

**Science Advisory Group (SAG) for the review of potential environmental
contamination in Grenfell and North Kensington**

Advice to Grenfell Tower Fire Ministerial Recovery Group

Minutes of Meeting #9 – 23rd October 2019

Overview

At its ninth meeting, SAG discussed: (i) lessons learned from Tier 1 of the review and (ii) next steps for science support from the departmental Chief Scientific Advisors (CSAs).

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Patrick Vallance thanked SAG members for their work over the past year, and Dr Alexandra Freeman and Dr James Rubin in particular for their recent support on science communication.
2. SAG reflected on Tier 1 and commented on some initial lessons learned, including:
 - It was suggested that, for Tier 2, data and communications should be prepared earlier to ensure the smooth running of the review and publication process.
 - SAG recapped that issues relating to health and the initial fire are beyond the scope of SAG and are for the Department of Health and Social care (DHSC) and the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) but noted that these remain important. SAG has previously advised that issues like biomonitoring would be best suited to a research project for a range of reasons, including that no clinical action could be taken to benefit individuals. SAG was supportive of the idea of a review of the proposed health services by the Multi Agency Partnership (MAP) to address these issues. Patrick agreed to raise with the CMO and write to the MAP to follow this up.
 - A question was asked whether flame retardants (polybrominated diphenyl ethers) would be tested for in Tier 2 and if so, whether laboratory limits of detection would remain the same as Tier 1. The Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) agreed to provide details on the approach in Tier 1 and AECOM's advice for Tier 2.
3. SAG was introduced to the Chief Scientific Advisors (CSAs) from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). As previously agreed, SAG and CSAs confirmed that the CSAs will take over day to day science advice and oversight for Tier 2. SAG agreed to reconvene when needed.
4. Testing of the indoor environment in Tier 2 was raised under AOB. As agreed in SAG Meeting #8, at present there is insufficient evidence to provide a sound scientific basis for any testing and SAG does not recommend broad spectrum, untargeted testing indoors. SAG has previously advised on an approach to indoor testing if it is deemed necessary for other reasons.

List of actions

ACTION 9.1: Patrick to contact Chief Medical Officer to discuss matters relating to potential health impacts outside of SAG remit and write to the MAP in support of a review of associated health services.

ACTION 9.2: Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) to provide details of the approach taken for testing flame retardants (polybrominated diphenyl ethers) in Tier 1.

ACTION 9.3: MHCLG and Defra CSAs to meet Suzanne Kochanowski, MHCLG, to discuss next steps for Tier 2. Patrick Vallance to attend representing SAG.

ACTION 9.4: Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) to share comments on Tier 2 specification with MHCLG and Defra CSAs

ACTION 9.5: SAG secretariat to share details of SAG expertise with MHCLG and Defra CSAs.

In attendance

Sir Patrick Vallance, chair
Government Office for Science secretariat

Dialling in:

Dr Lindsay Bramwell
Prof Len Levy
Prof Jose Torero
Dr Alexandra Freeman
Dr Paul Nathanail (Suitably Qualified Person)
Prof Sir Anthony Newman Taylor
Prof Alan Penn (Chief Scientific Adviser MHCLG)
Prof Gideon Henderson (Chief Scientific Adviser Defra)

Apologies

Prof Ragnar Löfstedt
Prof Chris Whitty (in his capacity as Chief Medical Officer)
Prof Robert Mokaya
Dr James Rubin
Prof John Warner