Wandsworth

Chief Executive
Paul Martin

Wandsworth Borough Council
Chief Executive's Group
The Town Hall Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PU

Date: 5 September 2018

For further information on this agenda, please contact the Committee Secretary: Ms Thayyiba Shaah on Tel: 0208 871 6039 or email: thayyiba.shaah@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

HOUSING AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2018 AT 7.30 P.M. ROOM 123 - THE TOWN HALL, WANDSWORTH HIGH STREET, WANDSWORTH SW18 2PU

Members of the Committee:
Councillor Mrs. J. Cooper (Chairman); Councillor Morgan (Deputy Chairman); Councillors Byrne, Calland, Dikerdem, Gilbert, P. Graham, Hart, Ireland, McLeod, Ryder and White.

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interests**

   To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other relevant personal interests in any of the matters to be considered at the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2018**

   To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20th June 2018.

3. **Borough Residents' Forum - Report of meeting on 4th September 2018 (Paper No. 18-278)**

Report by the Chief Executive (To follow).

4. **Fire Safety Update (Paper No. 18-279)** **(Pages 5 - 10)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).

5. **Proposal for an evidence-based approach to fire safety post Grenfell Tower (Paper No. 18-280)** **(Pages 11 - 20)**

Report by Councillors Paul White and Malcolm Grimston (Attached).

6. **Response to Paper No. 18-280 (Paper No. 18-281)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration concerning Paper No. 18-280 by Councillors Paul White and Malcolm Grimston on the 'Proposal for an evidence-based approach to fire safety post Grenfell Tower' (To follow).

7. **Housing and Homelessness Strategy: Options Paper (Paper No. 18-282)** **(Pages 21 - 48)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).

8. **Housing Services Activity Update (Paper No. 18-283)** **(Pages 49 - 68)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).

9. **Re-tendering of the lift servicing and maintenance services to domestic dwellings at various properties Borough-wide (Contracts A and B) (Paper No. 18-284)** **(Pages 69 - 74)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).

10. **Re-tendering the Boroughwide district and communal domestic gas servicing, maintenance and inspection contracts (Paper No. 18-285)** **(Pages 75 - 82)**

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).

11.	**Petition from residents of Bisley House SW19 (West Hill) regarding the installation of sprinklers (Paper No. 18-286)** Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).	**(Pages 83 - 84)**
12.	**Petition from residents of Glen Albyn Road, Chobham Gardens and Thursley Gardens SW19 (West Hill) in relation to noise and vandalism (Paper No. 18-287)** Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).	**(Pages 85 - 88)**
13.	**Petition from residents of Eliot Court, Wentworth Court and Sudbury House, SW18 (Southfields) in relation to pest infestation (Paper No. 18-288)** Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration (Attached).	**(Pages 89 - 92)**

PAPER NO. 18-279

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH SEPTEMBER 2018

EXECUTIVE – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2018

Report by the Director of Housing and Regeneration updating on fire safety arrangements in Wandsworth Council's managed housing stock.

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on progress with recladding works at Castlemaine, SW11 (Latchmere) and Sudbury House, SW18 (Southfields). It covers the Council's application to the First Tier Property Tribunal to establish that it has the power under the lease to undertake and charge leaseholders for retro-fitting sprinklers and sets out the Select Committee's recommendations on sprinklers and the Government decision to fund cladding works.

Finally, the report seek approval to fit sprinklers in its sheltered housing stock and provides an update on progress on individual fire safety reassurance visits to all properties in Council high rise blocks.

The Director of Resources comments that a positive Housing Revenue Account capital budget variation of £24 million was approved in July 2017 (Paper No. 17-243) specifically in relation to the installation of sprinklers in Council owned social housing blocks of ten floors and above. Extending the scheme to include sheltered housing properties and appropriate hostel accommodation would require a further positive Housing Revenue Account capital addition, estimated to be in the region of £4 million, which will need to be included in the Housing Revenue Account capital bids process and recommended for approval in January 2019.

The Council is expecting to spend approximately £17 million removing and replacing the cladding from both Sudbury House and Castlemaine. Officers have submitted a claim for the recovery of those costs through the Social Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund following the commitment by the Government to cover the costs of recladding Council and housing association blocks.

GLOSSARY

MHCLG	-	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
HRA	-	Housing Revenue Account

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.

2. If the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve any views, comments or additional recommendations on this report these will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

3. The Executive are recommended to approve the extension of the sprinkler installation programme to the Council's sheltered housing stock and appropriate hostel accommodation.

BACKGROUND

4. Since the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14th June 2017, the Committee and Executive have been kept regularly updated on progress with improvements to fire safety within the Council's high-rise housing stock and, where required, approval has been sought to proceed with various measures. The following reports have been submitted: -

   (a) Paper No. 17-239 to the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive in June 2017;
   (b) Paper No. 17-243 to the Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2017;
   (c) Paper No. 17-269 to the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive in September 2017;
   (d) Paper No. 17-413 to the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2017 and
   (e) Paper No. 18-12 to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive in January 2018.

PROGRESS WITH RECLADDING WORKS AT SUDBURY HOUSE SW18 (SOUTHFIELDS) AND CASTLEMAINE SW11 (LATCHMERE)

5. In October 2017, approval was obtained under the Council's SO83(A) consultation arrangements to make a direct award to the Council's Environment and Community Services' Operational Services Section, to replace the external cladding to Sudbury House, SW18 (Southfields).

6. In April 2018 approval was obtained under the Council's Standing Order No 83(A) consultation arrangements to appoint Durkhan Ltd. to replace external cladding at Castlemaine, SW11 (Latchmere).

