

**Report of the Chief Officer Housing Management**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)**

**Date: 17 October 2019**

**Subject: Inquiry into Leeds' Response to Grenfell – tracking of Scrutiny recommendations**

Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:		
Appendix number:		

**1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report sets out progress made in relation to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's 2017 inquiry into Leeds' response to the fire at Grenfell Tower.

**2. Background information**

- 2.1 Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London on 14 June 2017, Executive Board received a report at its meeting on 17 July outlining the work undertaken by Leeds City Council and partners to ensure the safety of Leeds residents living in high rise. A recommendation to Executive Board was for the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board to lead scrutiny of the relevant actions and emerging issues relating to Council housing stock safety, resident engagement and investment decisions.
- 2.2 The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board held evidence gathering sessions during October 2017 and produced a report in December 2017 outlining the key outcomes of the inquiry and a series of recommendations ([Link to inquiry report](#))

- 2.3 In October 2018, the Scrutiny Board received an update on the progress made towards implementing the recommendations arising from this inquiry. The Board agreed to continue tracking progress during the 2019/20 municipal year.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 This report provides the Board with the opportunity to evaluate progress over the last twelve months against the recommendations elected members set out in their original 2017 inquiry. It is for Board members to then determine the future course of action in relation to each recommendation.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria.
- 3.3 This standard set of criteria is presented in the form of a flow chart at Appendix 1. The questions in the flow chart should help to decide whether a recommendation has been completed, and if not whether further action is required.
- 3.4 Details of progress against each recommendation are set out within the table at Appendix 2. Highlights include a strengthening of communication and engagement with high rise residents, a draft proposal for block champions has been considered by the High Rise Strategy Group in October 2018, a standard suite of information has been rolled out on block noticeboards, and an e-notice board has been designed and fixed at Lovell Park Towers. Handheld technology has now been implemented to undertake stage 1 fire risk assessments, further investment has been made to enhance fire safety in blocks and fire safety checks have been rolled out to medium and low rise flats where cleaning is in place, again using hand held technology.

### **4. Corporate considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 The High Rise Strategy Group - a group of tenants residing in high rise properties - meet with Council on a regular basis to support the delivery of the High Rise Strategy and influence the way that services are provided to residents in Council owned high rise homes. The group have had an important role in supporting the Council's response to Grenfell – two members attended the inquiry's evidence gathering sessions during October 2017 and highlighted issues from a tenant's perspective, and the group has supported the implementation of the Scrutiny Board inquiry recommendations, including the development of a 'Block Champion' approach.
- 4.1.2 A number of the Scrutiny Inquiry recommendations focus on increasing engagement and communication with residents living in high rise. Appendix 2 outlines progress made in delivering each of the themes of the engagement and communication plan.
- 4.1.3 The Council undertook the biannual Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) in autumn 2018. As part of the survey, an increased sample size was undertaken of high rise residents in order for the results to be used to evaluate resident satisfaction with

services on a block by block basis. The Tenant engagement sessions referred to in para 3.2.4 will provide a further opportunity to explore tenant satisfaction and confidence.

- 4.1.4 Further details of consultation activity are referenced against the relevant recommendations within the table at Appendix 2.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 A key priority of the resident engagement and communications to high rise residents is to maximise communication and engagement with as many residents in high rise blocks as possible. Housing Leeds has therefore sought to ensure a range of different communication and engagement methods, with an increased focus on digital methods, including the trialling of free Wi-Fi access at 5 blocks across the city to encourage tenants to make better use of the internet and to more easily contact the Council.
- 4.2.2 Following the initial resident engagement sessions after the Grenfell fire we received some feedback from residents that language was a barrier to this engagement in some areas of the city where there a significant proportion of residents have limited English.
- 4.2.3 Since the engagement sessions Housing Leeds has collated a list of community and voluntary organisations who provide services / support to residents in the Little London, Lincoln Green and Burmantofts areas, where the greatest number of languages are spoken. Housing Leeds is able to use this network of contacts to be able to share key messages and encourage / request these groups signpost language support or help us relay key messages. Good working relationships with local community groups have been developed over time, for example, Housing Officers in the Little London team work closely with Bahar Womens Association (who also meet at the Little London Community Centre) that informally support translation activity.
- 4.2.4 In planning future engagement and communications consideration will be given to how we can engage with these community organisations to support our engagement.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 The Council's response to Grenfell supports a number of the Best City priorities. It supports the Housing theme of ensuring that housing is of high quality and the Safe, Strong Communities themes of keeping people safe from harm, protecting the most vulnerable, being responsive to local needs, building thriving, resilient communities and promoting community respect and resilience.

### Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 There are a number of implications of the way that we manage high rise homes on the climate emergency agenda. Housing Leeds is delivering significant investment in blocks to improve the energy efficiency of high rise blocks, including installation of wall and roof insulation, and installation of more efficient heating systems. The Leeds PIPES project will deliver district heating to 29 high rise and 2 low rise blocks linked to

the Recycling and Energy Recovered Facility (RERF). Housing Leeds is currently working with the University of Leeds to review its investment programme to ensure that it targets investment on measures which maximise energy efficiency.

#### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 4.4.1 It is of major importance to the Council to ensure the safety of its residents living in high rise homes. Resources have been made available through the existing Housing Revenue Account budget to deliver the recommendations from the Grenfell Scrutiny inquiry.
- 4.4.2 Once the conclusions and recommendations of the Grenfell Scrutiny Inquiry are known, consideration will be given to the resources needed to deliver on recommendations via the Council Housing Investment Plan and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.5.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 A High Rise Implementation Plan is in place to monitor the delivery of strategy actions and manage risk in relation to the delivery of the High Rise Strategy. The recommendations following this scrutiny inquiry are outlined within the implementation plan and risks considered as part of the risk register.
- 4.6.2 Progress in delivering the implementation plan and the risk register are monitored by the High Rise Strategy Board, a Board with representation from Chief Officers of services which have a role in delivering the High Rise Strategy.

### **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's earlier inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell is set out within Appendix 2 of this report for the Board's consideration.

### **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Board is requested to:
- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
  - Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

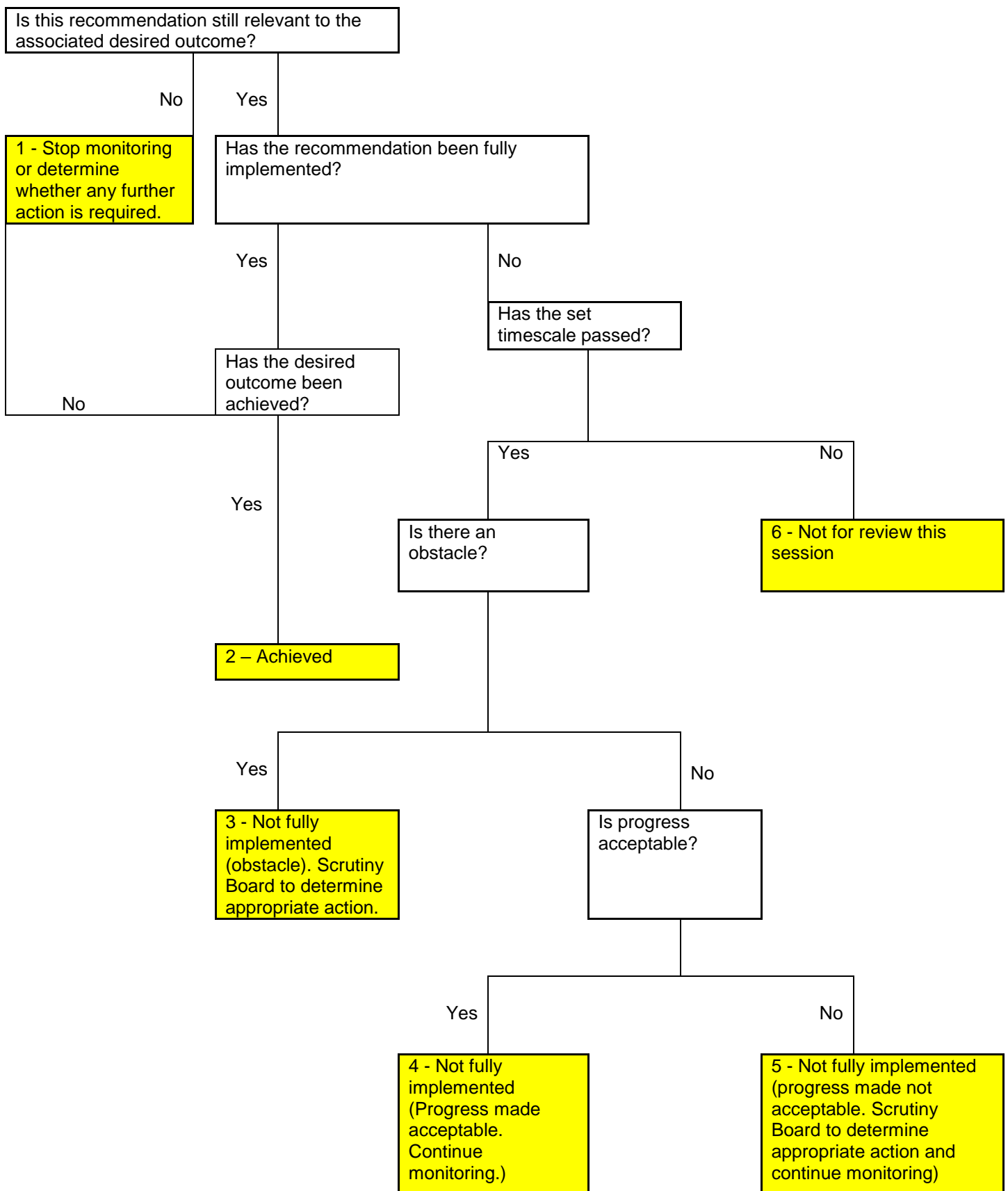
## 7. **Background documents**<sup>1</sup>

