Janice Wray then for these purposes?
 5 A. For this information, yes.
 6 Q. Would you scrutinise the accuracy of the information set
 7 out in these reports?
 8 A. Yes, always.
 9 Q. Given that you lacked the expertise and background to
 10 question Janice Wray, would you have involved the health
 11 and safety adviser at RBKC to enable you to critique
 12 what had been said?
 13 A. I didn't.
 14 Q. Can you help us as to why not?
 15 A. I knew that Janice was in close contact or worked
 16 closely with that part of the sector. It's certainly
 17 something that I could have done, in hindsight.
 18 Q. Did anyone in the housing department ever raise a doubt
 19 about the robustness or reasonableness of the advice,
 20 the information given by Janice Wray?
 21 A. No.
 22 Q. Did Laura Johnson ever express any doubts in that
 23 regard?
 24 A. No. No.
 25 Q. Is it right or fair to say that the TMO performance

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1 reports contained no independent or verified information
 2 about the TMO's health and safety and fire safety
 3 performance?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Thank you.
 6 Now, could we look at an example of the interaction
 7 between your team and Janice Wray, and go to
 8 {RBK00046464}, which is an email chain between you,
 9 Celia Caliskan and Janice Wray on 26 August 2016.
 10 The subject in the header is "Fire safety", and the
 11 chain begins with an email in the middle of page 3
 12 {RBK00046464/3}. That email is from the Greater London
 13 Authority regarding the Shepherds Court fire which had
 14 happened, I think, on 19 August of that year. The
 15 correspondent from the GLA, Maja Luna Jorgensen, asks in
 16 the final sentence:
 17 "Could you let me know what RBKC's fire safety
 18 policy is for tower blocks, how the council reviews this
 19 and when was it last updated?"
 20 Now, this email is then sent to Celia and then on to
 21 Janice Wray, and Janice Wray then drafts a response
 22 which, if we go back to page 1 of this chain
 23 {RBK00046464/1}, we can see starts at the bottom of
 24 page 1 and goes on to page 2 as well.
 25 Then Celia Caliskan says at the top of the first

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1 page:
 2 "Yes, this is very detailed so please do send."
 3 You are then copied in to the email at the very top
 4 at 09.38.
 5 Now, would you agree that the impression arising out
 6 of this brief email chain is that Celia neither had the
 7 requisite knowledge or expertise to answer
 8 Ms Jorgensen's email?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Or to question the substance or accuracy of Ms Wray's
 11 response?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Was that level of scrutiny typical of that applied by
 14 Celia Caliskan to correspondence from Janice Wray?
 15 A. We relied on Janice as the expert in the field for that
 16 type of information, yes.
 17 Q. Could we now go to {RBK00048400}. This is an email
 18 chain between you, Celia, Janice Wray and Laura Johnson,
 19 starting on the 20th and ending on 26 April 2017.
 20 If we go to page 3 {RBK00048400/3}, we can see there
 21 in the bottom part of the page Celia Caliskan asked
 22 Janice Wray for a short report on the fire at
 23 Trellick Tower following a request from
 24 Councillor Mackover.
 25 Janice Wray sent this report to you on 25 April,

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1 which we can see at the email at the bottom of the first
 2 page of this chain {RBK00048400/1}, which you then
 3 forwarded to Laura Johnson, which is slightly further up
 4 page 1, with the words:
 5 "Laura
 6 "Janice has completed this report for Scrutiny —
 7 I will format into our style and Asha will circulate
 8 when she is back."
 9 Again, is it right that you asked no questions of
 10 Janice Wray about the substance of this report?
 11 A. I would need to go to Janice as the person who was
 12 operational on the ground for the information on the
 13 fire. I had no reason to be concerned around her report
 14 of the fire.
 15 Q. So your department's role was limited to formatting and
 16 other such issues?
 17 A. We would read it and ask any questions, but I would rely
 18 on Janice for the subject matter expert information
 19 about what happened.
 20 Q. Would you accept that this email chain does not indicate
 21 that either you or Celia Caliskan asked any questions
 22 regarding the substance of the report given to you?
 23 A. According to this email chain, yes. There would have
 24 been other conversations though that were verbal.
 25 Q. You say "would have been"; were there any conversations

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1 in which you questioned the accuracy of anything Janice
 2 Wray had sent —
 3 A. I didn't have any reason to question the accuracy of the
 4 Trellick fire.
 5 Q. Now, Councillor Rock Feilding—Mellen refers in his first
 6 statement to the filter role that the housing department
 7 played. If we could go to his statement,
 8 {RBK00033403/18}, paragraph 68.
 9 He essentially says here that he understood the
 10 housing department to operate as:
 11 "... effectively an independent check on what the
 12 TMO said, and which monitored the performance of the TMO
 13 against the MMA. These reports and reassurances
 14 combined to provide us with the reasonable impression
 15 that fire safety measures within Grenfell Tower, and
 16 more widely across the entire HRA portfolio, were being
 17 appropriately managed by the TMO, which had contracted
 18 with independent fire consultants and which had regular
 19 meetings with the LFB."
 20 Would you agree with the accuracy of
 21 Councillor Feilding—Mellen's characterisation of the
 22 housing department as a filter?
 23 A. Yes, we would be a conduit for information.
 24 Q. Would it be fair to say on the basis of the evidence
 25 you've given this afternoon that the level of scrutiny

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1 brought to bear by your department was, at best,
 2 limited?
 3 A. In terms of technical aspects of the contract, yes. By
 4 that I mean compliance, asset management.
 5 Q. And particularly in relation to FRAs?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 MR KINNIER: Sir, it is 4.25.
 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Yes.
 9 MR KINNIER: I'm about to turn to a new topic which I will
 10 not be able to complete in five minutes, or four minutes
 11 now.
 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: So it might be better to start it on
 13 Monday morning, yes.
 14 I'm sure Ms Johnson would like to know how much
 15 longer you expect to require with her.
 16 MR KINNIER: Ms Johnson will certainly be free at Monday
 17 lunchtime, I hope in good time before then.
 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Right.
 19 Well, I expect you were warned that we might need to
 20 ask you to come back on Monday, were you?
 21 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: I'm glad it's not coming as
 23 a surprise, then.
 24 THE WITNESS: No.
 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Well, we're going to stop there for

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1 the afternoon.
 2 We shall have to ask you to come back on Monday to
 3 answer some more questions, but, as you have heard, it
 4 should only be for the morning, so not too bad.
 5 All right?
 6 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: So 10 o'clock on Monday, please, and
 8 remember not to talk to anyone about your evidence or
 9 anything relating to it over the weekend.
 10 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: All right?
 12 Thank you very much. Would you like to go with the
 13 usher, then, please.
 14 (Pause)
 15 Thank you, Mr Kinnier. 10 o'clock on Monday.
 16 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.
 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE—BICK: Good, thank you.
 18 (4.27 pm)
 19 (The hearing adjourned until 10 am
 20 on Monday, 17 May 2021)
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