Fire Safety Management Policy

Authors:	Housing and Commercial Assets Manager
Owner:	Director for growth and Regeneration
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Version No	Version Date	Author	Summary of Changes
1.0			
1.1			
1.2			

Approvals

Name	Title	Date of Approval	Version No
	JSWG		1.0
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Distribution

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MLT		
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Contents

Fire Safety Policy

1   Policy Statement

1.1   Melton Borough Council ("MBC") is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all users of council-owned properties. This policy applies to all council owned buildings within Melton Borough Council, but may be supplemented by specific procedures and guidance notes relating to individual properties and premises depending on its typology, size, materials, usage and unique circumstance.

1.2   This policy seeks to:
- Ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practice including guidance.
- Identify the hazards and manage the risks associated with fire in all premises owned by Melton Borough Council.
- Ensure managers and staff to carry out fire safety risk assessments that are accurate, understandable, and consistent with The Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005.
- Manage identified risks with solutions that are reasonably practicable.
- Embeds the provision of information and appropriate training as a core of fire safety management
- Ensure managers are able to address issues in relation to fire safety
- Ensure effective arrangements are in place to protect people and property
- Ensures the safety of employees, tenants and visitors as well as properties

1.3   The successful implementation of this policy can only be achieved by co-operative effort at all levels from all users.

1.3.1   The Council will ensure that those with responsibilities under this policy:

- Are trained to an appropriate level
- Have access to competent advice and support.

2.   Context

2.1   The Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005 simplifies the law relating to fire safety in council dwellings applying to all workplaces as well as other non domestic premises and replaces most of the previous fire safety legislation including the need for fire certificates.

2.2   The law requires any person who has some level of control over premises to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire, and make sure people can escape if there is a fire. This includes a requirement to carry out a fire safety risk assessment and consider others who may be affected including neighbouring properties.

2.3   Melton Borough Council is committed to providing a safe environment that is free from all reasonably foreseeable and significant risks to all users of council-owned properties. This policy supports the Corporate Health & Safety Policy with information enabling the effective management of fire risks.

3.0   Responsibilities

3.1   Management Responsibility

3.1.1   The main responsibilities for statutory compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Order) 2005 are set out in Annexe 1 - The Fire Safety Management Structure document.

3.1.2   The Responsible Person is the Director for Growth and Regeneration

3.1.3   The Competent Person is the Housing and Commercial Assets Manager

3.1.4   Fire Wardens will be allocated to individual premises by the competent person where appropriate.

3.1.5   The Responsible Person and Competent Person are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and managed effectively in alongside the Corporate Health and Safety policy which is developed and monitored by the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor.

3.1.6   Managers and supervisors at all levels are directly responsible for ensuring this policy is known and acted upon. This accountability cannot be discharged by delegation.

3.1.7   A key responsibility is to carry out a fire safety risk assessment. The essential elements of such an assessment are:
- Identify fire hazards
- Identify people at risk
- Evaluate the risk
- Remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- Record the findings of the assessment and action taken
- Ensure an effective emergency plan is in place
- Inform, instruct and train
- Review the assessment

3.1.8   All employees, tenants and visitors must:
- Take care of their own health and safety and that of others who maybe affected by what they do, or fail to do, at work.
- Follow precautions identified in fire safety risk assessments
- Follow procedures relating to fire safety for their workplace
- Inform their line manager / supervisor/ liaison and support officers/ customer service of any concerns regarding fire safety
- Participate in fire safety training, as agreed with their manager / supervisor
- Comply with the fire safety arrangements of host organisations when visiting or working at their premises.

3.2   Duties

3.2.1   Duties of the Responsible Person

1. Meet, deliver and maintain statutory fire safety obligations.
2. Provide adequate training to maintain competence.
3. Ensure initial Fire Risk Assessments are carried out for all new premises as soon as is practicable
4. Ensure a Fire Warden training programme is provided as required.
5. Provide a programme for staff fire safety training.
6. Ensure all contractors or agents acting on the Council's behalf have adequate fire safety procedures / training in place
7. Review all fire safety risk assessments as necessary in accordance with RRFSA 2005
8. Provide liaison and support on all matters relating to fire safety provision within MBC. Liaise with Local Authority Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) on all statutory fire safety matters.
9. Ensure all fire incidents are investigated and record all calls to the FRS

3.2.2   Duties of the Competent Person;

Supports the Responsible Person to undertake their duties as set out above and to provide associated advice and recommendations.