7.1 None

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

**Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications:**  
**Questions to be considered by Scrutiny Boards**



## Appendix 2

### Position Status Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session

### **Desired Outcome - To develop an effective engagement and communications plan for Council high rise tenants.**

**Recommendation 1** – That the Director of Resources and Housing ensures that regular updates are provided to the relevant Scrutiny Board in relation to the ongoing development of engagement and communication plans for Council high rise tenants, with an initial update provided by July 2018.

#### **Position reported in October 2018:**

Both the High Rise Strategy and Grenfell scrutiny inquiry stressed the importance of improving our engagement and communication practices with residents living in high rise, reflecting the particular tenancy and property related issues unique to this type of accommodation. During 2018 we have sought to strengthen our engagement and communication in a number of ways. There are a number of themes to our Engagement and Communication Plan for residents in High Rise:

- Strategic engagement via High Rise Strategy Group - engagement with a small number of high rise tenants who support the Council in delivering the priorities in the High Rise Strategy.
- Operational engagement with local tenant and residents groups – working with tenant and resident groups and attending tenant meetings in order to respond to issues in particular blocks and localities.
- Visibility of officers in blocks – engaging with residents and proactively managing local issues.
- Improved communication with all residents, sharing more information about the management of high rise and services into blocks.
- Maximising digital communication and engagement opportunities, in order to ensure engagement and communication with a wider number of residents.

During 2018, tenants on the High Rise Strategy Group have continued to support the Council in delivering priorities in the High Rise Strategy. This has included contributing towards a review of cleaning standards and quality monitoring, advising on the approach to and content of various resident communications, supporting a review of the block champion role and contributing to various policy and procedure developments.

The Council has continued throughout 2018 to work closely with a large number of local tenant groups where they exist in blocks to share information on what the Council is doing to enhance the management of high rise and to respond to any issues which require intervention.

Following the Grenfell fire Leeds has strengthened its arrangements for officer presence in high rise blocks to ensure the fire safety of high rise residents. In addition to daily stage one fire safety checks and planned stage two checks, a more robust framework of block sweeps and inspections has been introduced. Housing Officers now undertake weekly sweeps of all blocks (daily for the enhanced management blocks) to identify any urgent tenancy management activity required and make contact with residents on particular issues. Housing Officers also undertake monthly block inspections to identify wider management issues – these inspections are promoted on the block noticeboards and residents are encouraged to attend.

