

# Independent Grenfell Tower Inquiry

## Financial report to 31 March 2019

### 1. Overview

The information in this report sets out the expenditure for the Grenfell Tower Inquiry for the period 01 August 2017 to 31 March 2019, totalling £40.2m. Costs are recorded on a resource basis and audited by the National Audit Office as part of the sponsoring Department accounts (in this case those of the Cabinet Office).

Inquiry expenditure can be divided into two halves:

- the funding by the Inquiry of the legal representation of 585 Bereaved, Survivors and Residents (BSRs) and daily subsistence for BSRs who attend the hearings. It also includes funding by the Inquiry of the legal representation of two trade union bodies. This expenditure is essential in ensuring all those directly affected by the events of 14 June 2017 are properly able to take part in the Inquiry. Expenditure is controlled via the Inquiry's published protocol relating to legal representation at public expense.
- the costs of the Inquiry itself and its operations, including the hearing room, other accommodation and legal technology costs; the secretariat costs (including inquiry solicitors); and the costs for the Chairman, Counsel, assessors and experts who assist the Inquiry.

The Inquiry currently has 619 Core Participants. Up to March 2019 the Inquiry held 123 days of hearings and heard from more than 140 witnesses. The Inquiry received and reviewed more than 500,000 documents of which over 200,000 are expected to be disclosed to Core Participants. Eight days of commemorative hearings were held at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel, in west London, in May 2018 before the public hearings began at Holborn Bars on 4 June 2018.

An overview of expenditure is set out in the table below, figures provided are as per the Cabinet Office's audited accounts, and include accrued costs where invoices had not been received:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Expenditure (£ 000)</b>
Inquiry Chairman and Counsel	5,130
Core Participant Recognised Legal Representation	18,887
Inquiry Assessors and Experts (including experts' scientific investigations)	4,593
Inquiry Secretariat, Accommodation and Operational Costs	9,037
Hearing Room support services and Legal Technology services	2,620

## **2. Inquiry Chairman and Counsel**

### **2.1 Chairman**

The Chairman of the Inquiry received remuneration from the Inquiry of between £210,000 and £220,000 for the year April 2018 to March 2019. There were no expenses or accommodation allowance claims in this period. The Chairman of the Inquiry is appointed by the Prime Minister and is remunerated in line with standard rates for retired members of the judiciary. HM Courts and Tribunals Service records and charges the Grenfell Tower Inquiry for the Chairman's remuneration.

### **2.2 Counsel**

To the end of March 2019 the Inquiry had appointed 52 members of Counsel, including 4 QCs, 26 Junior Counsel and 22 supporting Counsel; although not all of these worked concurrently or full-time. All Counsel to the Inquiry are appointed under the authority of the Chairman, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, who delegates responsibility for sourcing and agreeing terms of appointment with individuals to the Solicitor to the Inquiry.

### **3. Core Participant Recognised Legal Representation**

47% of Inquiry expenditure relates to the legal expenses for the firms representing Core Participants of the Inquiry. These are costs for firms who represent Core Participants determined by the Chairman to be disadvantaged if not provided legal support by the Inquiry. In March 2019, 21 solicitor's firms had been accepted for funding by the Inquiry. Funding was paid for 5 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) QCs, 8 WTE Junior Counsel and 91 WTE other fee earners.

The core participants who receive funding for their legal representation are:

- all the Bereaved, Survivors and Residents
- the Fire Brigades Union
- the Fire Officers' Association

For the Bereaved, Survivors and Residents expenditure also includes daily travel and subsistence costs for those attending the hearings.

Applications for costs are controlled under the framework set out in the Inquiries Act 2005 and the Inquiry Rules 2006. The Inquiry operates a protocol relating to legal representation at public expense and all claims are scrutinised by the Solicitor to the Inquiry to ensure that they are appropriate under the protocol.

### **4. Assessors and Expert Witnesses**

#### **4.1 Assessors**

The Inquiry has three assessors who are appointed by the Chairman in consultation with the Secretary to the Inquiry to assist the Inquiry. Assessors provide specific experience or expertise which has been determined to be of value to the Inquiry.

#### **4.2 Expert Witnesses**

An expert witness is a person who is called to give an opinion on matters which call for expert skill and knowledge. Their role is to provide technical analysis and expertise, which will assist the Inquiry in delivering its Terms of Reference. Expert witnesses are appointed by the Chairman, in consultation with the Secretary and Solicitor to the Inquiry. Up to the end of March 2019 the Inquiry had appointed 16 experts across a range of disciplines in order to ensure the Inquiry had sufficient supporting knowledge.

Where it is deemed an expert is required the Inquiry reviews suitable candidates and provides clear requirements and terms to the selected individuals on an individual basis.

Inquiry expert's costs are based on an agreed daily rate plus any pre-agreed support team or materials they may require depending on the nature of their investigations and any testing they may need to undertake.

## **5. Inquiry Secretariat, Accommodation and Operational Costs**

The Secretary to the Inquiry is a seconded Cabinet Office Director General who received remuneration within the annual Senior Civil Servant Pay band 3 range (£111,500 to £208,100). Expenses of less than £300 were recorded for this period.

The Inquiry Secretariat consists of civil servants employed through the Cabinet Office, Government Legal Department (GLD) Solicitors and support staff. The Secretariat includes teams running the hearings, external affairs, stakeholder relations, and operational functions. These costs include accommodation costs, and charges for the commemoration videos and hearings in West London, information technology, stationary, printing, postage and media services.

The Inquiry Solicitors are seconded to the Inquiry by the Government Legal Department and charged to the Inquiry at standard rates. The Solicitors team is a mix of permanent civil servant and contracted solicitors with complementary areas of expertise. The Solicitors team are responsible for all Inquiry document review and disclosure, appointment and management of Counsel and Inquiry Experts and the legal organisation of Inquiry hearings. The Inquiry Solicitors team is supported by a team of paralegals provided through Cabinet Office framework contracts.

## **6 Hearing Room and other Legal Services Costs**

### **6.1 Hearing Room Technology Services**

Hearing Room technology services are those provided within the hearing room to aid in the broadcast and in-hearing display of evidence, the live streaming and IT infrastructure required for the delivery of the hearings.

### **6.2 Hearing Room Support Services**

Support services at the hearings include:

- onsite counselling services provided for the emotional wellbeing of individuals attending hearings; and
- translation and interpreter services for those Bereaved, Survivors and Residents whose first language is not english.

### **6.3 Other Legal Technology Services**

The costs of contracted out technology and assistance to the Inquiry, this includes courtroom evidence presentation, document hosting and redactions services.

## Grenfell Tower Inquiry

All figures within this report are recorded on a resource accounting basis, with estimates for work completed utilised to calculate values where invoicing has not yet been received.

Transactions over £25,000 are published by the sponsor department, (the Cabinet Office) through the Government Transparency publication.