

Jeremy Corbyn writes to Theresa May to call for further action on Grenfell Inquiry

Following the publication of the Terms of Reference of the Grenfell Inquiry, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, has written to Theresa May calling for further action.

In the letter, Corbyn raises concerns about the “decision to exclude the broader social and political issues raised by the fire from the terms of reference of the inquiry.”

Focussing criticism on the Government, Corbyn says there is a fear that its “priority is to avoid criticism” for policy failures “rather than secure justice for Grenfell survivors.”

In order to learn the lessons of the Grenfell fire, Corbyn calls on May to “immediately set out a clear, independent and thorough process for identifying and addressing the broader failings that led to the Grenfell fire.”

Continuing his calls for the Inquiry terms to be broadened, Corbyn seeks guarantees that Sir Martin Moore-Bick’s assessors “will include people from minority backgrounds in order to introduce a broader range of experiences and perspectives into the inquiry, as many residents have demanded.”

Following Sir Martin Moore-Bick’s request that the Government reassure survivors on their immigration status, Corbyn also urges May to “grant indefinite right to remain in the UK to all survivors who need it, on a discretionary basis.”

Full text of the letter to Theresa May

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 15 August 2017 setting out the terms of reference for the inquiry into the fire at Grenfell Tower.

It is, of course, a relief that the inquiry is now up and running, and that survivors are one step closer to the answers they so desperately need.

However, I am deeply concerned by the decision to exclude the broader social and political issues raised by the fire from the terms of reference of the inquiry. The fire has raised profound concerns about the way that social housing is provided and managed in this country, and I – as well as many survivors – worry that, without a wider focus, the inquiry will fail to get fully to grips with the causes of the fire.

The fear is that the priority is to avoid criticism of your party's policy failures rather than secure justice for Grenfell survivors, along with the safety of the many other people who live in social housing in this country.

On the issue of social housing, your letter accepts that 'there are a number of concerns, that have gone unheard for too long.' However, you are vague on how these concerns will now be addressed. The promise that your Housing Minister, Alok Sharma, will meet and talk to social housing residents will be of little reassurance to such residents, particularly in light of the failure of Conservative Governments to implement the recommendations of the inquest into the 2009 fire at Lakanal House in Southwark.

Learning the lessons of the Grenfell fire will require more far-reaching action. I therefore ask that you immediately set out a clear, independent and thorough process for identifying and addressing the broader failings that led to the Grenfell fire.

This process should work closely with Sir Martin Moore-Bick's inquiry where appropriate and should include within its remit social housing policy and all aspects of the relationship between residents and the local authority and the tenant management organisation. Only by rooting out the more systemic failings that led to the Grenfell fire will we ensure that nothing like it ever happens again in this country.

I am also troubled by your response to Sir Martin's request that the Government take all possible measures to reassure survivors worried about their immigration status. You re-state the 12 month immigration amnesty already in place. However, it seems clear that Sir Martin is indicating a 12 month amnesty is insufficient and that concerns remain that a number of survivors will be discouraged from participating in the inquiry as a result.

I therefore urge you to grant indefinite right to remain in the UK to all survivors who need it, on a

discretionary basis. Failure to do so will impede their ability to contribute to the inquiry and may undermine the inquiry itself.

Finally, you note Sir Martin's intention to appoint a group of assessors with wide-ranging experience and expertise. But you do not specify the nature of this diversity beyond having experience in relation to the occupation and management of social housing, the administration of local government and "more technical matters." I continue to seek guarantees that Sir Martin's assessors will include people from minority backgrounds in order to introduce a broader range of experiences and perspectives into the inquiry, as many residents have demanded.

Given the significant public interest in the subject matter of this letter, I will be making it public.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Corbyn

[Angela Rayner responds to Ofsted's report on Learndirect](#)

Angela Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary,

responding to Ofsted's report on Learndirect, said:

"We hope the Government has listened to our call to step in and protect trainees and apprentices in the short term, but in the long term it still leaves serious questions about the provision of training, as well as how we got into this position in the first place.

"This is why Ministers should take direct control now, to make sure the service is protected and restored to its previous high standards.

"Today's Ofsted report is just the latest evidence of the damage done by Government cuts, privatisation and falling investment. It's time for a different approach, which is why Labour would invest in genuinely high-quality technical and adult education, with free lifelong learning for all, so that people can re-skill and re-train throughout their lives."

[Congratulations to everyone around the country receiving their A-Level results today – Angela Rayner](#)

Angela Rayner MP, Labour’s Shadow Education Secretary, responding to the publication of A-Level results today, said:

“Congratulations to everyone around the country receiving their A-Level results today and thank you to the parents, teachers and school leaders who work hard to support young people through their education.

“They have managed this in the face of Tory cuts and large scale changes to exams that have made this process an even greater challenge.

“It is only with the support of the whole school community that young people can realise their full potential. They should be rightfully proud of what they have achieved together.”

[Millions of people have faced a real terms pay cut under this government – Abrahams](#)

Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour’s Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on today’s Labour Market Statistics, said:

“Labour welcomes the overall increase in employment but we are deeply concerned that millions have faced a real terms pay cut under this government. With wages continuing to fall in real terms, Tory cuts to in-work support, and rising prices, many households and families are worse off under this government.

“The Government has failed to close the employment gap faced by women, disabled people and ethnic minority groups, who are still less likely to be in work, and has failed to tackle regional inequalities in the Labour market.

“A Labour government will stand up for all working people, implementing a real Living Wage of £10 per hour and bringing an immediate end to Tory austerity.”

[Labour calls for Universal Credit roll out to be halted: new evidence of the impact on working people](#)

Labour is calling for the roll out of Universal Credit to be halted as new data shows that while wages are failing to keep up with inflation, cuts to in-work social security support have meant most net incomes of recipients have flat-lined in real terms and in some cases worsened, with women and people from ethnic minority communities worst affected.

Analysis from the House of Commons Library, shows real wages stagnating and in-work support contracting for both private and public sector workers.

The analysis looked at different types of households and income groups all working full time. It shows single parents with dependent children being particularly badly affected, with up to £3,100 a year less than they received with Tax Credits.

The analysis also shows that nurses and teachers will be hit particularly hard by the combination of stagnating wages and cuts to social security.

A single parent of two working full-time as a teacher who is a new claimant to Universal Credit will be around £3,700 a year worse off in 2018/19 compared to 2011/12. A single parent of two working in the NHS on average full time earnings for the public sector who is a new tax credit claimant will be over £2,000 a year worse off in real-terms in 2018/19 compared to 2011/12.

Equality analysis published in response to a Freedom of Information request submitted by Labour, predicts cuts to Universal Credit will fall most heavily on women and ethnic minorities. This analysis shows that

households

with a woman or member of an ethnic minority are more likely to be adversely affected by cuts to Universal Credit work allowances.

Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, commenting on the newly-published analyses, said:

"It is shocking that most people on low and middle incomes are no better off than they were five years ago, and in some cases they are worse off. The Government's cuts to in-work support of both tax credits and Universal Credit are having a dramatic effect on people's lives, on top of stagnating wages and rising prices.

"It's no wonder we are seeing record levels of in-work poverty, now standing at a shocking 7.4 million people.

"These analyses make clear that the Government's abject failure on living standards will get dramatically worse if Universal Credit is rolled out in its current form.

"That's why Labour is calling for the roll out to be stopped while urgent reform and redesign of Universal Credit is undertaken, making sure work always pays and that hardworking families are supported, creating a fair society for the many, not the few."