

Contact Officer: Sheila Dykes

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

AD HOC SCRUTINY PANEL – RESIDENTIAL HOUSING STOCK, HEALTH AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Wednesday 9th March 2022

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje
Councillor Susan Lee-Richards

Co-optee: Linda Summers

Apologies: Councillor Amanda Pinnock
Councillor Anthony Smith
Councillor Harpreet Uppal
Kevin McAllister (Co-Optee)

42 Membership of the Panel

Apologies were received from Councillors Amanda Pinnock, Anthony Smith and Harpreet Uppal, and Kevin McAllister.

43 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 1st February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

44 Interests

No interests were declared.

45 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public.

46 Deputations and Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

47 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

48 Gas Safety Management and Electrical Safety Management - Policy Review

The Panel received a report in respect of the updates made to the Gas Safety Management Policy and the Electrical Safety Management Policy to ensure alignment with Council policy and terminology, and to reflect legal and regulatory requirements.

Naz Parkar - Service Director, Homes and Neighbourhoods, Eric Hughes – Head of Assurance and Transformation and Asad Bhatti – Head of Asset Management attended to present the report and respond to Members' questions.

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It was noted that all policies had been standardised in response to the feedback from the Panel at the previous meeting.

Questions, comments and responses were put forward as follows:

- In respect of a process for checking the technical content of the policies generally, such as if there was a change to the relevant legislation, it was explained that all policies were checked by the relevant in-house teams as a first line of defence, the second line was through submission to Building Safety Advisory Board (BSAB) and, currently, the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel, and the third line was when they were audited.
- A decision was to be made about whether the named individual/role, with responsibility for compliance with statutory health and safety responsibilities, as required by the White Paper, would be the Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods or the Strategic Director, Growth and Regeneration.
- In order to assist in achieving 100% compliance, it was anticipated that some predictive analysis would be undertaken to establish if there were any patterns in respect of no-access properties.
- There was a separate data management policy which was applicable to any of the safety management policies. This policy provided guidance in respect of personal data
- If any personal data was used to undertake analysis and identify trends, this would be anonymised and not processed in a way that would breach the relevant legislation.
- Detail in respect of how the compliance data would be recorded, managed and validated would be included in the underlying procedures.

with the following revisions or amendments to the policies being recommended:

- Corrections to paragraphs 4.1 of both policies, 4.4 in the Gas Safety Policy and 4.7 in the Electrical Safety Policy to refer to 'gas' or 'electrical' as appropriate and an addition to paragraph 4.7 of both policies: '...where all other attempts to gain access *have failed*...'
- Add appropriate wording to all policies to confirm that remedial actions will be undertaken within the relevant timescale (which would be set out within the detailed underlying procedure), in order to be clear that this is a requirement and as a matter of good practice.
- Add a statement to all policies to the effect that the authority will handle the recording, management and validation of compliance data to ensure that it enables accurate and reliable reporting and offers assurance to the appropriate places.
- Inclusion of a list of the key performance measures that will be used within the policy, with how they will be calculated and any further detail being included within the underlying procedure. This would assist in providing a golden thread through policy to procedure to performance.
- Policies to be explicit about the cycle/timescale for monitoring and audit.
- Paragraph 5.5 of the Gas Policy amended to include the title of the Director within Homes and Neighbourhoods who is to be notified.