

Race on the Agenda
c/o Resource for London
356 Holloway Road
London
N7 6PA

Solicitor to the Inquiry,
Grenfell Tower Inquiry,
The Royal Courts of Justice,
Strand,
London,
WC2A 2LL

11th October 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Supplementary letter in support of the Joint Application for Core Participant Status submitted on 8 September 2017 by (1) the 'ROTA Group' and (2) the Bramley House Residents Association.

On 8 September 2017, we made an application seeking designation of core participant status for two linked groups, namely the 'ROTA Group' and the Bramley House Residents Association. We had previously submitted a response dated 4 August 2017 to the consultation on the 'Terms of Reference'. Both emails/documents are attached for convenience: see Enclosures 1 and 2.

We now write to update you on matters which we consider relevant to the assessment of our applications.

The 'ROTA Group'

As stated in our submission to the ToR, the Rota Group ("the Group") is made up of:

- Concerned residents in RBKC who are tenants and leaseholders of KCTMO managed properties;
- Voluntary sector organisations concerned with equalities issues as they impinge on social housing issues in RBKC and beyond;
- Academics and other experts with an interest and practice in housing, tenant consultation and rights, discrimination, disadvantage, race equality and migration;
- Lawyers with expertise in housing, human rights, construction and discrimination.

The Group's membership has grown and now includes many resident representatives and their associations, well reputed voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, academics and lawyers (the list of organisations' and individual's profiles can be found in Enclosure 3).

The ROTA Group also includes residents (tenants and leaseholders) of social housing in Kensington and Chelsea, who feel that their voices have been increasingly marginalised in decision making at both local and central government level. There is a concern that this may have breached the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in s.149 Equality Act 2010 and the residents' human rights.

The Group has representatives of a broad range of protected characteristics including, race and ethnicity, gender, age, and disability, as well as socio-economic disadvantage, which cuts across these protected characteristics, particularly in the context of social housing.

The Group are assisted by organisations, lawyers and academics with a longstanding interest and expertise in housing and related issues in addition to discrimination and equalities law.

We believe the outcome of this important inquiry will have implications for those in social housing in RBKC and probably across the UK. Therefore, the organisations, groups, and individuals that form the ROTA Group have a significant interest in an important aspect of matters relating to the inquiry, in particular local and central government's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and human rights. The Group also has particular and relevant expertise that will provide valuable assistance to the Inquiry.

Please note that Enclosure 3 does not contain a final list of the organisations and experts that are part of the ROTA Group as it is a growing list. For an up to date list of organisations and interested parties please see: (<http://www.rota.org.uk/content/grenfell-tower-inquiry>).

Bramley House Residents Association (BHRA)

Secondly, in amplification of the submissions made in relation to the BHRA in the application of 8 September 2017, we wish to update you on the following matters which support the submission that Ms Samia Badani, who is the chair of Bramley House Residents Association and a well-known prominent local tenants' representative, will be able to make a very meaningful contribution to the Inquiry, with the support and advice of the ROTA group of NGOs and experts.

On the night of the fire, Bramley House was included in the homes within the cordon of those immediately affected and Bramley House tenants have been told that they are a priority for the allocation of new homes, although the details of this are unclear.

Ms Badani has been actively involved in organising tenants and leaseholders within the borough to deal with the consequences of the fire and the many problems and issues the disaster has revealed. Some of these tenants and leaseholders are also involved in the ROTA group. She has also been helping and advocating for survivors and residents who have contacted her because they lack confidence in or feel they have not been served well by the services organised by the borough. As a result, she is now in the process of negotiating for a resident run hub for survivors, family members and others affected by the Grenfell Tower fire. She has secured support from various people with responsibilities in the aftermath of the fire and is now negotiating with different local statutory and voluntary service providers.

It is therefore plain that BHRA, represented by Ms Badani and supported and advised by the ROTA group, will be directly affected by the outcome of the Inquiry and will bring to the Inquiry their substantial experience of working with survivors, family members, tenants, leaseholders and residents.

Our focus

Our focus is as stated in our letter of 8 September 2017. We are happy to amplify that further if required, but are not sure whether you require us to do so. We therefore limit ourselves at this stage to pointing out that, if given core participant status, we propose to place particular emphasis on:

- the public sector equality duty and the duty to avoid discriminatory impacts, particularly by reference to a range of protected characteristics and by reference to broader socio – economic disadvantage, as set out in the 2010 Act;
- consideration of the extent to which injuries and fatalities were preventable and the extent to which those injuries and fatalities were not prevented by reason of the failure of central government, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the TMO to act in accordance with statutory duties including duties under the Equality Act 2010, and the Human Rights Act 1998 and the duties under Articles 2, 3, 8 and 14 of ECHR;
- The perspective of the Bramley House Residents association as victims of the fire in the sense that they witnessed the events at close hand and saw friends and family perish, suffer injuries and escape the fire; Bramley Residents/members of the BHRA were also subject to the same practices and culture of administration by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the TMO as were the residents of Grenfell).

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

Poornima Karunacadacharan

Senior Policy Officer

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For and on behalf of The ROTA Group

Samia Badani

Chair Person

Bramley House Residents Association

For and on behalf of BHRA

Enclosures:

1. Our response to the consultation on the 'Terms of Reference': 4 August 2017
2. Joint application for core participant status: 8 September 2017
3. List of Members of the Rota Group