

## Item Fire Risk Management Strategy

**To:**

Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee      7 October 2019

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

City Wide

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Cambridge City Council has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees, visitors, contractors and tenants. This includes a duty of care, for the safety of employees and a general duty in relation to non-employees regarding fire precautions as may reasonably be required and practicable in the circumstances. These duties are set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO).
- 1.2. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) covers general fire precautions and other fire safety duties which are needed to protect 'relevant persons' in case of fire in and around most 'premises'.
- 1.3. The FSO requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary' and to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the case. The responsibility for complying with the FSO rests with the 'responsible person'. In a workplace this is the employer and any other person who may have control of any part of the premises, e.g. the occupier or owner. In all other premises the person or people in control of the premises will be responsible.

- 1.4. This Fire Risk Management Strategy (FRMS) sets out how Cambridge City Council will implement its Fire Safety Policy. The strategy aims to reduce the risks posed by fire through a risk based approach, supported by fire safety management processes and procedures to reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable.
- 1.5. The Strategy applies to all Cambridge City owned premises, its staff, visitors, contractors and tenants. It provides a structured approach for managing and controlling fire risks in compliance with current legislation, technical guidance and best practice.
- 1.6. The approach taken in drafting the strategy has been to adopt PAS 7: 2013 – Fire Risk Management System Specification.
- 1.7. This Fire Safety Policy and the FRMS will be reviewed at regular intervals of not more than 3 years.
- 1.8. The Strategy includes:
  - The Council's Fire Safety Policy
  - The Council's Commitment
  - Responsibilities and accountabilities
  - How the Council intends to manage fire safety
  - Fire Safety Management Plan templates

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councilor is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the Fire Risk Management Strategy

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Estates and Facilities have opted to develop a FRMS that defines our fire risk management system and method of implementing the overarching policy for fire safety. The reason for the development of the strategy is to provide “a clear set of measures encompassing fire precautions, management of fire safety and fire protection” It involves the development and implementation of risk appropriate policies and procedures in line with objectives specific to our organisation.

3.2 Cambridge City Council is committed to the provision of a safe place of work for all employees, clients, visitors, contractors, volunteers and those affected by or involved in Cambridge City Council activities.

Fire is a major workplace hazard that can lead to injury and in some cases death. There are three sound reasons for maintaining good standards of fire safety:

**Moral:** Fires result in a great deal of suffering for those affected, the loss of personal items and the shock. We must all do what we can to avoid this.

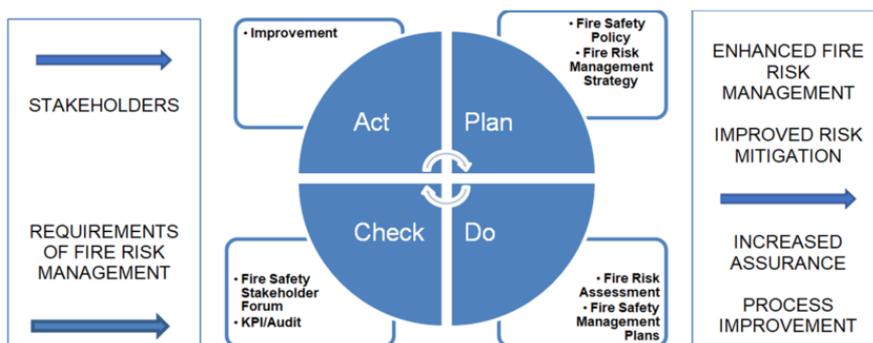
**Legal:** It is a legal requirement to prevent fire and protect employees and other relevant persons from the effects of fire. It is also a requirement to mitigate the effects of fire on anyone in the vicinity of the premises on fire.

**Financial:** The associated costs of a fire are substantial, especially when the consequential losses such as interruption to business and the physical and or uninsured losses are taken into account. The environmental damage caused by fires can also be far reaching.

3.3 The primary aim of the Fire Risk Management Strategy (FRMS) is to implement Cambridge City Council’s fire safety policy and in doing so achieve compliance with legislative requirements. This will ensure the provision and maintenance of buildings with fire safety systems and procedures so that in the event of a fire, the occupants are able to reach a place of ultimate safety, or relative safety in the case of flats, whilst also reducing the risk of the spread of the fire.