Immediately following the Grenfell fire, Housing Leeds held engagement sessions at all Leeds City Council owned high rise blocks across the city to outline what the Council was doing to ensure resident safety and to respond to resident concerns. It was clear from these sessions that many residents were not aware of much of the activity undertaken by the Council to manage high rise or of service standards linked to activities. A key priority during 2018 has been to improve the way that we share information and engage with all residents living in high rise.

A programme of further engagement sessions will be undertaken with residents during the autumn / winter 2018/19, with officers visiting blocks to share the follow up work which has been undertaken by the Council with its residents, and future plans.

In March 2018 we delivered a newsletter to all high rise residents. While the primary purpose of the newsletter was to provide an update on what Leeds has done following the Grenfell fire to ensure the safety of its residents, the newsletter also outlined progress in delivering the High Rise Strategy actions, and sought to raise resident awareness of activities undertaken by the Council in high rise and service standards. The newsletter was developed in consultation with the High Rise Strategy Group. Positive feedback was received from residents about the newsletter. Further newsletters will be issued on a regular basis to provide updates on any changes linked to high rise; the next newsletter is planned for autumn 2018 to provide updates on planned resident engagement, fire safety work, the block champion role and promoting the STAR Survey.

Housing Leeds is seeking to develop its digital engagement and communications with residents in blocks in order to maximise the opportunity to communicate with a wider range of tenants in blocks. A trial has been undertaken to use emails and texting as a way to communicate with residents to promote a block inspection. We are looking to roll this out more widely during late 2018, but taking care to ensure that residents who don't have access to the internet / texting are not disadvantaged through this approach.

In order to maximise the opportunity for residents to get on line, Leeds City Council has worked closely with internet service providers to seek opportunities to provide free Wi-Fi to residents living in high rise blocks in return for providers installing equipment on the roof of blocks. Housing Leeds has now implemented Wi-Fi pilots in five blocks with a further two blocks planned over the coming months; and is working with residents to access training opportunities where appropriate. One pilot currently being developed will support residents to access training along with equipment to enable internet access.

### **Current position:**

During 2018/19, tenants on the High Rise Strategy Group have continued to support the Council in delivering priorities in the High Rise Strategy. This has included developing and launching the new block champion role, undertaking joint cleaning inspections with Cleaning Services, co-designing communications such as the high rise newsletter and



reviewing with the service recent tenant satisfaction results from the STAR survey. The group has grown slightly since the last update and a new Chair appointed.

Officer presence in high rise blocks remains high to ensure a clear approach to fire safety management. In addition to daily stage one fire safety checks and planned stage two checks, a more robust framework of block sweeps and inspections is in place. Housing Officers also undertake weekly sweeps of all blocks (daily for the enhanced management blocks) to identify any urgent tenancy management activity required and make contact with residents on particular issues. To give opportunity for further resident engagement the service undertakes monthly block inspections to identify any wider management issues or suggestions for improvements – these inspections are promoted on the block noticeboards and residents are encouraged to attend.

A further programme of face to face engagement sessions was held in November 2018, the second series with residents, with a third programme planned for autumn 2019. The November 2018 engagement events were an opportunity to:

- Be open and accessible to residents, listen to residents views and – and an opportunity for residents to meet their Housing Manager
- To encourage residents to participate in the STAR survey
- To offer further reassurance on how we look after blocks in terms of daily cleaning and fire safety checks
- A reminder about how residents can help us monitor the quality of communal areas through block inspections, when these are taking place and that we'll feed-back on issues
- Reminders about tenants own responsibilities around rubbish or waste removal etc.
- To update residents on work we've done since Grenfell and, with support from senior technical Property and Contracts staff, what our future repairs and investment plans are for the block
- To have info available about where tenants can get online and how can get help to create an email address (with leaflets/handouts about this)
- To let people know we've launched a new block champion model
- How residents can get support if effected by Universal Credit or are worried about this

These sessions were promoted using emails, texts, by newsletter and flyer, attracting some 450 residents across the city. Each session was supported by senior Housing Management and Property and Contracts staff, resulting in local action logs for teams to respond to and feedback progress to residents. The service will continue to adapt and learn from each programme of engagement, and will put in place new practices for the autumn 2019 programme.

