

MAYOR OF LONDON

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP

Secretary of State for the Home Department
The Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Date: 12 JUL 2017



Further to my letter dated 25 April 2017, I write regarding a number of concerns I have about the resourcing of the fire service in London, following recent events. I will deal with each of these in turn.

Grenfell Tower Fire

The Grenfell Tower fire has shocked the world. No one can fail to have been inspired by the bravery of our firefighters who risked their own lives to save others. I know you have met some of the firefighters and the control staff and have heard their accounts of events on the night of the fire and, subsequently, like me, you cannot fail to have been moved by what you have heard.

I meet regularly with Dany Cotton, the London Fire Commissioner, and have thanked her and the London Fire Brigade (LFB) for their amazing response to the fire.

In order to learn from the fire, I asked her to review specialist equipment and support the LFB requires in order to assist their task of rescue and recovery in future major incidents

The Commissioner has undertaken an initial assessment of this and has indicated that London's Fire Brigade will need a range of new specialist equipment at an estimated cost of £6m in order to ensure that they are fully prepared for the challenges ahead. In addition, there are a number of additional costs related to staffing and the inquiry and investigation team that will also need additional resourcing. In total the Brigade estimate that the additional staffing and maintenance of the new equipment could have an ongoing cost of £6m per annum.

Furthermore, the Commissioner has indicated that a number of the ways in which the brigade had anticipated meeting the future budget gap are no longer viable, and would leave the forecast budget gap of about £13.5m unmet. The financial pressures outlined in this letter, including those on pay below, are estimated to create an additional budget gap of a further £12m. This could therefore leave the Brigade facing a budget gap of some £25.5m by 2021/22.

The fire grant in London has been cut repeatedly over the last seven years and further budget cuts inherited from the previous Mayor are in the pipeline over coming years. It is clear that London's grant needs to be increased to ensure that we can maintain and improve the service the Fire Brigade offers Londoners.

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Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA)

As you will be aware from previous representations, I have serious concerns about the government's approach and handling of preparedness for Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attacks (MTFA) incidents in the capital. As we have seen with the Westminster, London Bridge and Finsbury Park attacks, it is regrettably no longer the case that MTFA attendance can be argued to be exceptional. In all three cases, the LFB was among the first responders and worked alongside other emergency services as part of the response. As I set out in my previous letter, I believe that the national planning assumptions may prove to be inadequate in relation to the response London would require in the event of a larger major incident. Events over the last few months demonstrate how London continues to be a target for incidents of this nature and it is only right that the Government give London the appropriate status to allow our capital city to be fully resourced.

It is also essential that the Government recognise that the response to MTFA is not part of the firefighter role map and make additional funding available as a matter of urgency to ensure that London and Londoners are protected going forward.

I have been making representations on MTFA for some time now. It is taking too long for government to acknowledge the scale of the threat we face. Action and resources are required speedily.

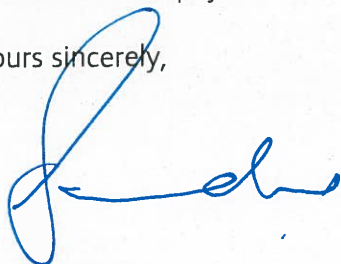
Firefighter Pay

Firefighters do an incredible job and deserve a decent level of pay.

Not only have firefighters seen a real terms cut in pay since 2010, the changing role of the firefighter – for example in taking on emergency medical response and in responding to terror incidents – should be recognised in the pay they receive. Irrespective of the outcome of the ongoing pay negotiations taking place between by the National Joint Council, it is time for the government to recognise that firefighters deserve a decent pay rise and this must be fully funded by government.

I would ask that you to act urgently on all these matters, to ensure the safety of London and Londoners and to make sure that firefighters and other emergency services are treated decently in relation to their pay.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc: Rt Hon Gavin Barwell, Chief of Staff, 10 Downing Street
Rt Hon Greg Hands MP, Minister for London