

Public Protection and Enforcement PDS Committee—8th December 2020

Question from Cllr Kathy Bance to the Portfolio Holder for Oral Response

Can the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement please confirm that out of all the London boroughs, Bromley Council have the highest number of care homes that have been served with a legal fire notice by the London Fire Brigade and what is the strategy of the Council to ensure that all care homes in the borough are safe from the risk of fire?

Answer to the Question from Cllr Bance

I take it this is the data shared in a London Assembly answer back in February and March 2019 - singling out Bromley Borough was not very helpful as the number of inspections carried out in each Borough by the London Fire Brigade will vary depending on numbers of care premises in the Borough, number of Fire Safety officers and their other workload priorities. Whilst I agree that this matter is of concern, it is not a matter that the Council has control of. Having said that the LFB have presented at our care home forum in relation to fire safety and in December 2019 we supported the LFB to host two workshops on reducing fire risks in care homes which was well attended by our care home managers. As part of our care home compliance checks, we do make some routine checks about fire safety but this is not the same thing as the specialist work the LFB undertakes. Care homes are responsible and should ensure that their risk assessments regarding fire have been completed, and that all matters to do with fire prevention have been undertaken in line with legislation, including actioning any work that is required. The London Fire Brigade are responsible for inspecting care homes for compliance, along with recommending any associated work or practice that may be required. The Care Quality Commission are the regulators here, who can take action if needed, with the ultimate sanction being to close the care home itself. There is information on the CQC website which outlines what they look for when they inspect <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/dentists/dental-mythbuster-21-fire-safety> and I can forward this to you if this would be of interest.

Background - Our routine checks include...checking that

- Care home staff are trained in fire safety
- That homes complete fire safety checks (testing of alarms weekly and regular fire drills etc.)
- That homes have up to date fire risk assessments completed
- That homes are taking action where there have been recommendations in the risk assessments