



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Jeremy Pocklington, CB
Permanent Secretary

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The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
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Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for your letter of today and the ongoing work of our officials as we work to bring about generational reform of building safety in this country.

You understand why the Government must act. Waking watch costs are a national scandal and it is right that we step in to support leaseholders. To not do so will leave leaseholders facing unacceptably high costs at a time when they are already experiencing significant uncertainty. As you recognise, the National Fire Chiefs Council has been clear that building owners should move to install fire alarms as quickly as possible to reduce or remove the dependence on waking watches. Whilst some building owners have done so, I am persuaded that the quickest and most effective way to correct this scandal is to provide a £30m fund to pay for the installation of the alarms.

I have carefully considered the issues you have raised about The Fire Alarm Fund proposal to provide £30m funding for the installation of a common alarm system in high rise buildings with unsafe cladding to reduce dependence on costly waking watch. In particular, I have considered the implications for the Department in demonstrating compliance with the principles set out in Managing Public Money. It is my judgement that this course of action is in the best interests of the people living in those buildings with unsafe cladding.

You should therefore take this note as a formal direction to proceed.

RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP