

9 February 2018

As Chair of the Grenfell Recovery Scrutiny Committee I have been heartened by the depth of interest and engagement, at our meetings, from local residents and from those involved in the voluntary, community and faith groups of North Kensington. These contributions have been valuable in allowing Committee members to do their work, to hold the Grenfell Recovery Programme to account and to make it better for those of us affected by it, and I am extremely grateful to all those who've taken part to date.

I have also listened carefully to the criticism that the very structure and nature of the meetings has not been conducive to facilitating the widest possible participation and representation from our local communities. I believe that in order for the Committee to do its work effectively this needs to be addressed. The meeting on 15 February will therefore be a facilitated meeting dedicated solely to giving local people - and the representatives of local voluntary, community and faith groups - the opportunity to consider what kind of meeting might enable the Committee to achieve its aims better in future, and identify topics for priority discussion at the March meeting.

I would like this next meeting to provide the opportunity for us all to learn from one another how these Committee meetings can be improved in order to achieve better outcomes for us all. We want to make sure that the voices from our local communities and our experiences of the Grenfell Recovery Programme are both listened and responded to. This is in order to allow the Programme to fall under the critical eye of those of us most affected by it, and to allow that experience to inform the Programme's development. The aim of all scrutiny is to make the work of the Council more effective for all of us who live and work in our communities, so I feel we need to discuss together how the work of this Committee can be as effective as possible to make sure:

- it can be seen as being owned by the communities most affected by the fire;
- the agenda reflects the concerns of our communities;
- the constructive input of those most affected by the fire is maximised; and
- the role of elected councillors and co-opted members of the committee is used to its best effect.

As Chair, I will open the meeting before handing over to an independent facilitator, Graham Elder. Graham has broad experience of helping council meetings run more productively to support local residents, having worked with more than 15 councils. He will encourage discussion in small groups about the kind of meeting that residents, and those involved with our communities, might hope to achieve in future. Towards the end, these groups will feed back to the wider meeting on key points raised in the group discussions – all of which will inform what happens at the following meeting, on 21 March.

I do hope that as many of our local residents, and those who work in our local community, voluntary and faith groups, will be able to come, to enrich our discussion and help move us forward in a positive and productive way by co-designing the format of future meetings.

I hope to see you on 15 February.

Robert Thompson

Cllr. Robert Thompson
Chair, Grenfell Recovery Scrutiny Committee