



Report for:	Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	05 September 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Fire Safety Policy
Contact:	Cllr Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing Ricky Lang, Compliance and Mechanical and Electrical Contracts Team Leader
Purpose of report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide members with an opportunity to comment on the proposed attached fire safety policy 2. This policy will outline our approach to managing fire safety in properties that are owned and managed by DBC's housing service
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For members to provide comments on the fire safety policy 2. For members to note the growing focus on the fire safety industry following the Grenfell Tower incident 3. For members to comment on the approach set out in the proposed revised fire policy
Period for post policy/project review:	Review of the Council's performance in relation to the fire safety policy to be undertaken 12 months after implementation
Corporate objectives:	<p>Clean Safe and enjoyable environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the safety of all people living, working in or visiting properties owned by the housing service; • Ensure alignment and adherence to current legislation and government policy on fire safety; and • Provide an overview of our approach to ensuring fire safety within our properties.
Implications:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>To meet the commitments set out in the policy and ensure compliancy the Council may require additional contracts to be awarded. This will be managed in line with existing budgets</p>

<p>'Value for money' implications</p>	<p>and staff resourcing.</p> <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>When awarding contracts, the Council will use a framework that has been procured in accordance with the EU public procurement legislation. The Council will carry out a compliant tender process using both price and qualitative criteria. This ensures that the Council does not look solely at the lowest priced contractor, but takes into consideration other aspects of the requirement to ensure true value for money.</p>
<p>Risk implications</p>	<p>Risk register is provided to members on a quarterly basis</p>
<p>Community Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Community Impact Assessment carried out</p>
<p>Health and safety Implications</p>	<p>The fire safety policy is in line with the corporate approach to health and safety</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>Fiona Williamson, Assistant Director Housing</p> <p>Mark Gaynor, Director Housing</p> <p>Housing Senior Management Team</p> <p>Hertfordshire Fire Service</p>
<p>Background papers:</p>	
<p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</p>	<p>FRA – Fire Risk Assessment</p>

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council has always been committed to ensuring the safety of our tenants and leaseholders and the revised fire safety policy will allow us to achieve this, especially in blocks of flats.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Grenfell Tower incident has not changed the Council's approach to fire safety, only reinforced and refocused it. The Safety in Communal Areas Policy is already enforced and Fire Risk Assessment's (FRA's) are commissioned, but the revised policy ensures every block of flats is assessed in an agreed time frame and also introduces new commitments to electrical testing and a higher specification for fire detection in dwellings.

3. Staffing and Resourcing

- 3.1. The Compliance Team has recently expanded with the addition of a Support Officer to co-ordinate the existing fire safety contracts. A Compliance Officer dedicated to fire safety is also in place and is qualified to undertake FRA's. Additional contracts will be required to achieve a higher level of compliancy; the management of these contracts should be realised within the current structure.

4. Legislation

- 4.1. Under the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, we have a responsibility to ensure certain safety standards are met and adhered to.
- 4.2. The Grenfell Enquiry is ongoing and the Council will keep abreast of any changes and react accordingly, especially if there are modifications to The Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document Part B (Fire Safety).

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. The policy has been reviewed by Herts Fire Service, who also attend a quarterly fire safety group meeting hosted by the Council. This provides additional professional support to any decision making around fire safety. A work stream review project plan is also being undertaken that focuses on compliance; fire safety is included within this review.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The implementation of this revised policy commits the Council to providing measures that will enhance the fire safety of our buildings and provide a safer environment for the individuals that reside within them.