

**TO:** Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

**FROM:** Assistant Director Operational Response and Fire Protection  
Simon Thompson

**PRESENTING OFFICER(S):** Assistant Director Operational Response and Fire  
Protection Simon Thompson  
Telephone: 07710 917430  
[simon.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk)

**DATE:** 19 December 2024

---

## **GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY – SERVICE ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Fire Authority on the progress Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) has made against the recommendations for both Phase One and Phase Two of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry reports.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Authority is asked to;

2.1.1 note and comment on the progress to date,

2.1.2 approve the planned activities to meet the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry reports.

### **3. Risk Assessment**

3.1 **Political** – there is ongoing national focus into the tragic Grenfell Tower incident. There is a risk that if CFRS does not fully consider and, where appropriate, adopt recommendations from the inquiry there will be impact both operationally and through building safety.

3.2 **Social** - the Grenfell Tower fire of June 2017 was a significant national incident that continues to affect members of our community. There is a risk that the ongoing work following the outcomes of the inquiry will continue to affect our communities and especially those living in residential tall buildings.

3.3 **Technological** – the recommendations require the Service to implement technological changes to support information gathering and sharing. There is a risk that these systems will require additional support and financial resource from within the Service to deliver suitable functionality.

3.4 **Legal** – CFRS (as a regulator) has a duty to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 or FSO and other legislation linked to the Building

Safety Act. CFRS must also respond to the public inquiry outcomes and implement solutions to mitigate the risks identified and the lessons learned. Recommendations from the Inquiry will need to be implemented to mitigate against any legal action.

3.5 **Equality Impact Assessment** – Equality impact assessments are completed as required.

## 4. Background

4.1 The Grenfell Tower fire, which occurred on 14 June 2017, in north Kensington, London, remains one of the most devastating and tragic events in modern British history. The fire engulfed the 24-storey residential tower, claiming the lives of 72 people, with many others injured and displaced. It sparked widespread outrage and public grief, prompting significant questions about social housing, fire safety regulations, and the responsibility of public officials and corporations in ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities. The tragedy exposed severe shortcomings in building safety standards and highlighted the importance of safe public sector housing.

4.2 In the aftermath of the fire, a public inquiry was established to investigate the causes of the disaster, determine who was responsible, and make recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the future. Led by Sir Martin Moore-Bick, the inquiry aims to provide answers for the victims' families, survivors, and the public at large, as well as to restore trust in the institutions that failed to prevent the fire. The inquiry has been comprehensive in its approach, examining the role of local authorities, fire safety regulations, the involvement of private contractors, and the broader societal context of austerity and inequality.

4.3 The Phase One report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, published in October 2019, focused on identifying the key factors that led to the catastrophic fire and establishing the sequence of events during that tragic night. This phase did not assess issues of responsibility or make specific recommendations for reform, but it provided crucial insights into what happened on 14 June 2017, and what failures contributed to the disaster. The report can be accessed via the link within the bibliography at the end of this report (Appendix 1).

4.4 The Phase One report concluded that the combination of poor building design, flammable cladding, inadequate fire safety measures, and failure in emergency response procedures led to the tragic loss of life. It made clear that the safety of the residents had been compromised through a series of institutional failures, both in terms of design, management, and regulation. The findings set the stage for the further phases of the inquiry, which aimed to delve into the accountability of individuals and organisations involved in the fire and to make specific recommendations for preventing similar incidents in the future.

4.5 The Phase One report underscored the urgency of addressing these issues to ensure that such a tragedy could never happen again; it made 43 recommendations.

- 4.6 The Phase Two report, published in September 2024, provided a detailed examination of the causes of the fire, the systemic failures that contributed to it, and the accountability of individuals and organisations involved. Unlike the Phase One report, which focused primarily on the events of the fire itself, the Phase Two report aimed to identify the underlying issues, such as the role of the local authority, building contractors, architects, and fire safety regulations. It also made recommendations for reforms to prevent similar tragedies in the future. The report can be accessed via the link within the bibliography at the end of this report (Appendix 2).
- 4.7 The Phase Two report concluded that the fire was a result of numerous failures in building design, fire safety measures, and regulation, as well as a systemic lack of accountability. It identified a profound failure to protect the safety of the residents, many of whom were from vulnerable communities. The findings reinforced the need for urgent reforms in building safety, fire prevention, and emergency response systems to prevent similar tragedies in the future. The report set the stage for ongoing work to hold those responsible accountable and ensure that lessons are learned from the disaster.
- 4.8 There were 59 recommendations from the Phase Two report.
- 4.9 Following the conclusion of the Phase One report the government introduced legislative change and implemented the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). Managed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) the BSR is designed to scrutinise and support developers to ensure new high rise residential buildings are compliant. Fire and rescue services are included within regional multi-disciplinary teams who deliver this function.

