



Candidate brief for the position of

HEAD OF FIRE SAFETY

Westminster City Council

March 2025



Berwick Partners
an Odgers Berndtson company



**City of
Westminster**

Westminster and Westminster City Council

Westminster is an amazing place. Home to over 250,000 residents from all backgrounds, over 50,000 vibrant and vital businesses and the work setting for 750,000 people. Westminster City Council believes in creating a city where people are born into a supportive and safe environment, grow and learn throughout their lives, build fantastic careers in world-leading industries, have access to high quality, affordable homes and retire into the community with dignity and pride.

We work together to adapt to the changing needs of our communities, resulting in a dynamic atmosphere where ambition, diversity and creativity are celebrated. The vision at the heart of our Council Delivery Plan is to build a Fairer Westminster that supports and celebrates its communities, led by a council that combines social justice with efficient services.

As part of our commitment to be as open as possible about the work we continue to do, we have published our Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan for 2024-25. This sets out what we have planned for the next year and beyond.

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/delivering-our-plan-build-fairerwestminster>

We are proud of what we have achieved so far, but we know there is still a lot more we want and need to do, and ways of working that can be improved. Most importantly, we will continue to consider and reflect the priorities of our residents and businesses as we build a Fairer Westminster together.

Fairer Housing

Westminster City Council Housing Services are high profile, with circa 22,000 social homes in the borough. The careful and diligent management of these homes is vital to maintaining and furthering the City Council's reputation. Although we have made great progress in delivering on our Fairer Housing commitments, including completing 300 Harrow Road, opening new housing service centres and providing more support for rough sleepers, there is more to do if we are to realise the breadth of our ambition.



Some of our objectives for 2024/25 include:

- Improving the quality of our housing repairs service and ensuring timely and transparent communication with residents about their repair progress.
- Strengthening frontline housing services to provide better face-to-face interactions with housing officers in local neighbourhoods.
- Securing more temporary accommodation for families that need it, ensuring residents remain close to their families, jobs, and schools.

- Delivering a further 227 affordable homes through our house building programme.
- Developing new housing and care for older people at Carlton Dene, and adapting the homes of others to support independent living.

Within the City Council's Housing service, we are determined to apply resident centred best practice to everything that we do, including compliance. At Westminster we have a culture of openness, transparency and integrity – where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and develop to be the very best. We want people to thrive at Westminster and take our people's personal development seriously. We value our people and embrace our differences. We think diverse perspectives are critical to solving the future challenges of our city. We empower all our people to be leaders, encouraging everyone to develop a growth mindset and unblinkered approach in order to provide the best service to our residents, businesses and visitors. That is the Westminster Way.

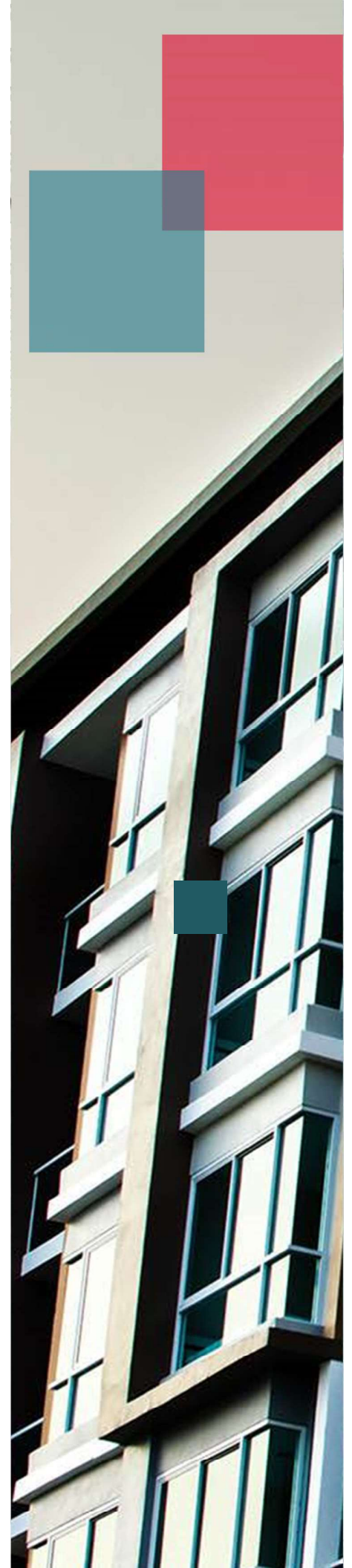
The Role

The Head of Fire Safety acts as the responsible person for all fire safety related to Westminster's housing, ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. Fire safety risks are managed through accurate work packaging, inspections, and audits. Regular reviews and updates to fire safety policies, processes, and procedures, and quality check fire risk assessments will also be the responsibility of the Head of Fire Safety.

The Head of Fire Safety leads a team of fire safety professionals, delivering a multi-million-pound annual programme of planned works, and ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction. The role requires advanced technical experience in fire safety, as well as experience in building surveying and maintenance.

