



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

20 December 2019

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Sir Martin,

GRENFELL INQUIRY PANEL - APPOINTMENT

Section 7 of the Inquiries Act 2005 states that the power to appoint additional members to the Inquiry panel is exercisable only with the consent of the Inquiry Chair. I am therefore writing to seek your consent to the appointment to the Inquiry panel of Ms Benita Mehra.

You will be aware that my predecessor wrote to you in May of this year to seek your consent to appoint Thouria Istephan and Professor Nabeel Hamdi to the Inquiry Panel for Phase 2.

Sadly, Professor Hamdi was unable to proceed with the appointment and as a consequence I am proposing that Benita Mehra, an experienced chartered engineer, replace him.

Section 8 of the Inquiries Act, is clear that in deciding to exercise my power to appoint additional panel members to the Inquiry, I must have regard to:

- 1) the need to ensure that the Inquiry panel (considered as a whole) has the necessary expertise to undertake the Inquiry; and
- 2) In the case of an Inquiry panel consisting of a chair and one or more other members, to the need for balance (considered against the background of the terms of reference) in the composition of the panel.

Ms Mehra is a highly experienced engineer with a range of skills and experience directly relevant to the issues that the Inquiry will be investigating in Phase 2 of its work.

Her curriculum vitae is attached to this letter for your consideration. I am confident that she will be an excellent addition to the Inquiry panel.

The Act is also clear that I must not appoint a person to the panel who has a direct interest in the matters to which the Inquiry relates or a person who has a close association with an interested party unless those links could not reasonably be regarded as affecting the impartiality of the inquiry panel.

Ms Mehra has confirmed that she is not aware of any conflict of interest and Cabinet Office officials have also undertaken due diligence which has not identified any concerns. Benita will resign from her current job, as Director of Strategic Assets, at the London Ambulance Service, following her appointment to the panel.

I hope that this appointment will provide additional reassurance that, along with your Chairmanship, the Inquiry has the breadth of skills and experience to conduct a thorough investigation of the Phase 2 issues.

I would also like to inform you that I propose to publish the Government's formal response to the Inquiry's Phase 1 report and its recommendations once Parliament has returned from the Christmas break and before the start of the Phase 2 hearings. This will set out in detail, how we intend to address the recommendations and I will ensure that the appropriate Parliamentary time is secured for its full and proper scrutiny.

The Government response will provide further information on primary and secondary legislative options being considered to implement the recommendations that require a change in the law. We aim to bring forward legislation during 2020 to address both your recommendations and those of Dame Judith Hackitt.

We will also publish further advice and guidance to help ensure that the fire safety risks identified are proactively managed so that residents can feel safe in their homes and we will be able to provide details of the work we are undertaking with

our partners to ensure that they in turn deliver on the recommendations in the report.

I look forward to receiving your consent to the appointment of Ms Mehra which along with my letter to you, will be published on gov.uk when an announcement of the appointments is made tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sir Martin Moore-Bick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sir Martin Moore-Bick