

<b>Committee(s):</b> Environment, Enforcement and Housing	<b>Date:</b> 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Housing Gas Safety and Servicing Policy	<b>Wards Affected:</b> All
<b>Report of:</b> Tracey Lilley – Corporate Director (Housing and Community Safety)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report Author/s:</b> Name: Johanna Batchelor-Lamey Telephone: 01277 312 500 E-mail: Johanna.batchelor-lamey@brentwood.gov.uk	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

In March 2019, Brentwood Borough Council were subject to a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) review into all compliance areas.

As part of this review, we were found to be effectively managing the risk across all areas of compliance but had areas requiring improvement in relation to Gas Safety and Servicing.

The Housing Department began working alongside the HSE to improve our compliance, taking advice and guidance from them on what was required to improve our compliance management.

One main area of focus was the request to implement a Gas Safety and Servicing policy which would be available to the whole housing department.

### Recommendation(s)

**Members are asked to:**

**R1. To approve the Housing Gas Safety and Servicing Policy**

### Main Report

#### **Introduction and Background**

1. In March 2019 the Housing department began working with the HSE to review all areas of compliance and a part of that review was that Brentwood Council develop and produce a Gas Safety and Servicing Policy.

2. In June 2019 Axis won a repairs and maintenance contract with Brentwood as their partnering contractors to provide repair and maintenance to all our housing stock. This also included using their in-house gas team for the servicing and maintenance of domestic and non-domestic (communal) heating and repairs.
3. In 2020 we have been developing the Keystone Delivery modules which collate, analysis and produce reporting streams for areas of compliance including gas safety.
4. In September 2020 we have instigated a full time Brentwood repairs team which includes the monitoring, evaluation and development of Brentwood's gas safety policy and procedures. Our existing Health and Safety Manager and newly appointed Compliance Manager have written a Gas Safety and Servicing Policy for approval to comply with the HSE recommendation's.
5. The policy outlines how Brentwood, will manage its responsibilities to carry out the annual gas safety checks on Council owned appliances, carries out a visual inspection on tenant owned appliances and produces a Landlord Gas Safety Record which is valid for 12 months. The policy also outlines how the Council responds to emergency callouts, breakdowns and repairs noting the timescales as agreed as part of the Axis contract.

### **Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

6. In order to continue our improvement and effectively manage the Council's statutory duty to gas safety a full policy is more encompassing. To support this document a Solid Fuel Policy is currently being developed, along with the electrical safety policy, which will outline other heating sources the Council has in its portfolio. This policy can be underpinned with procedures which can be changed and is a published approved document which can be made available to the public.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

7. To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the delivery of their Gas Safety and Servicing processes and procedures and to comply with HSE guidelines.

### **Consultation**

8. Consultations have taken place with our third-party consultants GCS who have read the policy. GCS are directly employed with the Council and carry out a monthly 10% check on gas elements of the Axis contract.

## References to Corporate Plan

9. Drive continuous improvement of our housing services
10. Continue a service improvement programme to ensure our services are delivered efficiently.

## Implications

### Financial Implications

**Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Finance Manager**

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The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) existing budgets and 30-year Business Plan captures the requirement in adhering to this policy.

The gas servicing, breakdowns, repairs and maintenance and auditing process is a revenue cost to the HRA. Installations and replacements are a capital expense and captured within the Decent Homes capital program.

The timeframe of the Planned Replacement Programme within the policy, is currently in line with Council's budget setting timetable. Ensuring that future budgets captured the requirement to continue to meet this policies requirement.

The continuation of the development of Keystone will aid in ensuring workstreams required on properties are built into the HRA's 30-year Business Plan, so that the HRA can continue delivering services efficiently.

### Legal Implications

**Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer.**

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Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 which are supported by the Health and Safety Executive's Code of Practice. This provides practical guidance on what the regulations mean and how to comply with them. The regulations give increased legal protection to the public and place important duties upon landlords to manage the risks from gas appliances or the supply of gas. The regulations cover both normal gas supplies and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), which is usually supplied from tanks and cylinders and is commonly used in mobile homes and some rural areas where mains gas is not supplied.

By having policies and procedures in place the Council mitigates the risk of non-compliance and can demonstrate that they are complying with the statutory duty in an appropriate manner.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

## **Background Papers**

## **Appendices to this report**

Appendix A: Housing Gas Safety and Servicing Policy March 2021