3.2.3 Duties of the Fire Wardens

Annex 2 sets out an overview of the Council's premises including those which have allocated Fire Wardens.

In larger or more complex buildings fire evacuation can be achieved more easily with the support of Fire Wardens.

Fire warden duties include:

• Being familiar with all exit routes from the building in which they normally work
• Notifying the FRS in an emergency
• Managing emergency situations until the FRS are on site.
• Providing assistance and support to the FRS.

3.3   Contractors / Agents

All contractors/agents are required to report any fire risk concerns to the Responsible Person.

Where contractor/agents are commissioned to undertake works on Council owned premises, a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment should be issued before commencement of the works.

Where any work is undertaken that is likely to involve the application of a naked flame or mechanically induced heat source a Hot Work Permit must be acquired from the Council from the instructing officer.

3.4   Visitors

Fire Action Notices and Evacuation Plans will be displayed at prominent locations in Council owned buildings. Where applicable, Fire Wardens should account for all visitors within the premises at any given time to ensure all persons are accounted for.   Visitors to all other buildings should note and comply with displayed fire notices.

4.   Arrangements / Implementation

Whilst this policy cannot be exhaustive on all property site specifics the next sections will set out the overview of the Authority's approach on the policy approach to fire safety arrangements and implementation in line with its responsibilities.

4.1   Fire Safety Risk Assessment

The main purpose of the fire safety risk assessment process is to ensure that a methodical and structured approach is applied to assessing the suitability and effectiveness of the fire safety provisions applicable to a relevant premise and the fire hazards within.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a statutory duty on each building owner and employer to carry out an assessment of the workplace for the purpose of identifying any risks to the safety of the employees, residents, visitors and others in respect of harm caused by fire.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 details the specific requirements but the general approach of the MBC will be to undertake annual Type 1 Fire Risk Assessments where there are shared common areas of buildings with recommendations being programmed based on the category of risk being identified.

Where appropriate MBC will do more detailed Fire Risk Assessments in line with its Stock Condition reviews.

4.2   Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS)

Where there is a requirement for assistance by any person to evacuate any relevant premise during an emergency a PEEPS application will be required to be undertaken.

Residents, who may require assistance to evacuate, should discuss their concerns and needs with the Council, so that any necessary individual arrangements can be put in place in advance.

The Responsible Person and Competent Person will consider the arrangements that may be required to assist visitors with physical impairments in their area where evacuation becomes necessary.

Evacuation chairs are provided at various locations and training in their application and use may be coordinated through the Competent Person or nominated representative on request.

4.3   Fire Action Plans

Fire action notices are located at various points within all relevant premises detailing the relevant information from the fire action plans.

All employees are required to be familiar with these notices as well as the detail within the fire action plans.

Each notice will clearly indicate the following:

- The type of audible sounder within the relevant premise
- The location of the assembly point
- Simple guidance on actions to be taken.

Fire action plans require to be adapted to accommodate all known hazard or risk that are likely to impact on evacuation. These will include details of isolation procedures for processes and equipment as well as information sharing with the fire and rescue service when in attendance. The fire action plan will also detail the relevant evacuation procedures that are to be adopted generally for the premises and for persons with impairments whether this be for a stay put or staged evacuation.

The Responsible Person and Competent Person must be consulted prior to implementing a Fire Action Plan.

4.4   Fire Safety Log Book

In addition to the Fire Action Plan the Fire Safety Log Book is intended to be a single file to record all necessary fire safety provisions within the relevant premise. It will include copies of the Fire Risk Assessment, Fire action plans, records of all tests carried out on the fire safety equipment and record all drills and training provisions applicable to the building and staff. This will be housed appropriately on site at properties with shared common areas.

4.5   Evacuation Plan

Not every site will have an evacuation plan. However, at those sites where it is deemed appropriate it will contain common features set out below.

The Evacuation Plan should cover:

- How people will be warned if there is a fire.
- What staff should do if they discover a fire.
- How the evacuation of the premises should be carried out.
- Where people should assemble after they have left the premises and Procedures for checking whether the premises have been evacuated.
- Identification of key escape routes, how people can gain access to them and escape from them to a place of total safety.
- Arrangements for fighting the fire.