7. Work on both blocks has now commenced and good progress has been made, particularly with respect to Sudbury House where cladding has been fully removed from the north and south elevations which sit in front of the two staircases. This has significantly reduced the level of fire risk with respect to this block. Recladding works to both blocks are due to complete in June/July 2019.

GOVERNMENT DECISION TO FUND CLADDING WORKS

8. On 16th May 2018, the Government announced that it had agreed to fund the recladding works required to Council and housing association blocks and has now issued directions as to how to reclaim these costs. It has specified that the replacement cladding should meet the appropriate European combustibility standard and the product chosen has been subject to a full British Standard fire test in 2016.The Council, along with a number of

other landlords, had consistently petitioned the Minster of Housing, Communities and Local Government to fund these essential works. The Government announcement was most welcome, given that the Council would have had to find £17 million from its own resources to complete the works.

APPLICATION TO THE FIRST TIER PROPERTY TRIBUNAL

9. In January 2018 (Paper No. 18-12) the Executive approved the Council making a pre-emptive application to the First Tier Property Tribunal to establish that it has the power under the lease to undertake and charge leaseholders for works to retro-fit sprinkler systems within their properties. The application was lodged on 25th July 2018 and directions from the tribunal have now been received. As directed, all affected leaseholders were notified of the contents of the Council's application by 17th August and advised on how to make representation to the tribunal. The Tribunal has also convened a case management conference for 27th September 2018 and leaseholders have been asked if they wished to make representation to this conference, which is expected to issue further directions for a hearing later in the year. In advance of any works being undertaken, sprinklers systems have been fitted to show flats in central Wandsworth and Roehampton and residents invited to inspect the installation.

SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SPRINKLERS

10. On 18th July 2018 a Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) cross party select committee published a report entitled an "Independent review of building regulations and fire safety: next steps". This report is wide ranging and drew on evidence presented by a range of fire safety experts and makes an important recommendation with respect to sprinklers indicating that, where feasible, "*sprinklers should be retro-fitted to existing high-rise residential buildings…"* It then goes on to state that *"the Government should make funding available to fit sprinklers into council and housing association-owned residential buildings above 18m."*

11. Again, the Council has petitioned for funding for what it considers vitally important fire safety work to its high-rise stock and welcomes the recommendations of the cross-party select committee.

OPTIONS FOR SHELTERED HOUSING STOCK AND HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

12. Sheltered schemes house vulnerable tenants who are at a greater risk from fire. This increased risk stems from the fact that many residents would have difficulty in self-evacuating in the event of a fire. Although all properties are fitted with integrated fire alarms and are linked to a 24-hour control centre it is felt that the additional protection a sprinkler system would provide to these properties would prove invaluable in managing future fire risk to residents. The Council has already fitted sprinklers to its temporary accommodation at Nightingale Square, SW12 (Nightingale) and very recently a sprinkler head was actuated in a kitchen and a potentially serious chip pan fire was extinguished before the fire service attended. There are 903 sheltered housing properties that would benefit from the installation of sprinklers and the estimated cost of these works would be £4 million. It is recommended that the sprinkler installation programme be extended to include sheltered housing and appropriate hostel accommodation. A budget variation for these works will be included as part of the HRA capital bids in January 2019 to enable these sheltered properties to be added to the programme.

PROGRESS ON INDIVIDUAL VISITS TO HIGH RISE PROPERTIES

13. The Council manages 100 residential blocks of 18 metres or higher and individual visits are being completed to each of the 6,322 properties, 2,400 of which have been carried out to date. These visits are to check that properties are fitted with smoke alarms, front doors are fitted with closers and offer the necessary fire resistance and to offer general fire safety advice to residents. It is anticipated that these visits will be concluded by the end of 2018 but follow up work will continue into 2019.

14. The communal areas of all these blocks are also being rechecked to ensure that the necessary compartmentation and other fire safety measures are in place. Fire risk assessments for these blocks are also being reviewed in accordance with government guidance.

LONDON COUNCILS' FIRE SAFETY GROUP

15. The Council continues to play an active role in the London wide Fire Safety Group which is facilitated by London Councils and is also a member of the smaller steering group. At a local level, regular meetings are held with the Borough Commander and Fire Safety Officers reviewing local arrangements around the managed stock.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

16. The Director of Resources comments that a positive Housing Revenue Account capital budget variation of £24 million was approved in July 2017 (Paper No. 17-243) specifically in relation to the installation of sprinklers in Council owned social housing blocks of ten floors and above.

17. There is currently no approved provision in the Housing Revenue Account business plan for extending the scheme to sheltered properties and other hostel accommodation. Extending the scheme to cover these would require a further positive Housing Revenue Account capital addition, estimated to be in the region of £4 million, which will need to be included in the Housing Revenue Account capital bids process and recommended for approval in January 2019.

18. The Council is expecting to spend approximately £17 million removing and replacing the cladding from both Sudbury House and Castlemaine. Officers have submitted a claim for the recovery of those costs through the Social Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund following the commitment by the Government to cover the costs of recladding Council and housing association blocks.

CONCLUSION

19. The Department will continue to progress the matters set out in this report and further reports will follow to future meetings to keep the Committee and Executive updated on fire safety measures.

The Town Hall,
Wandsworth,
SW18 2PU.

BRIAN REILLY
Director of Housing and Regeneration

5th September 2018

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/moderngov) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the committee secretary (Thayyiba Shaah, 020 8871 6039; email thayyiba.shaah@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) can supply if required.