

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 29 August 2017

Report by: Director of Development and Housing Services

Heading: Fire Safety - High Rise Blocks

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the range of measures that have been taken and are in place to ensure the safety of residents living in high rise properties across Renfrewshire, in light of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked
- (i) To note the measures that are in place and the action taken following the fire at Grenfell Tower to ensure that effective fire safety management practices are followed at the 14 high rise blocks owned and managed by Renfrewshire Council.

3 Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council owns and manages 14 high rise blocks of flats – 13 in Paisley and one in Johnstone. A report entitled 'Fire Safety Audit' was submitted to the former Housing & Community Safety Policy Board in 2010 summarising the findings from an independent fire risk assessment that had been commissioned for all these blocks.

- 3.2 The report coincided with the launch of a detailed leaflet that has since been provided to all residents living in high rise properties since 2010, which details the action they should take in case of a fire. The content and advice contained in the leaflet was agreed with the Fire & Rescue Service.
- 3.3 Following the Grenfell Tower fire on 13 June 2017, a group of key officers including representatives from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service have been meeting regularly to:
- Review the measures that are in place to ensure fire safety at our high rise blocks,
 - Agree any actions that may enhance these fire safety arrangements,
 - Ensure tenants and residents are kept up to date and re-assured in the weeks following the Grenfell Tower tragedy
- 3.4 The table below summarises the key areas that have been under review and consideration:

TABLE 1 Fire Safety at high rise blocks – list of key actions

No.	Item/Issue	Action Taken
1	CLADDING	<p>9 of the 14 high rise blocks have been re-clad in the last 5 years, with the other 5 blocks being re-clad between 18 and 25 years ago – see APPENDIX 1.</p> <p>Checks have been carried out to ensure that the materials used comply with the terms of the Building Warrants issued for each of the 14 blocks, and it has been confirmed that there is no cladding of the type used at Grenfell tower on any of the 14 blocks.</p> <p>Given that works on the cladding on 5 of the blocks took place over 20 years ago, arrangements were made for a specialist contractor to inspect the condition of these panels and carry out additional combustion tests.</p> <p>Initial results have confirmed that the materials used comply with the relevant Building Regulations but the final assessment of the materials is expected in the next few weeks as the results have been delayed due to the number of tests that are currently being carried out for a range of landlords.</p> <p>It is also noted that as the cladding on these 5 blocks is approaching the end of its lifecycle, provision is being made within future Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme to commence a programme of replacing the cladding.</p>

No.	Item/Issue	Action Taken
2	FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS	<p>Daily checks are carried out by concierge / caretaking staff, with quarterly inspection visits to all blocks from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.</p> <p>These regular inspections include checks on: dry risers, hydrants, fire doors, bin stores and other communal fixtures.</p>
3	INDIVIDUAL FLATS	<p>All individual council flats have hard wired smoke alarms fitted.</p> <p>Council properties have had '60 minute' fire resistant doors fitted, and steps are currently being taken to ensure that the 11 tenants who had previously refused to have these doors fitted allow this work to proceed.</p> <p>A visual inspection of doors of privately owned flats within each of the blocks has been carried out. Where it has been noted that the door which has been fitted may not meet the required standards, contact has been made with the owner concerned to offer advice and assistance.</p>
4	FIRE ALARMS	<p>Communal Fire Alarm Systems are in place at 9 of the 14 blocks and are regularly serviced by a specialist contractor.</p> <p>While there is no statutory requirement to have a fire alarm fitted in high rise properties, alarm systems are currently being fitted to ensure that all blocks have a suitable system.</p>
5	SPRINKLERS	<p>The fitting of sprinkler systems to high rise flats is currently being reviewed by the Scottish Government, and we are awaiting findings / guidance.</p>
6	INFORMATION/ ADVICE TO TENANTS	<p>All residents at our 14 high rise blocks were lettered within 3 days of the Grenfell Tower tragedy in order to provide reassurance that the cladding on our high rise blocks was not the same as that used on Grenfell Tower.</p> <p>This has been followed up with 'drop-in' sessions at each of the blocks during July and August, where Housing Services staff and Fire & Rescue Service officers have been available to offer advice and reassurance to residents and respond to any questions.</p>

- 3.5 Members will be aware that it is likely that further guidance/regulations on fire safety at high rise blocks is likely to be issued from the Scottish Government and/or from the findings of the Grenfell Tower enquiry. This being the case it is considered that further reports will be provided to future meetings of the Policy Board on ongoing fire safety considerations.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none – though findings from the Grenfell Tower enquiry may result in a requirement for additional measures at all high rise blocks.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community Planning – Safer and Stronger** – the range of measures that are in place help to ensure tenants at our high rise blocks are as safe as possible.
4. **Legal** - none.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – none.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report as it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** – no risks have been identified.
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable.

List of Background Papers

- (a) None.

Renfrewshire Council High Rise Blocks

Appendix 1

Renfrewshire Council Stock	Year of Construction	No of Floors	No of Units	Original Construction	Overcladding	Fire Alarm
Camphill Court, Paisley PA2 6BU	1968	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - PermaRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Speirsfield Court, Paisley PA2 6BS	1968	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - PermaRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Rowan Court, Paisley PA2 6NB	1966	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - Rockwool EcoRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Calside Court, Paisley PA2 6DS	1966	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - Rockwool EcoRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Hamilton Court, Paisley PA2 6DG	1964	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - Rockwool EcoRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Union Court, Paisley PA2 6DX	1964	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2015 - Rockwool EcoRock Mineral Fibre EWI system	Yes
Williamsburgh Court, Paisley PA1 1QJ	1970	14	88	Concrete frame in-filled with 100mm brick, 50mm cavity and 100mm breeze block and 10mm render surface	Refurbished 2014 - Structtherm Insulated Render System with mineral wool fire barriers at all floor slabs, internal corners and vertically between dwellings	Currently being installed
Glencairn Court, Paisley PA3 4PD	1969	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2013 - Structtherm Insulated Render System with mineral wool fire barriers at all floor slabs horizontally and vertically between dwellings	Yes
Gallowhill Court, Paisley PA3 4NJ	1969	15	90	Concrete frame with in-filled 'no-fines' concrete panels	Refurbished 2013 - Structtherm Insulated Render System with mineral wool fire barriers at all floor slabs horizontally and vertically between dwellings	Yes
George Court, Paisley PA1 2JS	1959	14	56	Concrete frame 'Blackburn' construction	Refurbished circa 1999 - Rainscreen cladding system with Stoneflex panels and acoustic thermal insulation "Rocks"	Currently being installed
Provost Close, Johnstone PA5 8AL	1976	13	52	Reinforced concrete frame and floor with precast concrete in-fill panels	Refurbished circa 1992 - Rainscreen cladding system with Cape Stenni 88 panels and mineral fibre insulation	Currently being installed
Maxwellton Court, Paisley PA1 2UD	1967	17	102	Steel frame with precast concrete floors and panels	Refurbished circa 1999 - Rainscreen cladding system with Cape Stenni 88 panels and mineral fibre insulation	Yes
Glentiffer Court, Paisley PA2 8PS	1967	14	57	Concrete frame with 'Bison' sandwich panels	Refurbished circa 1992 - Rainscreen cladding system with Cape Stenni 88 panels and mineral fibre insulation	Currently being installed
Nethercraigs Court, Paisley PA2 8PT	1966	14	57	Concrete frame with 'Bison' sandwich panels	Refurbished circa 1992 - Rainscreen cladding system with Cape Stenni 88 panels and mineral fibre insulation	Currently being installed