- The duties and identities of the staff who have specific responsibilities if there is a fire.
- Arrangements for the safe evacuation of people identified as being especially at risk, such as those with disabilities lone workers and young people.
- Specific arrangements , if necessary for high fire risk areas.
- Contingency plans for when life safety systems fail or go out of order.
- How the fire and rescue service will be called and who is responsible for this.
- Procedures for meeting the fire and rescue services on their arrival and notify them of any special risks.

4.6   Notices

Notices will be made visible in the lobby and on all floors together with an escape route diagram to the nearest safe exit. In the event of fire in a building occupied by staff the generic advice will be to:

- Raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point
- Evacuate to a safe place
- DO NOT USE THE LIFT (unless it has been designated as a refuge or part of the emergency escape route and conforms to the criteria given in the British Standard BS5588: Fire Precautions in the Design and construction of Buildings.
- Trained personnel to tackle the fire only where appropriate.
- Where appropriate check toilets and close windows and doors on the way out.
- If have responsibilities for assisting persons with Personal Evacuation Plans respond as required following the actions as identified in the Plan.
- Leave the building by the nearest exit.
- Do not stop or return to collect personal belongings.
- Ensure visitors are escorted from the building to the assembly point.
- Close any doors en-route without delaying your escape.
- You must remain at the assembly place.
- Return to the building only when authorised to do so.

The advice for those hearing the fire alarm will generally be:

- Leave the building by the nearest exit.
- Close any doors en-route without delaying your escape.
- Do not stop or return to collect personal belongings.
- Do not use any fire fighting equipment unless you have been trained.
- Do pass any information to the building responsible person at the assembly point.
- You must remain at the assembly place.
- Return to the building only when authorised to do so.

5   Staff Training

MBC recognises the importance of having appropriately trained staff in fire safety either at its premises or on call. Key elements of the fire safety training

for key staff identified by the Responsible Person and Competent Person will include:

- The significant findings from the fire risk assessment and fire safety policies;
- What to do on discovering a fire;
- How to raising the alarm, including the locations of fire alarm call points (break glass points);
- The action to take upon hearing the fire alarm;
- The evacuation procedure for alerting guests, residents and visitors including, where appropriate, directing them to exits and assembly points at a place of total safety;
- The arrangements for calling the fire and rescue service;
- The location and , where appropriate, the correct use of portable fire extinguishers and fire-fighting equipment;
- Knowledge of escape routes including stairways and especially those not in regular use;
- How to open all emergency exit doors;
- The appreciation of the importance of fire doors, keeping them closed and not wedged open to prevent the spread of smoke and heat, keeping escape routes unobstructed;
- Where appropriate, isolating electrical power and gas supplies and stopping machines and processes;
- The reasons for not using lifts (except those specifically constructed as evacuation lifts);
- The safe use of and risks from storing and working with highly flammable and explosive substances;
- General fire precautions, fire awareness and good housekeeping practices;
- The no smoking policy (where applicable);
- Special provisions for assisting disabled people and any training needed;
- Identifying fire hazards and fire incidents reporting procedures; and
- Equipment fault reporting procedures.

6.0.   Fire Safety Management

All of the organisation's premises have a number of fire safety provisions incorporated within them. These provisions are often referred to as either an active provision, examples of which can be fire safety systems and smoke extraction, or a passive provision, examples of which can be fire doors or intumescent treatments etc.

Irrespective of the provision it is necessary to recognise the importance of such features and ensure that their function is not compromised, as to do so will ultimately impact on the operational capability of the provision and ultimately effect the safety of occupiers and the integrity of the building itself.

6.1   Fire Doors

Fire doors are doors that are designed to restrict the spread of fire and the products of combustion within a predicted time period and will normally feature a self closing device.

All fire doors are marked as a fire door and should be kept closed at all times. The use of wedges and other items as hold open devices is **not** permitted within any of the MBC`s premises and must be positively discouraged and will be removed if found upon inspection.

It is the Responsible Person and Competent Persons' responsibility or their nominated representative to ensure this is followed.

6.2   Exit Routes

All exit routes are indicated by signage. To ensure exit routes are not compromised, no equipment or materials may be accommodated or stored within any protected exit route or protected stair enclosure.

All exits must be maintained clear, free from any obstruction and all final exit doors require being easily and immediately openable from the direction of travel. Additionally, the surface finish to wall linings within stair enclosures and protected routes should be maintained free from any form of combustible wall decorations.

