

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **FIRE SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE ADVISORY PANEL** held on **WEDNESDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 2022** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 1, Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT

Councillor Meric Apak (Co-Chair), Gul Begum (Co-Chair), Ryan Heng, Mark Davidson, Kate Gordon, Gavin Haynes, Dominic Johnson, Councillor Samata Khatoon and Meriel Tourmei

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT

Lynn Addis, Maria Soanes, AaZim Ihsan, Mandisa Khabo, David O'Keefe, Jo Rose and Angela Spooner

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Fire Safety and Compliance Advisory Panel and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. GUIDANCE ON HYBRID MEETINGS

RESOLVED –

THAT the guidance on hybrid meetings be noted.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Angela Spooner, Head of Estates Services, and Maria Soanes.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Webcasting

The Chair announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the internet and would be capable of repeated viewing and copies of the recording could be made available to those that requested them. Those participating in the meeting were deemed to be consenting to being filmed.

Deputation request CASP

The Chair agreed to allow Petra Dando, Chair CASP, to speak to the panel in relation to the Fire and Building Safety Charter item. Her request to speak would be heard before item 8 on the agenda.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

5. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There were none.

6. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2022.

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2022 be approved as a correct record.

7. ACTION TRACKER UPDATE

Consideration was given to the action tracker.

RESOLVED –

THAT the action tracker be noted.

8. FIRE & BUILDING SAFETY CHARTER ANNUAL REPORT

Deputation from CASP

Petra Dando, Chair of Camden Association of Street Properties (CASP), took the meeting through her deputation statement as set out in the supplementary agenda.

Officers agreed to meet representatives of CASP to discuss the issues that they raised in their deputation statement.

ACTION BY: Director of Property Management

The Chair then thanked Petra Dando for attending the meeting.

Consideration was then given to the report of the Director of Property Management.

Gavin Haynes, Director of Property Management, then took the meeting through the report and he along with Melissa Dillon, Resident Safety, Engagement & Governance Lead, and Dominic Johnson, Head of Resident & Building Safety, gave the following key responses to questions:

- All Council homes received an annual gas safety check, and they would also receive an electrical test every five years.
- The suggestion of having a 'building safety day' on estates when gas safety, electrical checks, Fire Risk Assessments and the stock conditions survey were, as much as possible, all done on the same day was a good one and officers would consider this proposal in the future. This would be especially helpful in seeking to deal with low rates of access at particular blocks.
- The Fire Safety Building Charter annual report would be circulated to all residents this quarter. Also, 4 newsletters had been circulated to tenants and residents regarding the fire safety issues regarding communal areas. Housing Neighbourhood Officers would also be visiting every home to discuss their housing issues and, as part of that, there will be conversations about keeping their homes and communal areas fire safe. There would also be another housing newsletter going out this autumn regarding fire safety and communal areas. Another Council leaflet would also be circulated regarding fire safety and communal areas, and the information would be on the Council's website, along with an e-newsletter which would be available to those with a Camden Account.
- As part of the changes to the repairs contact centre, instant translation messaging was now available. This enabled tenants and residents to be able to ask questions and receive responses in their own languages in real time. Officers were also seeking to ensure that all relevant documents were able to be accessible to all its tenants and residents.
- Officers were not able to access some of the TRA Halls because the key holders were not available. A lock change programme had been put in place for those TRAs halls the Council still needed to access. For those halls where there was no longer a TRA, a lock change would be undertaken and the keys would now be held by the Tenant Participation Team who would make them available when necessary.
- The Repairs Teams had staff who would go out and do communal area and smoke alarm checks in street properties. This was an on-going process and officers would be discussing with CASP how this could be made to work better.

