

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Financial report to 31 March 2021

1. Overview

The information in this report sets out the expenditure for the Grenfell Tower Inquiry for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2021, totalling £77m. It also sets out the total Inquiry expenditure over the period 01 August 2017 to 31 March 2021, totalling £117m. Costs are recorded on a resource accounting basis and audited by the National Audit Office as part of the sponsoring Department accounts (in this case those of the Cabinet Office).

Since the last cost report was published covering the period to March 2019, the Inquiry has started its second phase. The period has covered the publication of the Phase 1 report in October 2019, the move to the new hearing venue and the commencement of Phase 2 hearings. The Inquiry proceedings have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, leading to a short delay in the spring of 2020, the implementation of limited attendance hearings and subsequently hearings wholly online. All the Inquiry's proceedings continue to be livestreamed.

The table below sets out Inquiry expenditure over the period by the last Financial Report - August 2017 to March 2019 - and then from April 2019 to March 2021.

Item	Expenditure August 2017 to March 2019 (£ 000)	Expenditure April 2019 to March 2021 (£ 000)	August 2017 to March 2021 (£000)
Inquiry Chairman, Panel and Counsel	5,130	11,615	16,745
Core Participant Recognised Legal Representation	18,887	31,152	50,039
Inquiry Assessors and Experts (including experts' scientific investigations)	4,593	6,352	10,945
Inquiry Secretariat, Accommodation and Operational Costs	9,037	18,164	27,201
Hearing Room support services and Legal Technology services	2,620	9,781	12,401
Total for Period	40,267	77,064	117,331

2. Inquiry Chairman, Panel and Counsel

2.1 Chairman and Panel

The Chairman of the Inquiry received remuneration from the Inquiry of between £210,000 and £220,000 for the year April 2020 to March 2021. 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.

The Prime Minister has appointed two panel members to serve the Inquiry alongside the Chairman. Panel members are appointed by the Prime Minister with respect to sections 7 and 8 of the Inquiries Act 2005 with the consent of the Chairman.

2.2 Counsel

To the end of March 2021 the Inquiry had appointed 59 members of Counsel, including 3 QCs and 56 Junior Counsel. Not all of these have 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

43% of Inquiry expenditure relates to the legal expenses of Core Participants of the Inquiry. These are costs for legal firms who represent those Core Participants determined by the Chairman to be disadvantaged if not provided with legal support by the Inquiry. At March 2021, 24 solicitors' firms had been accepted for funding by the Inquiry. Funding was paid for 5 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) QCs, 8 WTE Junior Counsel and 132 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
- Kevin Lamb
- Osborne Berry

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 the 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 experts' 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 (£120,000 to £208,000). There were no expense claims reported for the period April 2019 to March 2021.

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. Secretariat costs cover accommodation costs, including the move to the new Inquiry venue at Bishops Bridge Road, the cost of publishing the Phase 1 report, as well as general office costs including information technology, stationery, printing, postage and media services. These costs also encompass the costs of implementing social distancing and safe transport measures for the hearing venue during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Inquiry Solicitors are seconded to the Inquiry from the Government Legal Department and charged to the Inquiry at standard rates. The Solicitors team is a mix of permanent civil servants 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.

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. These costs also cover the IT costs of delivering remote hearings and connections where individual participants require remote access.

6.2 Hearing Room Support Services

Support services at the hearings include:

- 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, including courtroom evidence presentation, document hosting and redactions services.

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.