

**Request to Approve Implementation of the Housing Services Gas Safety Policy
(Housing, Simon Allen)**

Synopsis of report:

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service needs in place a Gas Policy to cover aspects of customer delivery services and legislation that applies to landlord responsibilities in line with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) regulations 1998.

The policy will be immediately adopted and will form part of a wider range of Health and Safety Policies covering the Housing Service.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to approve the implementation of the Housing Services Gas Safety Policy (Appendix A).

1. Context of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to clearly communicate what the Council will do to ensure that our housing stock gas appliances are managed effectively, safely and adopt a best practice approach.
- 1.2 The Housing Service has produced this policy to ensure those affected by our undertaking understand what the Council liabilities are and what the expectations are for our customers in allowing access to undertake yearly gas safety checks to maintain gas appliances in a satisfactory and safe condition.
- 1.3 The Council is committed to providing safe and healthy working conditions for all its employees, and to providing safe premises, facilities and services for residents, visitors, contractors, and others who may be affected by its activities so far as is reasonably practical.
- 1.4 Runnymede Borough Council aims to achieve Gas Safety performance that not only complies with the law but is also the best in its sector. To support this aim, the Council Housing Service will ensure full compliance with the requirements of the related legislation Gas Safety (Installation and Use) regulations 1998.
- 1.5 All employees of the Council and others who work for, and with, are expected to co-operate with management to help ensure the effective implementation of this policy and all employees, consultants and contractors are regularly reminded that failure to comply with this policy by either action or inaction may result in the termination of contracts and cancellation of agreements, and may, in very serious cases, result in civil or criminal prosecution.

2. Housing Services Gas Safety Policy

- 2.1 Enclosed with this report is the draft Housing Services Gas Safety Policy.
- 2.2 This policy clearly communicates the standards and service agreements with our existing gas service and breakdown contractor and what steps are taken

to ensure that service standards are maintained. In addition, the Council have duties as a landlord to ensure that gas appliances and flues provided for tenants' use in residential property are installed and maintained in a safe condition. The Council are required to perform an annual safety check, which must be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer, on each appliance and flue.

2.3 The Council is responsible for the following:-

- Arranging for a gas safety check to be carried out any time from 10-12 months after the last check, without affecting the original check expiry date. If it is less than 10 or more than 12 months after the last check, the property will end up with a new deadline date - 12 months from the most recent check.
- Ensuring that all gas appliances (in the Council's ownership) flues and gas installation pipe work are maintained in a safe condition. This also applies to the safe fitting of gas installations in new build properties as well as the replacement of installations through planned or reactive maintenance work.
- Giving a copy of the landlord's Safety Certificate to the tenants within 28 days of the safety check.
- Ensuring that all new tenants, and mutual exchange tenant transfers, are given a copy of the Safety Certificate prior to occupation of the property.
- Ensuring that any work carried out on the Council's behalf is carried out by a Gas Safe Engineer

2.4 It is proposed that this policy will be implemented with immediate effect once approved by Housing Committee.

3. Policy Framework Implications

3.1 The Housing Services Gas Safety Policy is one of a suite of policies that will link into the key Housing Services Health and Safety Policy

3.2 As a responsible landlord we have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of our tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards. The Council will adhere to all relevant legislation, although not exhaustive, will include: -

- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

3.3 This policy will help Housing Services to ensure the safety of staff, contractors, and residents.

3.4 This policy will assist Runnymede Borough Council in ensuring compliance with current legislative duties.

4. Resource implications

- 4.1 The Housing Technical Services Team are fully resourced to maintain the standards listed within the policy and there is no requirement to add further resources to maintain this policy document.
- 5. Legal implications**
- 5.1 The legal implications are contained in the body of the report.
- 6. Equality implications**
- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening form has been completed. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 is statutory legislation and, therefore, must be adhered to by all employers, employees, and contractors irrespective of any protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**
- 7.1 Within the context of the policy, the Council have just entered a new contract to replace boilers for the next five years with gas boilers. It is our intention to review the heating fuel source and options for the next contract which will commence in 2027. At which time, it is envisaged that the market will have advanced to offer alternative and sustainably solutions for social housing providers.
- 8. Other implications**
- 8.1 Approval of this policy will give further assurance to the Regulator for Social Housing and any future audits undertaken on Health and Safety.
- 8.2 The Housing Service are not proposing to consult with residents on this policy, as it responds purely to the legislative regime required of landlords. Consultation has been undertaken internally with relevant parties to ensure the content of the policy meets our legal obligations.
- 9. Conclusions**
- 9.1 Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Services Gas Safety Policy will assist the department in reducing and mitigating our risks and ensuring that we actively manage our housing portfolio in line with industry standards.

(To resolve)

Background papers

Draft Housing Services Gas Safety Policy

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Runnymede Borough Council's Health and Safety Policy

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