Notice boards will be accepted in such areas as long as they are enclosed and effectively managed.

Corridors and stairways that form part of escape routes should be kept clear and hazard free at all times.

Items that may be a source of fuel or ignition should not be located within escape routes, such items include; portable heaters, cooking appliances, upholstered furniture, coat racks, vending machines, gas pipes and meters, photocopiers and other electrical equipment, seasonal decorations and display or exhibition material.

6.3   Fire Warning System

A fire warning system is a system designed to provide an audible alarm and may include activation by means of detecting the elements of combustion. In all cases the alarm can be activated by means of a manual alarm call point.

Manual alarm call points are normally situated in exit routes and at final exits.

Where fire is known or suspected, the alarm should be raised immediately utilising a manual alarm call point (break glass point).

On hearing an alarm all occupants of a premise (employees, student's, contractors and the public) must evacuate the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the prescribed assembly point, with the exception of authorised persons for specific tasks, such as alarm investigation or PEEPs implementation.

Visual warning devices are incorporated within all new fire warning systems to assist in warning people with hearing impairments; however, existing systems do not offer this facility.

Where people with hearing impairments are identified within any relevant premise a Deaf pager may be provided within specific areas by life line contractors following a referral by the Council.

6.4   Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire fighting equipment is provided within fire exit routes and may be placed adjacent to some specific risks, such as computer servers, electrical transformers etc.

The extinguishers are provided for use by trained competent persons but should only be used when it is safe to do so and the escape route from the seat of fire is not compromised.

Under **no** circumstances should a fire be confronted without first raising the alarm. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the extinguishers provided within the relevant premise and the fire classification that may influence their limitations of use.

Where any firefighting equipment has been used or is deemed unsatisfactory, the Fire Safety Manager should be advised to facilitate replacement or investigation as necessary.

6.5   External Waste

Containers & Refuse Bins External waste containers refuse bins and industrial skips are a potential fire hazard to all buildings.

Fires often occur in such receptacles and where they are placed in close proximity to a building, the potential for fire spread through radiated and convector heat currents is a realistic possibility.

To ensure this risk is eliminated all such receptacles must be placed a minimum of 6m from any building.

In all cases no receptacles should be placed directly adjacent to or below any window, door or other openings of a building. Where, due to operational reasons, a waste skip has to be placed within 6m of a building, it must be of the enclosed type and sited with the access doors facing away from the building.

6.6   Use of Lifts

The use of lifts during a fire or an alarm activation is **strictly prohibited**.

Specific evacuation lifts may provided for persons with specific physical impairments and must only be operated by trained staff with notices to that effect provided on site.

Under **no** circumstances should evacuation lifts be operated by anyone other than a trained member of staff with specific knowledge and training in relation to safe evacuation procedures for the relevant premise.

Where a relevant premise has a refuge area incorporated within a protected zone it is required to have a clear means of communication between the designated refuge area and another person in a safe zone.

It is the responsibility of the MBC to ensure evacuation of persons with physical, cognitive or sensory impairment is carried out diligently.

Where refuges and evacuation lifts are present, the evacuation procedures are required to be incorporated within the fire action plan for the relevant premise which will be kept on site.

6.7   Maintenance

A suitable and sufficient system of maintenance will be adopted for all preventative and proactive measures.

The following items will be addressed in the maintenance schedule for the premises.

- Daily Checks where there are on site staff (See FSM Checklist at **Annexe 3**)
- Weekly Tests and Checks
- Monthly Tests and Checks
- Six Monthly Tests and Checks
- Annual Tests and Checks.

7.0.   **Audit**

7.1   All directorates and services within Melton Borough Council must be able to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

