

Report of: Chair of Housing Scrutiny Committee

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Executive	22 March 2018	All
Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt

**Subject: Fire Safety in Council Housing Scrutiny Review
– Findings of the Housing Scrutiny Committee****1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 This report requests that the Executive receive the recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Committee following the completion of its review of Fire Safety in Council Housing. A response to the recommendations set out in the report will be considered at a future meeting of the Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report of the Housing Scrutiny Committee be received.
- 2.2 That the Executive Member's response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Housing Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

3. Background

- 3.1 In July 2017 the Housing Scrutiny Committee commenced a review of fire safety in council housing. The review was carried out in response to the tragic Grenfell Tower fire of 14 June 2017. The overall aim of the review was to review if the fire safety features of the council's housing stock and associated arrangements are sufficient. The objectives of the review included to evaluate how fire risks in council properties are identified, assessed, and responded to; to review the Housing Service's emergency response arrangements in the event of a major fire; to review if the council's

capital programme includes all of the fire safety works it should; and to understand the feasibility of fitting alarm systems, sprinklers and fire escapes to council housing. The review concluded in January 2018.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The proposals in the report need to be costed before a response is made by the Executive.

4.2 Legal Implications

Relevant legal implications will be considered as part of the response to the review.

4.3 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications at this stage. Any environmental implications will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Committee has had regard to any equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses during the course of the review. Details of any such implications are set out in the appended report. A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed as the Executive is only asked to receive the report at this stage. The impact on residents will need to be fully considered as part of the Executive Member response to the review, at which point a Resident Impact Assessment will be completed if required.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee welcomes the council's response to the Grenfell Tower fire. Islington Council has provided support to the emergency relief effort and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and stepped up work to review and improve the fire safety of the council's housing stock. The housing service has effective working relationships with the London Fire Brigade and other key partners.
- 5.2 The Committee has made 21 recommendations in response to the evidence received. These focus on maintaining and improving the safety features of the council's housing stock, managing the fire risks to vulnerable and disabled tenants, and ensuring there is ongoing review and scrutiny of how the council manages of fire risks.
- 5.3 In carrying out the review, the Committee met with council officers, the London Fire Brigade, industry experts and others to gain a balanced view. The Committee would like to thank the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the scrutiny. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

Appendices:

- Fire Safety in Council Housing – Report of the Housing Scrutiny Committee

Background papers:

- None.

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