

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission Meeting 27th February 2020

Attendees

Michael Lockwood – meeting chair
Thelma Stober
Community representatives
Secretariat
MHCLG Strategic Communications

Meeting purpose

The ninth meeting welcoming the co-chairs, to discuss the outcomes of the February community events and to agree the agendas for future meetings.

Opening

- A one-minute silence was held at the start of the meeting.

Introductions and logistics

- The co-chairs have agreed to alternate chairing meetings. Thelma will chair the next meeting.
- The secretariat advised that the meeting was not quorate therefore any decisions made would be only indicative.
- Everyone introduced themselves. Michael asked for any declarations of interest - there were none.
- Michael explained that for future meetings minutes will first be seen by the co-chairs before sending them to the community representatives to approve and publish them.

Update from the co-chairs

- The co-chairs introduced themselves. Thelma and Michael expressed that they are honoured and privileged to have been chosen to chair the Commission and that they will do their best. They will strive to be open, transparent and accessible in everything that they do.
- Michael asked the community representatives to let them know if there is anything, they think they can do better as chairs.
- Thelma suggested that the Commission meets with the chair of the Manchester Advisory Group who are working on the memorial for the Manchester terror attack, to better understand the challenges they faced.
- Michael and Thelma would like to meet the community representatives, either together or individually depending on their preference. They are keen to learn how the community representatives like to work so that they can all work well together. They would also like advice from the representatives on how to engage with their community groups.

Reflections from community representatives on community events

- The community representatives reflected on the community events. Kensington Leisure Centre was considered a good venue as it attracted more people from across the community. The drop-in style format of the events was also appreciated as representatives were able to share the workload.
- The second bereaved and survivor event was well-attended although not many people seemed aware of the Memorial Commission's work, although the representatives hope that these events will have encouraged more active engagement in future.
- The secretariat updated that although the afternoon Kensington Leisure Centre event on Saturday 8th February saw lower attendance, the majority of attendees were 18-25-year-olds – a target group that has previously been difficult to engage with.
- The representatives felt that more events should be held at the leisure centre, the Westway and other local sports centres to reach this target group.
- The Commission agreed that it is important to understand why attendance was lower for the bereaved and survivors e.g. whether it was because of the locations, the Inquiry or other reasons.
- The Commission acknowledged that the Inquiry evidence sessions are likely to have an impact on their ability to engage with the community but felt it was unnecessary to halt plans as it will not always be possible to predict what will happen with the Inquiry.
- Thelma asked how the events were publicised. The secretariat explained that letters were sent to all Lancaster West residents, bereaved families and former residents of the Tower and Grenfell Walk before Christmas. In the two weeks leading up to the events posters were put up in community spaces and block entrances on the Lancaster West Estate, and messages circulated on local WhatsApp channels (through the community representatives, community groups and the LW Resident Association), Nextdoor app and North Kensington News.

Community feedback from events

- The secretariat updated that feedback from residents was that advertisement and communications for events needed to start earlier and be more frequent.
- The suggestions residents had for patrons will be considered by the Commission at a future meeting and the representatives were pleased that so many ideas had been put forward.
- The Commission considered an item on the community's feedback from the February events and talked through the memorial ideas people suggested. There were a wide range of views, and the most popular themes include: somewhere quiet, tranquil, open space, flowers, water, somewhere to pay respects. Some people mentioned security and safety and how to ensure the memorial isn't vandalised or attracts people who might not treat the site in a respectful way e.g. antisocial behaviour. Some people suggested the memorial could be something that has useful or practical use e.g. somewhere

the community can plant things, a play area, etc – something that will still be relevant 30 years down the line. Others suggested something that captured the community's stories/testimonies. Involving children and young people was also a popular idea.