7.2   The Competent Person will audit compliance with these standards and report to the Responsible Person.
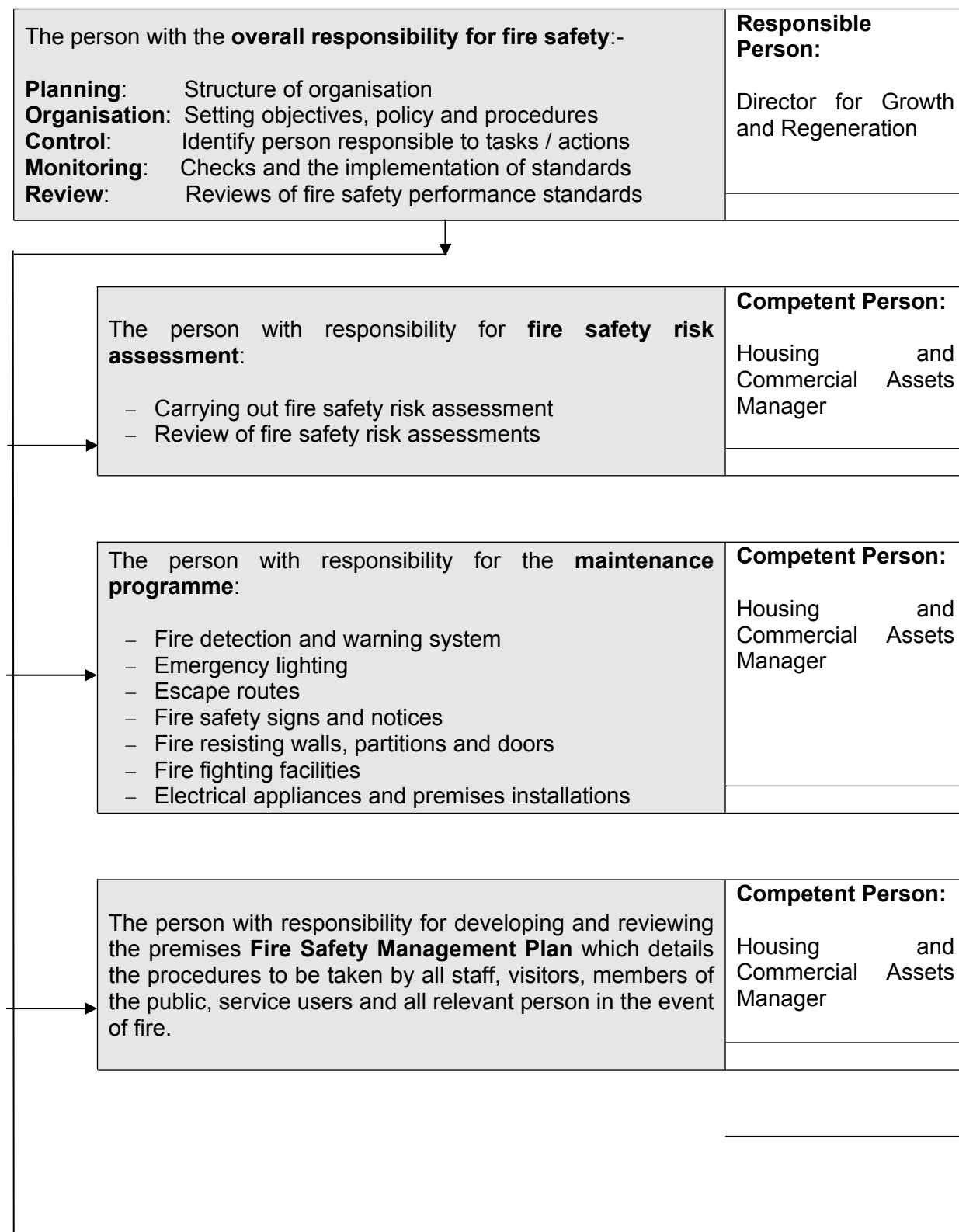
8.   **Compliance Standards**

8.1   Directorates will review existing arrangements and carry out steps for implementation where necessary and report this to their representative to feedback to the Responsible Person including any recommendations for any items for review.

9.0   **Review of the Policy**

9.1   The Responsible Person will review this Policy every twelve months, or as and when changes are made to current content and legislation.

ANNEXE 1:

FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

	Responsible Person:
The person with the **overall responsibility for fire safety**:- **Planning**: Structure of organisation **Organisation**: Setting objectives, policy and procedures **Control**: Identify person responsible to tasks / actions **Monitoring**: Checks and the implementation of standards **Review**: Reviews of fire safety performance standards	Director for Growth and Regeneration

	Competent Person:
The person with responsibility for **fire safety risk assessment**: – Carrying out fire safety risk assessment – Review of fire safety risk assessments	Housing and Commercial Assets Manager

	Competent Person:
The person with responsibility for the **maintenance programme**: – Fire detection and warning system – Emergency lighting – Escape routes – Fire safety signs and notices – Fire resisting walls, partitions and doors – Fire fighting facilities – Electrical appliances and premises installations	Housing and Commercial Assets Manager

