



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	13 November 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. That the Fire Safety Policy, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved and implemented. 2. That the growing focus on the fire safety industry following the tragic Grenfell Tower incident and the Hackitt Report be noted and that a further report be made to Cabinet dependent on the legislative and guidance changes that may arise.
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 or existing contracts amended. This will be initially</p>

'Value For Money Implications'	<p>managed within existing budgets and staff resourcing with any significant change requirements dealt with through future budget setting.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>When awarding contracts, the Council will either carry out a tender exercise or use a framework that has been procured in accordance with the EU public procurement legislation. The Council will always 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>
Risk Implications:	The intention of this policy is to comply with legislation and therefore avoid the risk of non-compliance.
Community Impact Assessment:	Community Impact Assessment carried out
Health And Safety Implications:	The fire safety policy is in line with the corporate approach to health and safety
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments:	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>Continual monitoring and review of the policy will be essential to ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirements and follows best practice.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>The implementation of the fire safety policy is budgeted for and can be delivered within existing approved budgets.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Fiona Williamson, Assistant Director Housing</p> <p>Mark Gaynor, Director Housing</p> <p>Housing Senior Management Team</p> <p>Hertfordshire Fire Service</p>
Background papers:	N/A
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	FRA – Fire Risk Assessment

Background

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 with a greater focus on blocks of flats.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Grenfell Tower incident has not radically changed the Council's approach to fire safety, rather it has been reinforced and refocused. 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. The role of a Compliance Officer dedicated to fire safety is also in place and fully qualified professionals undertake the 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 Inquiry 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.