- Michael particularly liked the local aspect of the suggestions e.g. including local artists. Michael is also involved in the memorials for those who lost their lives in the Hillsborough stadium disaster and thinks that they could share information in order to learn from each other.
- The Commission agreed that it was vital for all of the community's suggestions and feedback from the events to be written up for the Commission to keep on record. Memorial suggestions will be published on the website shortly.
- The Commission discussed that having the community representatives leading the events worked really well as people attended the events wanting to know who they were and were keen to talk to them. The Secretariat felt that the representatives engaged very well with the community and in particular were very good at helping to reassure attendees.
- Some people continue to have concerns with how the Memorial Commission has been set up and the definition of next of kin. Others raised concerns about a memorial design being chosen that they will not agree with. Thelma mentioned that from her experience of the 7/7 memorial, it is important for everyone to engage, even people who have concerns.

Evaluation of events

- The Commission considered an item providing a high-level evaluation of the community events. They showed that most arrivals were between 17:30 and 18:00 and that the first event saw the lowest turnout. Most people appreciated handouts being available to take away and many people signed up to join the mailing list. Local venues e.g. the Leisure Centre had a better turnout – the hotels were not as accessible and were more awkward to travel to. The Commission discussed whether to consider venues close to the Inquiry venue for future events as a lot of bereaved families and survivors attend, provided this wouldn't cause irritation or offence to the families or community.
- The Commission discussed the need to use a wide range of communication channels to meet the needs of different people. The Community representatives agreed to test with their community groups what the preferred communications methods are.
- MHCLG wishes to bring on board a specialist to work with and help arrange the Commission's future engagement events who has experience of community-led design. They will oversee the structure for the Commission's ideas-gathering phase and capture the community's views. The Secretariat reassured the Commission that extensive due diligence would be carried out on all companies to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.
- The co-chairs are looking for someone who can articulate the community's vision for a memorial – this isn't a community "design" project and is deeply

personal for the community. They are also looking for someone practical and who understands the community.

- The Commission agreed it would want to meet prospective suppliers first before a decision is made on procurement.

Action: Secretariat to contact those working on the Hillsborough memorials to remember those who were lost in the Hillsborough Stadium disaster.

Action: Secretariat to produce a complete write up of all feedback received from the events.

Action: Secretariat to ensure all memorial ideas are sent to all members before publishing on the website.

Action: Community representatives to test with their community groups the best way to communicate during the process.

Action: MHCLG to provide advice to the Commission on how they will be involved in the procurement process.

Action: MHCLG to gather demographic analysis/data to identify targeted communications methods.

Actions Log

- The Secretariat updated the Commission on progress on actions arising from the previous meeting.

Meeting with RBKC ex-officio candidate

- The RBKC candidate and the Commission members introduced themselves.
- The Commission asked the RBKC candidate a set of questions each to establish details of their experience, how they would expect to work with the Memorial Commission, and how they would support the process in good faith.
- The candidate was offered an opportunity to ask the Commission questions.
- Following the meeting, the community representatives and chairs discussed and agreed that as the meeting wasn't quorate, further discussions would be needed with community representatives who were unable to input their views before a final decision was made.

Action: Secretariat to hold further discussions with community representatives who were unable to input their views.

Contingency Planning for Commission Membership

- As the meeting was running over the Commission agreed to postpone this agenda item to the next meeting on 2 April 2020.
- The community representatives questioned whether the quorum should be reviewed and there was some discussion about what the right number for the quorum should be.

Action: Secretariat to provide advice on alternative options for the Commission's quorum.

Forward look of meetings

- The Commission considered an item on future Commission meeting and agenda items for the next three months. The Commission agreed that they wanted to see further details on planned agenda items before agreeing on the timetable for future meetings.
- The Commission asked to see research on other existing memorials before the next meeting and agreed what they would like to consider at the next meeting.
- The chairs suggested one-to-one meetings between the community representatives and co-chairs during March.
- The Commission felt that advance notice of meetings was important for all members so that they could flag any concerns around their availability as early as possible.
Action: Secretariat to arrange one-to-one meetings between the community representatives and co-chairs during March.

Next meeting: Thursday 2nd April 2020.

Meeting end.