In October 2018 we delivered a second newsletter to all high rise residents. Developed in consultation with the High Rise Strategy Group, the content included letting people know about the forthcoming face to face engagement, updates on large scale investment and fire

safety related works, a promotion of the STAR survey and where can get help to get online and support for residents who may be effected by Universal Credit.

During 2018 Housing Leeds have trialled using email and texts as a way to communicate with residents to promote one off activity, like promoting a local residents group meeting, or a block inspection. Whilst these have had some benefit, there are a number of issues with the use of existing systems and permissions from residents to be able to do this more systematically. We are therefore working with colleagues from Corporate Communications in the deployment of 'Gov-Delivery' the new council emailing tool so our engagement with high rise residents as a whole is improved and done in a way that is compliant with GDPR. Housing Leeds remains aware that not all residents have access to an email address or the internet, and will continue to offer different types of communications so no residents are disadvantaged through any digital approach.

Free Wi-Fi pilots in five blocks are currently in progress, with potential for a further two blocks during 2019. Take up in terms of residents usage of the free Wi-Fi varies. There are many factors influencing this, such as the level of current internet usage amongst residents through their own arrangements and how the Wi-Fi has been installed and delivered which can impact on the residents' experience. The trials are therefore proving valuable in terms of our understanding about the extent of digital inclusion within the blocks and how future connectivity or Wi-Fi services can be delivered in future.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome - To have effective and transparent tenant engagement in the fire safety audit process across all Council high rise blocks.**

**Recommendation 2** - That the Director of Resources and Housing ensures that work is undertaken, in conjunction with the High Rise Advisory Group, to consider the merits of all possible tenant engagement options, including the Block Champion approach, with the aim of developing a best practice model that provides effective and transparent tenant engagement in the fire safety audit process across all Council high rise blocks.

**Position reported in October 2018:**

Housing Leeds, with members of the High Rise Strategy Group, have researched national good practice in relation to the block champion model in high rise, and compared the approaches of ten other social landlords. A proposed model which takes the best practice from other organisations will be considered by tenants at the next High Rise Strategy Group meeting on 15 October.

The key principles of the proposed approach to Block Champions are as follows:

- Making the opportunity available and accessible to a broad range of tenants/leaseholders by ensuring that the role is flexible to accommodate an individual's circumstances.
- Possible roles of a Champion can include the monitoring of cleaning standards, taking part in cleaning and block inspections, reporting repairs to designated contacts, reporting adhoc issues to the service and supporting resident consultation and engagement.
- Block Champions would not have responsibilities linked to managing the health and safety of the block but could support the promotion of health and safety within blocks.
- We would encourage Champions to engage with us digitally, and support the digital agenda (by also being Digital Champions if they wish)
- That the activity adds value by giving us additional feedback about the communal management of the block to complement our own internal management checks and controls and responsibilities as a landlord
- That the role is informal and mutually supportive, to help foster a partnership approach with residents.

Following further engagement with the High Rise Strategy Group, the service will launch the new block champion model as standard offer to all blocks during in November/December 2018 and promote within the next High Rise newsletter.

**Current Position:**

Working with the High Rise Strategy Group we have now developed a [Block Champion approach](#) that adds value to existing fire safety mechanisms and checks without duplicating them or creating an unreasonable sense of expectation or duty on the involved tenants.

The approach provides a means by which high rise tenants and leaseholders can get involved, flexibly to suit them, (without having to attend meetings) and still give feedback on the quality of services given to residents in their block, raise any concerns and learn more about how we are delivering our future plans.

