

For publication

Housing Fire Management Policy ([H000](#))

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Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 3 October 2017

Cabinet portfolio: Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers

Report by: Housing Manager

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Cabinet to approve and adopt the Revised and Updated Housing Services Fire Management Policy. (Revised policy document attached at **Appendix 1**).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the Housing Services Fire Management Policy.
- 2.2 That the Housing Manager be authorised to carry out an annual review of fire safety arrangements and that an annual report be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers.

3.0 Report details

Background

- 3.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) introduced duties for landlords in relation to fire safety in the common areas of flats, maisonettes, and sheltered accommodation in which personal care is not provided. These duties include the carrying

out of Fire Risk Assessment and taking specific action to minimise the risk of fire in the common parts.

- 3.2 A Fire Risk Assessment is an organised and methodical look at the premises, the activities carried out there and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises. The aims of a Fire Risk Assessment are to identify the fire hazards, to reduce the risk of those hazards potentially causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable and to decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the premises if a fire does start.
- 3.3 Since 2013, Savills, a firm of Chartered Surveyors with expertise in carrying out Fire Risk Assessments, have undertaken the assessments on behalf of the council. The contract for this work was put in place for a 5 year rolling programme until 2017/18.
- 3.4 The findings of the 2016/17 assessments, associated action plan and all associated work is currently being progressed on site, as part of the Housing Capital Programme. Both Savills and the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service have commented positively about the condition of Chesterfield Borough Council's housing stock, the physical fire precautions and management arrangements put in place to minimise the risk of fire.
- 3.5 A new Fire Risk Assessment Consultancy contract was due to be procured in 2017/18, however following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017 and in order to ensure continuity of risk assessments and fire certification, whilst this procurement took place, Savills were appointed for an additional 1 year until April 2018/19.
- 3.6 Fire Risk Assessment Consultancy Services for 2018/19 onwards are currently being procured to ensure continuity of service after this date.

Fire Management Policy

- 3.7 A Fire Management Policy pulls together all of the information, policies and procedures relating to fire safety in the residential

premises owned and / or managed by the council's Housing Service.

3.8 The objectives of the Fire Management Policy are to;

- Comply with all current fire safety legislation (namely the Building Regulations 2010, the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005)
- Minimise the risk of fire and subsequent danger to occupants of all residential premises controlled by Chesterfield Borough Council Housing Services
- Achieve best practice in the approach to fire safety, obtaining standards above the minimum legislative requirements where possible

3.9 It sets out the responsibilities for fire safety management, how these are allocated to specific employees and all other employees. It also sets out the responsibilities of tenants, residents and visitors to these premises.

3.10 The policy clearly sets out the Evacuation Policies for the different types of premises owned and managed by Housing Services and the assistance that the council can give in this process.

3.11 Finally it brings together all the fire safety related information into one document, including;

- Documented fire risk assessments, reviews and amendments
- Fire precautions records e.g. checking of fire alarms, emergency lighting, fixed systems and fire extinguishers
- Fire safety training and fire drills
- Fire history records

3.12 The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier to take account of any recommended changes to fire safety legislation, following the public inquiry into Grenfell Tower and a report submitted to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers.

Actions taken following Grenfell Tower

- 3.13 In response to the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, Housing Services, immediately sought to reassure tenants that all the required fire safety measures are in place and up-to-date in council houses and flats. This included;
- Confirmation that all cladding installed on council housing in Chesterfield is safe and of a different type and construction method to that reported to be on Grenfell Tower
 - All blocks of flats have had recent fire risk assessments carried out by independent fire risk assessors, as detailed in this report
 - All flats are inspected monthly for fire safety measures by Housing Services Neighbourhood Rangers. This includes checks that fire doors and other prevention measures are working correctly and the removal of any flammable materials which residents or visitors have left in corridors or communal areas causing an obstruction or may result in slips, trips or falls.
 - Working with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service, have installed sprinkler systems in sheltered housing schemes and portable misting systems in individual properties where there is a higher risk of fire.
 - Carried out two fire risk assurance visits with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service to our 4 and 5 storey blocks of flats.

- 3.14 A leaflet is currently being prepared to remind tenants of their obligations in respect of minimising the risk of fire and the actions that they should take in the event of a fire. This will be distributed to all tenants residing in flats, issued as part of the tenant welcome pack and included in a revised Tenant Handbook in early 2018/19.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 Provision has been made in the Council's Housing Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2022/23 to meet the ongoing requirement to carrying out Fire Risk Assessments and any resultant Fire Risk Remedial Works that have been identified.
- 4.2 Consideration is being given to the installation of sprinkler systems in the council's 4 and 5 storey blocks as part of the setting of the

2018/19 to 2023/24 Housing Capital Programme, which will be brought to Cabinet in February 2018.

5.0 Risk management

Description of the Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Action	Resultant Likelihood	Resultant Impact
Enforcement action under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.	High	High	Implement the actions set out in the Fire Risk Assessments and carry out annual reviews	Low	High
Fire Enforcement Notices being served on the council requiring them to carry out immediate remedial work / building closure or legal action resulting in a fine.	High	High	Implement the actions set out in the Fire Risk Assessments and carry out annual reviews	Low	High
Fire which injures or kills residents.	High	High	Implement the actions set out in the Fire Risk Assessments and carry out annual reviews	Low	High

6.0 Legal and data protection implications

- 6.1 If the council does not, as a Landlord, carry out Fire Risk Assessments and effectively manage the risk of fire (including carrying out associated remedial works) it is at risk of enforcement action under the Regulatory Reform Act (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

7.0 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1 The equalities impacts of all the proposals in the report have been assessed with no negative impacts being identified. A preliminary EIA is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 7.2 The purpose of the policy is to minimise the risk of fire and subsequent danger to all occupants (including those with protected characteristics) of all residential premises owned and/or

managed by Chesterfield Borough Council. The arrangements for assisted evacuations have been strengthened to support residents with disabilities and/or ill-health. A range of accessible communications channels will be used to communicate the new arrangements to residents.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the Housing Services Fire Management Policy.
- 8.2 That the Housing Manager be authorised to carry out an annual review of fire safety arrangements and that an annual report be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers.

9.0 Reasons for recommendations

- 9.1 To meet our statutory obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 9.2 To contribute to meeting the council's corporate priority, 'Improve the quality of life for local people'.
- 9.3 To contribute to improved performance against our key project to deliver the Decent Homes Standard for Council Homes.

Glossary of Terms <i>(delete table if not relevant)</i>	
<i>e.g. HRA</i>	<i>Housing Revenue Account</i>

Decision information

Key decision number	741
Wards affected	ALL
Links to Council Plan priorities	To contribute to the council's priority to improve the quality of life for local people

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
Alison Craig	Extn. 5156 alison.craig@chesterfield.gov.uk
Background documents	
<i>none</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Housing Fire Safety Policy
Appendix 2	Preliminary Equalities Impact Assessment