3.4 The Council have formed a Fire Risk Management Group (FRMG) that is formed of stakeholders across the Council that have a responsibility or input into fire safety within the Council owned assets. They follow the Fire Risk Management Model explained in the diagram below.

Fire Risk Management Model



The FRMG will meet quarterly in accordance with their agreed Terms of Reference to ensure the management of fire safety in conjunction with KPI data and internal audit reports

- 3.5 Fire risk management systems – Specification (PAS7) is developed by BSI for use as a formal fire risk management system for organisations and individual sites. It provides assurance to Fire and Rescue Authorities in undertaking an audit under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It is designed to help demonstrate that the organisation is taking responsibility for managing fire risks and complying with the law. Designed to dovetail with the existing British Standard BS 9999 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings, and other formal management systems such as the BS ISO 45001 health and safety management system, the specification applies the ‘plan, do, check, act’ model common to many business management systems.
- 3.6 PAS 7 has been adapted proportionately in terms of the organisation and its needs to manage fire safety. The draft Fire Risk Management Strategy and Fire Safety Policy embodies the relevant elements of PAS 7 to achieve this.
- 3.7 The strategy aims to be dynamic, ensure continuous improvement, and to allow for changes in fire safety standards, specifications and policy locally and nationally. Flats remain the focus (through Appendix 1) with a fire safety specification depending on the type of building the flats form part of.
- 3.8 The FRMG will work proactively in terms of fire safety in a national context, whenever a fire occurs we ensure we appraise the findings of the investigation in context with our own housing stock. For example, following the Grenfell tragedy we are able to provide assurance that the council owned housing stock does not contain Aluminium Composite Material (ACM Cladding). Fires in the national context that have occurred in recent months will also be analysed when the findings of the investigation are disclosed.
- 3.9 Fire safety priorities have been set based on the fire safety standards in current Cambridge City Council building stock following fire risk assessments (2018/19) against benchmark national technical fire safety standards. Although compliance has been

broadly achieved through application of the FSO, these fire safety priorities provide an additional focus for fire safety risk management through the fire safety management plan and fire protection strategy specific for each building. They are dynamic and may vary year on year depending on the significant findings from the fire risk assessment, fire safety audit undertaken by the corporate health and safety team and guidance from the Fire Risk Management Group.

## **4. Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

As detailed in section 3.8 above priorities will be set following an assessment against of each building against benchmark standards ensuring the fire management approach is appropriate and proportionate to the risk for that asset.

Compliance against benchmark standards for active / passive fire protection systems and fire safety management will incur additional resource implications however priorities will be determined by assessment. Fire Safety priorities are detailed on pages 12-38 within the fire safety strategy.

We have a Fire Risk Assessment Program which has a budget of 39K per annum and within the 5 year investment programme for the Council's general needs housing there is an allowance of £534K for fire prevention and fire safety works. Whilst budget bids are made where required for the corporate administrative buildings and commercial portfolio

### **b) Staffing Implications**

This strategy will be delivered within the existing staffing resources. The strategy also gives staff clear guidance on the Council's approach to fire safety.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An EQIA has been completed and can be viewed upon request. The result of the assessment shows that no characteristic protected group is negatively affected or impacted. There is an overall positive impact improving safety and community resilience.

#### **d) Environmental Implications**

The environmental impact is Low Negative. This is due to a potential increase in supply chain demand and waste generation when making fire safety improvement and replacing old for new products and upgrades.

#### **e) Procurement Implications**

Where possible we will look to utilise existing frameworks or contracts where appropriate otherwise procurement following the Councils Contract Procedure rules will be undertaken

#### **f) Community Safety Implications**

The strategy may improve the safety and resilience within the Community, the Council has now formalised its approach to fire safety with clear priorities and responsibilities. The strategy brings all of the relevant information around risk assessments and management plans into one place.

### **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

5.1. We have consulted with key stakeholders:

- Fire Safety Management Group
- Senior Leadership Team
- Senior Management Team
- Steve Cotton MIFireE – Fire Safety Advisor to CCC
- Tenant and Leasehold representatives

### **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Publicly accessible specifications (PAS) 7 and 79 (as detailed above)

### **7. Appendices**

Cambridge City Council's Fire Risk Management Strategy

### **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact: Renier Barnard, Corporate Health & Safety and Emergency Planner  
Tel: 01223 457485, email: [Renier.Barnard@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Renier.Barnard@cambridge.gov.uk)