Information on this approach has been shared with Housing managers and team leaders to help engage tenants and encourage their participation and to date we have attracted interest from 9 new block champions who along with 6 existing area champions, already covering a number of Tower blocks, gives us the beginnings of a core group that we hope will expand over time as we begin to collate and to share feedback on their findings. The service remains in contact with a network of other social landlords who have adopted similar approaches (albeit at a smaller scale) and will share progress and learn from others as the block champion model develops.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome - That communal noticeboards are being effectively used in all Council high rise blocks.**

**Recommendation 3** –. That the Director of Resources and Housing:

- (a) Ensures that all Council high rise blocks have communal noticeboards in use by June 2018 to display key information, such as fire safety audit results and details of planned/completed communal repairs and maintenance work.
- (b) Develops a best practice approach to ensure that communal noticeboards within all Council high rise blocks are being managed effectively and kept up-to-date.

**Position reported in October 2018:**

A core suite of 14 posters was developed with the High Rise Strategy Group, including:

- General welcome
- Introducing the Housing Officer – key contact for issues, additional support.
- Common emergency repairs advice
- Communal door entry advice
- Anti-Social Behaviour – advice and key contacts
- Communal cleaning service standards
- Fire Safety information – service standards / expectations
- Getting Involved – key contacts
- Contents Insurance -
- Pets - policy
- Rough Sleepers – how to respond
- Satellites - policy
- Tenancy Fraud Awareness - contacts
- Useful Telephone Numbers

There are some small variations to the core suite dependent on the type of block and information on display is adapted to take into account the different or additional services provided to PFI and sheltered block residents.

The core suite is now on display in all but 15 blocks and plans are in place to roll out the remaining blocks.

In addition to the core suite of posters, the service is currently installing two A4 snap frames in each block to display outcome information from the fire and safety check sheets and updates about planned communal repairs.

The Council is also developing a pilot to use electronic noticeboards in blocks to support engagement and communication with residents, particularly on more urgent issues. As part of the pilot consideration will be given as to how electric noticeboards could be used to provide feedback on the outcomes of fire and safety checks and planned communal repairs.

A central register of all notice boards is now in place, recording the number of notice boards in each block, how they are accessed and a record/photo confirmation that the core suite of posters is on display and up to date. Any future changes to key information will be issued and completion monitored by the Housing Information Team.

**Current Position:**

All high rise blocks have a communal noticeboard that is furnished with both a core suite of standard posters and information sheets, including fire safety guidance, and additional notices relating to local events and opportunities, including ways for tenants to become more involved in Housing Leeds tenant forums.

On 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019, Housing Leeds began trialling an electronic notice board at Lovell Park Towers. The electronic notice board is able to display the core suite of posters along with relevant timely and bespoke updates and messages for example advising that we are aware of the lift being out of order, helping reduce avoidable contact, and giving an estimated repair time. The content is managed remotely and can also include information about events or activities taking place in the local community.

The trial runs until 31<sup>st</sup> August and whilst the technology is still being tested, early indications suggest it is proving popular with tenants, some of whom have found it useful as a means of knowing who their local housing officer is and making contact with him. Other providers are to be contacted to test different models but clearly the potential for getting messages out quickly to tenants in high rise blocks is promising.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome - That there is real time recording of fire safety checks undertaken in Council high rise blocks.**

**Recommendation 4** – That, as a matter of urgency, the Director of Resources and Housing explores investment opportunities for handheld technology, such as smart phones, to be introduced for undertaking and recording fire safety checks in high rise blocks.

**Position reported in October 2018:**

A business case was developed and approved to work with the Digital Information Service to introduce Total Mobile, a hand held solution for the stage 1 fire safety checks in high and low rise blocks across the city. The relevant forms have been designed and tested on the hand held devices and a trial is currently underway for a wedge of the city with 20 users using the electronic forms for the Stage 1 checks and replacing the paper forms.

The trial is being constantly reviewed and improvements made. The trial is due to conclude at the end of October with a view to undertaking a full roll out across all blocks during early 2019. This technology will supply real time accurate time and date stamped information with the ability to upload photographs of any issues so they can be quickly be identified and addressed.