The Head of Fire Safety will also be responsible for procuring works via contracts, managing capital budgets, and liaising with residents, leaseholders, councillors and the London Fire Brigade. The Head of Fire Safety will provide technical support across the business. and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

The role involves coordinating feasibility work, developing client briefs, and ensuring effective communication with key stakeholders.



Additionally, the Head of Fire Safety will stay updated with the latest fire-related legislation and promote a positive fire safety culture within Westminster City Council and its contractors.

This role reports to the Chief of Compliance and is responsible for the Fire Safety Budget with a delivery value of £5.9m over 5 years.

Key Responsibilities

- **Technical Fire Safety Management:**
 - Provide competent advice on fire safety policies and procedures to internal departments.
 - Liaise with Lessee Operations on the Section 20 consultation process.
 - Support building control, planning, and listed building consent processes.
 - Provide technical support for developing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).
 - Work with the property team to develop policies, standards, and specifications supporting the housing asset strategy.
 - Act as the competent person for all Westminster's housing fire safety.
 - Assist Westminster City Council in complying with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.
 - Provide managed and accurate work packaging, inspection, and audit functions to manage fire safety risks.
 - Conduct post-fire investigations with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and housing team.
 - Perform post-inspection of remedial works to ensure quality and value for money.
 - Sign off on fire safety works and audit the supply chain.
 - Ensure Regulation 38 (Approved Document B) handover packs are received for all capital works.
 - Keep up to date with fire-related legislation, including the Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Bill.
 - Attend quarterly partnering meetings with LFB and other required meetings.
 - Promote best practices and a positive fire safety culture within Westminster City Council and its contractors.
 - Regularly review and update fire safety policies, processes, and procedures.
 - Quality check fire risk assessments (FRAs) conducted by in-house or external assessors via fire safety management software.
 - Allocate fire safety actions from FRAs to surveyors and supply chain, managing projects via fire safety management software.

- **Project Management:**

- Coordinate feasibility work and develop client briefs for fire improvement works.
- Prepare detailed, project-specific client briefs for external consultant teams.
- Agree on and monitor programme scope from initial brief to completion.
- Develop a process for managing and completing FRA findings in consultation with relevant heads of service.
- Manage the capital budget for fire safety works, forecasting monthly and annual performance.
- Define minimum design and material standards for fire safety precautions within the Fire Strategy.
- Assist in developing a 2-5 year risk-based programme for FRA capital works delivery.
- Procure fire safety consultants and remediation contractors.
- Liaise with Major Works and Property Maintenance teams to provide information for fire improvement works.
- Ensure compliance with Westminster City Council's legal, contract, policy, and administrative requirements.
- Contribute to the review of WCC's Housing Asset Information.
- Develop capital programme works on 1-, 3-, 5-, and 30-year cycles.

- **Team Management:**

- Manage the fire safety team, including the Fire Door Programme Manager, Fire Surveyors, , and Fire Coordinators.
- Update the Head of Health & Safety on fire safety matters, compliance, remedial progress, and KPIs.
- Host monthly fire safety committee meetings.
- Ensure timely and relevant communication with tenants, lessees, and ward councillors.

Qualifications and Experience Requirements

- **Technical Fire Safety Management:**

- Substantial experience in fire-related project management, design, servicing, repair, or installation within the public and/or private sectors, preferably housing.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation applicable to residential buildings and construction activities.
- Understanding the implications of the Landlord and Tenant Act and how it affects leaseholder responsibilities (e.g., Pre-1987 leases, Section 20 notices).
- Fire Safety Diploma.
- NEBOSH Fire Safety Management certificate or an alternative Level 3 Fire Safety Management or Engineering qualification.



- Evidence of training related to fire doors and fire stopping.
- Affiliation with IFSM or IFE (full membership not required).
- **Project Management:**
 - Experience managing an extensive, complex, and varying workload with projects from inception to completion.
 - Evidence of ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction through delivering schemes on time, within quality standards, and within budget.
- **Team Management:**
 - Significant experience working in a capital investment team, managing a team of fire safety surveying professionals.
 - Experience delivering multi-million-pound annual programme of planned works.
 - A leader capable of proactive decision-making and engagement with senior professionals.

Additional Information

- There is no requirement for previous experience working in a Local Authority. Westminster City Council are excited to consider individuals from the entire social housing sector, and there is considerable support available to those candidates who would like to make the transition from Registered Provider to Local Authority.
- Agile and flexible working conditions.
- Local Authority pension scheme.

How to Apply

The preferred method of application is online at www.berwickpartners.co.uk/92458

If you are unable to apply online please email your application to response.manager@berwickpartners.co.uk

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process.

For **detailed information** on how we process your personal data, please review our privacy policy on our website <https://berwickpartners.co.uk/privacy-and-cookie-policy/>

In line with GDPR, we ask that you **do NOT send us** any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation.

Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

If you have any queries or would like more information in regard to this document, please contact:

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