

**POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**29 JUNE 2017**

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL LILLEY WITH  
RESPONSES PREPARED ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE  
MEMBER**

- Q** In light of the Grenfell Tower Fire and subsequent press release by the Government in regard to new school buildings I wish to ask what are IW Council plans in regard to the safety of children in school buildings that do not have sprinkler systems. Oakfield School which serves my Ryde East Ward has just opened a new school building which does not have a sprinkler system due to this not being required under current legislation although the Government has indicated that this will be reversed. Parents of children at Oakfield School have raised this concern with me?
- A** The Grenfell Tower tragedy is without doubt a most devastating event for all those affected and our sincere sympathies go to the families affected. The subsequent investigation now underway will be an important element of preventing its re-occurrence and any legislative changes will need to be adhered to. Whilst there is much evidence that sprinkler systems are an important factor in fire prevention, they are a mechanism by which to save buildings from fire. Rapid evacuation procedures are therefore the key factor in saving lives. Schools are required to undertake fire risk assessments, establish robust evacuation plans that allow effective egress from the building to a point of safety in the shortest possible time and to regularly test those procedures. The health and safety advisory service contracted by the school, in this case, is the local authority and who will be offering to assist in the review their current evacuation procedures to assist the school in providing assurance to parents that they continue to be operationally sound.