**Current Position:**

A business case was developed and approved to work with the Digital Information Service to introduce Total Mobile, a hand held solution for the stage 1 fire safety checks in high and low rise blocks across the city. Following a trial of the system earlier in 2019, the solution has now been implemented across all high rise blocks and low rise blocks serviced by Civic Enterprise Leeds. This technology offers the advantage to supply real time accurate time and date stamped information with the ability to upload photographs of any issues so they can quickly be identified and addressed by housing management teams. Real time information enables Housing Leeds to respond to urgent issues identified, reducing the risk of fire, providing reassurance that issues are addressed quickly, and supporting the aim to increase tenant satisfaction and confidence.

Housing Leeds intends to trial the Total Mobile technology to support Housing Officers to carry out stage 2 fire safety checks. Work is ongoing to align data from 2 systems, Orchard and Total Mobile, to ensure consistency and accuracy of the data supplied and to ensure the most up to date information is available for Housing Offices. This element of the Total Mobile solution is still in development and the next meeting planned with CEL's Business Partner is planned for 6<sup>th</sup> November. Should the trial prove successful after an evaluation then the solution will be rolled out and will support the delivery of stage 2 fire safety checks.

Similar advantages are expected to be realised i.e. a digital solution offering real time information and a quicker response to urgent matters, whilst reducing reliance on paper based systems. Urgent issues such as blocked chutes and faulty entry systems can be identified and responded to quickly reducing associated risks and once available for Housing Officers, it will remove duplication of work, making them more efficient and available to focus efforts to increase customer service requests.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome - That there is continued Scrutiny engagement surrounding the implications of the Grenfell national public inquiry findings.**

**Recommendation 5** – That the Director of Resources and Housing ensures that further engagement is undertaken with Scrutiny to consider the impact on the Council's Housing Investment Plan once the Grenfell national public inquiry has concluded.

**Position reported in October 2018:**

Housing Leeds are closely following the Grenfell national public inquiry and await any conclusions and recommendations which will inform a review of the Council's Housing Investment Plan.

Following a proactive approach to fire-safety, Housing Leeds had already prepared a programme to retrospectively fit sprinklers to eight multi-storey high rise sheltered blocks. To expand this initiative to a number of higher risk general needs blocks, £10m has been made available from the capital programme to fund further sprinkler installations. This is progressing well to programme with the work being undertaken by Leeds Building Agency. Good resident engagement with residents in the blocks has led to high access rates and very positive customer satisfaction.

An additional 21 multi-storey blocks in Burmantofts, East Leeds, will also have sprinkler systems installed alongside the renewal of the heating systems as part of the 'Leeds Pipes' district heating installation. Initial customer liaison has shown this to be a welcomed addition to the scheme.

As the capital programme continues to progress, 'fire stopping' works have been undertaken to around 97% of high rise properties to re-establish the compartmentation of the building. This in addition to fire signage, planned fire door replacements and replacement of high risk hopper heads on waste chutes.

**Current Position:**

Housing Leeds are closely following the Grenfell national public inquiry and await any conclusions and recommendations which will inform a review of the Council's Housing Investment Plan. Fire safety is of paramount importance and we are unambiguous in our commitment to ensuring resident and building safety and this commitment is supported by our budget allocation.

The following list highlights some of the recent activity undertaken to ensure our properties meet all legislative requirements and that our residents feel safe in their homes:

- Fire risk assessment required by law are carried out by our in house fire safety team in all blocks with communal areas regardless of the type, i.e. high rise or low rise. High rise assessments are carried out annually, following a fire incident, refurbishments or on request of management.
- Sprinkler systems are being installed in the blocks identified as higher-risk following assessment.
- LCC fire safety booklets have been produced and circulated to all households, these may require updates at some time in future following the outcome of the Grenfell enquiry.



Fire stopping works and compartmentalisation of our flats has been completed in our High Rise blocks across the City. This has further enhanced resident safety by improving passive fire safety measures and improving resident safety in the event of a fire. The works have been carried out by our third party accredited contractor.

Auto quench systems for dealing with fires in bin room are fitted following a fire risk assessment where the number of nuisance fires within these areas is (following investigation by fire team) incrementally raising the fire risk to the block endangering our residents.

