

Cabinet Addendum Sheet

24 July 2025



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Classification: Public

ITEM 7 - OUTTURN 2024/25 & MONTH 2 MONITORING 25/26

New recommendation 2n)

That Cabinet note the building safety situation at the Union Park Estate, Brindley Place, Uxbridge and authorise the Director of Operational Assets to take the necessary decisions required to ensure the safety of over 250 private sector properties and to enable residents to remain in their homes while emergency works are progressed, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property and briefing other Members as and when required.

Reasons for recommendation

A recent fire risk assessment by the managing agents at the Union Park Estate in Cowley, Uxbridge (private sector housing) has identified urgent building safety concerns requiring immediate action. These include the need for enhanced fire detection systems and interim safety measures to protect residents while longer-term works are planned and delivered. The London Fire Services was informed and convened an emergency meeting on 17 July with relevant stakeholders including the Council.

As the managing agents have advised they are unable to fund the urgent works at the current time, to ensure the safety of over 250 households and avoid the disruption of temporary rehousing, the Council has had to step in to coordinate and implement emergency measures. This includes the introduction of a temporary “waking watch” service across the estate, which provides 24/7 on-site monitoring to alert residents in the event of a fire. Residents on the estate have been advised by the managing agent on the matter.

The Council is working closely with key stakeholders, including housing providers and the managing agents, to ensure a joined-up response. It is also engaging with central Government to explore funding support for the installation of temporary fire alarm systems. If external funding is not secured, the Council may proceed with installation to allow the “waking watch” to be safely withdrawn at the earliest opportunity.

These actions are being taken under the Council’s statutory powers to protect public safety. The Council will seek to recover the costs it incurs in managing this emergency from the relevant parties.

The introduction of a waking watch will be funded from revenue budgets (corporate contingency already released in full in the Period 2 forecast). The estimated cost of providing this service is £30k per week with an initial requirement of 6 weeks, £180k required in total.

Implementing this service will avoid the need to find alternative accommodation for 250 households which would have been estimated to cost in the region of £150k per week.

13 of the 250 households are leaseholders.

The managing agents are liaising with the MHCLG to secure circa £200k funding to enhance the fire alarm systems and manage the works themselves. Should the works not be completed, there would be the need for the Council to carry out these works and seek reimbursement directly from the MHCLG or through recharging the management company. The need to fund the waking watch can be removed as soon as the enhancement to the fire alarm system has been completed, so in the event of a delay from the managing agents it would be cost effective to progress with the works directly.

The delegation to the relevant Director, which may include procurement matters regarding the waking watch service and installations, will ensure responsive decision-making by the Council to this evolving situation. Cabinet Members and Ward Councillors will be kept informed.

Finance and Legal services have reviewed and contributed towards this addendum.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The Council would never risk the safety of 250 families. Failure to have taken responsive action would have led to immediate action by the London Fire Service, who could have issued a notice to move all resident's out of all properties.