

MAYOR OF LONDON

The Prime Minister

10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Date: 29 July 2020

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing in relation to the concerning delay in the appointment of a replacement panel member for the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

You wrote to the Chair of the Inquiry over five months ago confirming your intention to appoint a new panel member. You also stated that Cabinet Office officials would engage the services of a search company to identify a shortlist of suitable candidates as a matter of urgency.

The only update you have given since then, despite repeated calls for this to happen, was on 2 June 2020, when in a further letter to the Chair you confirmed Perrett Laver had been appointed to search for a suitable candidate.

This lack of progress and communication is unacceptable. The bereaved, next of kin, survivors, residents and all those who have long called for an independent and diverse panel did so in the knowledge that it would provide a breadth of expertise and differing perspectives that are all too often ignored. Not only is a diverse panel essential for the full trust of the Grenfell community, it will also serve to ensure that the Inquiry can comply with its legal duties including those under the Equality Act 2010.

I wrote to you on 29 January 2020 and 12 June 2020 urging you to appoint a panel member as soon as practicable and requesting that you outline your Cabinet Office's efforts thus far. It is now imperative that the panel member is in place for the recommencement of Phase 2 hearings in September. Further delays simply erode trust in the Inquiry process.

I have today written to the Chair of the Inquiry about the need for the Inquiry to examine whether racism and discrimination were factors in this tragedy, bearing in mind the prevalence of certain protected characteristics amongst London's social tenants. I have also urged the Chair to hold a procedural hearing so that these issues can be explored further.

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In the letter of 12 June 2020, I also highlighted the need for transparency around the Grenfell recovery budget being managed by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and concerns that some of the Grenfell bereaved, next of kin and survivors are struggling to gain access to it. I am still waiting for a reply to these serious concerns.

I would be grateful for an urgent response to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small number '2' written below the name.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc Paul Scully MP, Minister for London