The previous report identified the investment available to install sprinkler systems across Leeds and this has been expanded with further funding committed to ensure residents safety. This scheme is progressing well with the status of the programme detailed below:

- 10 Nr sprinkler installations completed to date (2014-19) - £4.2m
- 21 Nr Sprinkler installations planned for completion this financial year (2019-20) - £7m
- 25 Nr Sprinkler installations in the 3 year financial plan (2020-23) - £11.3m
- Total Sprinkler spend £22.5m (2014-23)
- This programme of works will see all the blocks identified as higher-risk receive a sprinkler installation along with others where the installation is carried out for logistical and commercial reasons alongside other works, for example the Leeds Pipes scheme.

At the request of Scrutiny Board enquiries have been made with MHCLG regarding additional funding for the installation of sprinkler systems. These enquiries have formed part of a collaborative approach from Local Authorities, however to date no additional Government funding has been made available to Local Authorities for this purpose.

Fire Safety has been a priority for Housing Leeds for some time and investment in this area has been provided to support this requirement. The scope of this investment over recent years and committed future investment is detailed below:

- £12.7m spend (2014-19)
- £1.6m planned for this financial year (2019-20)
- £6m in the 3 year financial plan (2020-23)
- Total Fire Safety Spend £20.3m (2014-23)
- General Fire Safety Works include but are not limited to:
  - Fire-Stopping / Compartmentation
  - Fire Doors/screens
  - Fire & Smoke detection/alarm
  - Emergency lighting
  - Signage

In terms of further regulation specifically the government consultation entitled Building a Safer Future, proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system closed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Housing Leeds await the results of this consultation and are committed to taking on board any recommendations. This consultation builds on the recommendations from

Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety. It proposes fundamental reform of building safety requirements so that residents are safe, and feel safe, in their homes.

The proposals span 5 broad areas:

- the scope of the new regime
- the concept of duty holders who have clear responsibilities throughout a building's design, construction and occupation
- giving residents a stronger voice in the system and ensuring their concerns are never ignored
- plans for a new building safety regulator to provide oversight of the new building safety regulatory regime
- strengthened enforcement and sanctions to deter non-compliance with the new regime

Any outcomes from this consultation and subsequent impacts on Housing Leeds will be reported to The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board in any future updates concerning the Leeds response to Grenfell.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*

**Desired Outcome - That there is scrutiny engagement surrounding fire safety standards linked to medium and low rise Council housing stock.**

**Recommendation 6** – That the Director of Resources and Housing ensures that further engagement is undertaken with Scrutiny regarding fire safety standards linked to medium and low rise Council housing stock.

**Position reported in October 2018:**

Housing Management, Civic Enterprise Leeds and LCC's Fire Safety Manager worked together to introduce stage 1 fire safety checks for all low and medium rise flats which receive a cleaning service from January 2018. Blocks receive a check each day that they are cleaned and any issues are reported through to the housing office for action. Stage 2 fire safety checks are undertaken at least once every 6 months by Housing Office staff, although each block is risk assessed and some are checked more frequently.

**Current Position:**

Housing Management, Civic Enterprise Leeds and LCC's Fire Safety Manager worked together to introduce stage 1 fire safety checks for all low and medium rise flats which receive a cleaning service in January 2018. Fire safety checks are undertaken based on the cleaning frequency, and issues escalated to Housing Officers in line with the fire safety checks of high rise. For medium and low rise blocks where there is communal space, e.g. a staircase, but no cleaning service, each block is risk assessed to determine the frequency of stage 2 checks, and Housing Officers undertake checks accordingly. Stage 2 fire safety checks are undertaken at least once every 6 months.

As mentioned above, the introduction of the Total Mobile solution has supported the delivery of stage 1 and stage 2 fire safety checks. In addition, stage 2 checks are included in monthly Quality Assurance checks, which provides further reassurance that regular checks are made to ensure tenant safety in high rise and low rise accommodation.

**Position Status (categories 1 – 6)** *This is to be formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board*