## **5. CFRS Progress to Date and Forthcoming Activities**


- 5.1 CFRS has completed all but one of the applicable recommendations from the Phase One report. Due to external processes beyond our control (waiting our turn to receive hardware as part of a government multi agency information transfer or MAIT project to improve incident communications between emergency services), we have been delayed in completing the last recommendation. However, this is now being completed and the Service has started assurance activity against all the completed actions.
- 5.2 Following Grenfell the government has continued to provide one off annual grant funding settlements to support fire protection activities. The Service continues to use this grant by enhancing its fire protection provision. This has minimised the impact experienced through additional workloads resulting from the recommendations. However, the sector continues to experience barriers which have been shared with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 5.3 Although there are 59 recommendations for Phase Two, only 25 of these are applicable to the fire service. CFRS has continued its Grenfell Action Plan Group who have completed a gap analysis against each of the recommendations contained within the report. Whilst no official timeframe for completion has been set by MHCLG, cognisant of our available resources and to mitigate risk to our communities, we aim to have the work against these 25 recommendations completed by September 2025.

- 5.4 On 2 December 2024 the Government published a remediation acceleration plan (Appendix 3, accessed via the link within the bibliography at the end of this report). The plan lays out the Government's position to remediate all unsafe cladding for buildings over 18 metres by 2029 and to remove or have a time defined plan to remediate all unsafe cladding for buildings 11 to 17 metres in height. It is stated that the plan will be backed by funding for enforcement.
- 5.5 Cambridgeshire currently has 27 residential buildings over 18 metres or seven storeys in height. CFRS fire protection officers have completed inspections at all these premises and are on track to meet the 2029 deadline set for these buildings.
- 5.6 The Deputy Prime Minister has asked Mayors (in Cambridgeshire, the Combined Authority Mayor) to write and oversee local remediation acceleration plans for their area for buildings between 11 to 17 metres in height. This has been completed and shared with the Deputy Prime Minister (Appendix 4, accessed via the link within the bibliography at the end of this report provides the detail).
- 5.7 CFRS has a team assigned to risk assess each of these properties and provide advice and support where required. Working alongside MHCLG and Local Authority Building Control (LABC) the Service is currently identifying all buildings that fall within the 11 to 17 metre category for review. We will use this information alongside our existing data to confirm all properties across the county that fall into this height category.
- 5.8 Following the introduction of the BSR the fire protection department continues to support its regional multi-disciplinary teams. The BSR provide fire safety scrutiny to developers for new build high rise residential buildings through a gateway process. Over a five-year cycle, the BSR will also inspect safety cases for all existing 18 metre buildings and provide safety certificates if they are deemed satisfactory. The Service continues to review and monitor the workload created by this new function.

## **6. Summary**

- 6.1 CFRS continues to be in a strong position with the work completed to support the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The proactive approach by CFRS will allow us to complete the required actions ahead of schedule.
- 6.2 The ongoing work following these recommendations may continue to impact business as usual activity. This will be particularly apparent if the annual fire protection funding is ceased.
- 6.3 The remediation activity is significant and will take considerable resource and attention to action; CFRS will provide guidance, support and where required enforcement action against non-compliance. Barriers to delivery will continue to be discussed with MHCLG, the Combined Authority Mayor and local authority partners.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Appendix	Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
1	Grenfell Phase One Report	<a href="#">Report</a>	Simon Thompson Assistant Director Operational Response and Fire Protection 07710 917430 <a href="mailto:simon.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk">simon.thompson@cambsfire.gov.uk</a>
2	Grenfell Phase Two Report	<a href="#">Report</a>	
3	Government Accelerated Remediation Plan	<a href="#">Remediation Acceleration Plan</a>	
4	Local Accelerated Remediation Plan	 Local Acceleration Plan 2024 01.12.24 Fi	