

Report to Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee

06 March 2025

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service – Grenfell Tower Inquiry Recommendations

Report by Chief Fire Officer

Electoral division(s): All

Summary

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has published its second, and final, report into the circumstances leading up to the tragic fire in 2017. Phase 1 reported on the details relating to the building, the events that unfolded on the night as part of the major incident response, and the fire-fighting actions of the London Fire Brigade. Phase 2 has now reported on the processes and systems that enabled the building to be renovated in the manner that it was, which ultimately facilitated the spread and development of the fire beyond the original fridge fire within a kitchen on the fourth floor.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service have already considered the recommendations made under Phase 1 and will now undertake the same assurance work surrounding the Phase 2 recommendations.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to consider this report and confirm its future plans for the scrutiny of the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service in relation to the assurance activities of the Grenfell Assurance Board. The focus for scrutiny is laid out below:

- Relevant organisational learning from the report for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, specifically relating to Phase Two.
 - Any further scrutiny that is required by the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee.
 - Any relevant recommendations to be considered by the Cabinet Member.
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Proposal

1 Background and context

1.1. The Inquiry was established to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on the night of 14 June 2017.

- Phase 1 focused on the factual narrative of the events on the night of 14 June 2017. The Phase 1 report was published in October 2019 and contained 22 individual recommendations.
 - The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's final hearings took place in November 2022.
 - Phase 2 examined the causes of the fire, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase 1.
- 1.2. The National Fire Chiefs Council produced a progress tracker and placed a requirement on all Fire & Rescue Services to use this and provide quarterly updates on the progress being made against the Phase 1 recommendations, including how they were assuring themselves around the outcomes.
 - 1.3. The National Fire Chiefs Council tracker split the 22 Phase 1 recommendations into 34 individual actions that Fire & Rescue Services had to report against.
 - 1.4. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service set up a Grenfell Board, with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer as the Senior Responsible Owner to track progress and ensure successful embedding of recommendations.
 - 1.5. As of 1 November 2023, all the actions were recorded as complete, having been assured through the Board that the activities were fully embedded into policy/procedure/training etc, and assured through exercises where relevant.
 - 1.6. On 4 September 2024 the Grenfell Tower Inquiry published the second, and final, report into their findings.
 - 1.7. The Phase 2 report details 58 individual recommendations, the majority of which are directed towards the Government in terms of ensuring that aspects such as legislation, guidance, process, assurance etc are fit for purpose.
 - 1.8. Two of these recommendations directly link to recommendations that were initially issued as part of the Phase 1 report, which the Government has yet to fully resolve, surrounding the element of Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedures (PEEPs). On 02 December 2024 the Home Office published its response into the [Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing Plus consultation](#), and are now developing the policy detail and Regulations to enact Residential PEEPs.
 - 1.9. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service will undertake the necessary actions required to embed any activity, as a result of these two recommendations that have been rolled over from Phase 1, into our systems/training/processes once the Government has produced this policy direction and Regulation.
 - 1.10. Of the 58 individual Phase Two Report recommendations, the National Fire Chiefs Council have provided guidance to Fire & Rescue Services that, through discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Home Office, there are 11 recommendations that require direct review and consideration by the Fire and Rescue Services. These 11 recommendations are detailed in **Appendix A**.

- 1.11. In addition to the 11 actions relevant to West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, we have identified 8 recommendations that would be pertinent for West Sussex County Council to consider to assure itself that it can also meet its obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in the event of a major incident, or as part of training to ensure the competence of those who will be responding to one. These are detailed in **Appendix B** and have been shared with the West Sussex County Council Resilience and Emergencies Team to consider on behalf of the West Sussex County Council.
- 1.12. As West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service have the responsibility for the Resilience and Emergencies Team, it is considered appropriate for these recommendations to also align to the Grenfell Assurance Board to enable the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Executive Board, the West Sussex County Council Executive Leadership Team, and the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee to have assurance that they have been addressed and embedded.
- 1.13. It is the intent of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service to continue to operate its Grenfell Assurance Board in the same way as it did through Phase 1, to continue to provide the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Executive Board, the West Sussex County Council Executive Leadership Team, and the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee with the assurance that the actions required to address the recommendations under Phase 2 have been fully considered, implemented and embedded.
- 1.14. National Fire Chiefs Council have confirmed that it is their intention to issue all Fire & Rescue Services with a progress tracker, to aid with the provision of quarterly updates, to enable assurance to both the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Home Office that actions have been taken and embedded. It is not yet known when this will be issued.
- 1.15. With regards to considering the funding of any element of the recommendations, and any resourcing needs, there has been no suggestion currently that the Fire & Rescue Services/Local Authorities will be provided any additional funding to support the implementation of these. By way of reference no additional funding was provided to embed the recommendations of the Grenfell Phase 1 report.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 For the Committee to scrutinise the proposed governance and assurance of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service embedding the actions that relate to the 11 recommendations that the National Fire Chiefs Council have defined require Fire & Rescue Service activity.
- 2.2 This scrutiny would be required through the submission of our six-monthly Community Risk Management Planning updates and the annual Statement of Assurance, detailing progress and where tasks have been embedded, how an appropriate degree of assurance has been demonstrated.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 For the committee not to consider the wider Phase Two recommendations beyond the scope of the 11 areas for review by the Fire and Rescue Service, and the 8 areas that the Resilience and Emergencies Team will consider on

behalf of the West Sussex County Council, as these other aspects are beyond our local control.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 Consultation will be undertaken as part of the consideration of the report to identify what further scrutiny members wish to undertake.

5 Finance

- 5.1 Given that we are in the early stages of planning, it is too early for us to understand the revenue consequences for the 11 recommendations. There is likely to be a financial impact in relation to four key areas, however as a service we must ensure that we consider all options, both in relation to fire fighter safety, efficiency as well as value for money:

- i. Fire Control function
- ii. Equipment; for example radios
- iii. Additional one off and cyclical training required to support implementation
- iv. Improved water undertaker arrangements in relation to supply of water

- 5.2 The immediate actions will be considered through the existing Medium Term Financial Strategy process alongside the wider Community Risk Management Planning delivery.

- 5.3 The longer term will be considered as part of the Community Risk Management Planning 2026 and beyond to ensure it is sustainable and embedded for the longer term.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
A lack of effective scrutiny of the Fire and Rescue Service	The robust and focussed scrutiny of the Committee to ensure that the ongoing activity of the Fire & Rescue Service Grenfell Assurance Board represents appropriate and embedded policies/procedures and training which has been checked through exercising where relevant.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 There are no social value, crime and disorder, equality duty, human rights, public health, climate change or legal implications arising from this report.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations relevant to West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Appendix B: Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations relevant for West Sussex County Council consideration through the Resilience and Emergencies Team

Background papers: None