Fire Safety and Compliance Advisory Panel - Wednesday, 12th October, 2022

- Regular quarterly checks of street properties were undertaken due to historical reasons, and this process would identify any actions needed regarding smoke detectors and ensuring communal areas were kept clear.
- Items now found in communal areas were labelled and it was made clear that in future, if they were not removed then the Council would do so and they would then be disposed of. This approach would ensure that the Council did not have the added burden of storing the items for long periods. Appropriate clear communication was always given to tenants and residents and enforcement action would be handled sensitively.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

9. BUILDING SAFETY CASE UPDATE REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Property Management.

Dominic Johnson, Head of Resident & Building Safety, took the meeting through the report and gave the following key responses to questions:

- Between April and October 2023 building owners would be required to register higher-risk buildings with the Building Safety Regulator, who was based in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). From April 2024 building owners must submit Building Safety Case reports to the Regulator explaining how those buildings were being maintained safely and how tenants and residents were involved and informed about the safety of their building.
- Final guidance on the registration of higher-risk buildings and the content of building safety case reports, along with the submission timetable were expected to be published by spring 2023. Camden, as an early adopter, was working with the HSE to help develop the future guidance, but in the meantime the Council would seek to develop its own approach to building safety cases/building safety case reports based on its knowledge and best practice, and this would be revised if necessary once the formal HSE guidance was available.
- The Council had regular meetings with other social housing providers based in the borough, where the Council's approach on these matters was being shared with them. Some social housing providers were also early adopters so were already aware of the direction of travel on this issue. The Council also had put in place arrangements to ensure that any person placed by them in a social housing provider home would be placed in a home that was safe.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

10. GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION -DEFINING HIGHER-RISK BUILDINGS AND INTRODUCTION OF BUILDING SAFETY ACT LEASEHOLDER PROTECTIONS

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Property Management.

Melissa Dillon, Resident Safety, Engagement & Governance Lead, took the meeting through the report.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

11. EMERGENCY EVACUATION INFORMATION SHARING UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Property Management.

Melissa Dillon, Resident Safety, Engagement & Governance Lead, took the meeting through the report and she along with Glendine Shepherd, Director of Housing, gave the following key responses to questions:

- Regulations required the authority to share certain types of information with the fire service in relation to those people covered by the Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing Regulations. Information gained from tenants and residents arising from the Council's home visit programme being undertaken by neighbourhood Officers, would be shared with colleagues in children's services, adult social care, repairs and other housing teams as necessary. Data Protection requirements would restrict the Council's ability to share personal information with other agencies.
- Neighbourhood Housing Officers would be given appropriate information so that they would be able to conduct the home visit programme. Following a home visit, Neighbourhood Housing Officers would be able to refer issues raised to the appropriate Council staff, update the data onto the appropriate data base and keep the tenant informed of the outcomes. If necessary vulnerable tenants and residents would receive an extra visit.
- Premises information boxes would not contain personal data, rather they would inform fire crews of the location of vulnerable tenants and residents and be dated so crews were aware of who was in the building and how up-to-date the information was.
- It was recognised that Premises information boxes information was time limited and the information may be immediately out of date, but it was hoped that once the process had been bedded in and, with Neighbourhood Officers developing a closer relationship with tenants and residents, the information would be monitored and updated regularly.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

12. FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan as set out in the agenda papers.

The meeting agreed to receive a report on the way the Council's Capital Programme was meeting its fire safety obligations, and the report would be submitted to the April meeting.

ACTION BY: Director of Property Management (GH)

The meeting noted that officers would be writing to all members of the Panel in relation to whether they had any comments on the reports on the agenda for the meeting.

ACTION BY: Director of Property Management (MD)

New items in bold

24th January 2023

- Annual Report
- Tenants Guide changes
- Fire doors and closure mechanisms update
- Leaseholder Protection Scheme

20th April 2023

- LFB Annual Performance report
- **Capital Programme fire safety programme**

Yet to be programmed

- Emergency services communications

RESOLVED –

THAT the work programme as outlined above be agreed.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There were none.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm.

CHAIR

Contact Officer: Gianni Franchi

Telephone No: 020 7974 1914

E-Mail: gianni.franchi@camden.gov.uk

MINUTES END