	Competent Person:
The person with responsibility for developing and reviewing the premises **Fire Safety Management Plan** which details the procedures to be taken by all staff, visitors, members of the public, service users and all relevant person in the event of fire.	Housing and Commercial Assets Manager

The person with responsibility for **staff training**:
 	
    – What to do in the event of fire
    – What to do upon hearing the fire alarm
    – Liaison with the fire service
    – Emergency shut down procedures
    – Fire fighting arrangements
    – The reason for good housekeeping practices etc
	Competent Person:
	
	 Housing and Commercial Assets Manager

ANNEXE 2:

List of Council Premises

ANNEXE 3

THE SAFETY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Daily Checks where on site staff are present (not recorded)				
Escape Routes				
Can all fire exits be opened immediately and easily?	☐	☐	☐	
Are fire doors clear of obstruction?	☐	☐	☐	
Are escape route clear?	☐	☐	☐	
Fire Warning Systems				
Is the main indicator panel showing "normal"? (where installed)	☐	☐	☐	
Are whistles, gongs or air horns in their correct place?	☐	☐	☐	
Escape Lighting				
Are luminaries and exit signs in good condition?	☐	☐	☐	
Is the emergency lighting and signs working normally?	☐	☐	☐	
Fire fighting Equipment				
Are all fire extinguishers in place?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all fire extinguishers clearly visible?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all fire hydrants accessible for the fire service?	☐	☐	☐	
Weekly Checks				
Escape Routes				
Do all emergency fastening devices work correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Are fire doors clear of obstruction?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all external escape routes clear?	☐	☐	☐	
Fire Warning Systems				
Did the fire alarm work correctly when tested?	☐	☐	☐	
Did staff and all others hear the alarm working?	☐	☐	☐	
Did any linked fire protection system operate correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Did visual alarms, pagers or vibrating pads work?	☐	☐	☐	
Do voice alarms work and was the message understood?	☐	☐	☐	
Escape Lighting				
Are charging indicators visible and illuminated?	☐	☐	☐	
Fire fighting Equipment				
Are all fire fighting equipment in working order?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all fire extinguishers mounted 1 - 1½ metres?	☐	☐	☐	
Monthly Checks				
Escape Routes				
Do all electronic release mechanisms work correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Do all automatic doors "failsafe" in the open position?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all self-closing devices working correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all door seals and intumescent strips in good condition?	☐	☐	☐	
Are all external stairs in good condition and non-slip?	☐	☐	☐	
Do all roller shutters for compartmentation working correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Do all internal fire doors close against their rebate / stop?	☐	☐	☐	
Escape Lighting				
Do all luminaries and exit signs working when tested?	☐	☐	☐	
Are emergency generators working correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Fire fighting Equipment				
Is the "pressure" in stored pressure extinguishers correct?	☐	☐	☐	

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS

Three Monthly Checks

General

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Are emergency tanks / ponds at their normal / correct level?	☐	☐	☐	
Are vehicles blocking fire hydrants or access to them?	☐	☐	☐	
Additional items from manufacturers requirements?	☐	☐	☐	

Six Monthly Checks

General

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Has the emergency evacuation lift (if fitted) been tested?	☐	☐	☐	
Have sprinkler systems been tested by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	
Have release and closing mechanisms on fire resisting compartment doors and shutters been tested?	☐	☐	☐	

Fire Warning Systems

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Has the system been checked by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	

Escape Lighting

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Do all luminaries work for a third of their rated value?	☐	☐	☐	

Annual Checks

Escape Routes

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Do all fire doors work correctly?	☐	☐	☐	
Is escape route compartmentation in good condition?	☐	☐	☐	

Fire Warning Systems

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Has the system been checked by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	

Escape Lighting

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Do all luminaries operate on test for their full duration?	☐	☐	☐	
Has the system been checked by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	

Fire fighting Equipment

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Has all equipment been checked by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	

Miscellaneous

	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
Have dry / wet risers been tested by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	
Has smoke control systems been tested by a competent person?	☐	☐	☐	
Has external access for the fire and rescue service been checked for availability at all times?	☐	☐	☐	
Have any fire fighters switches been tested?	☐	☐	☐	
Are fire assembly points clearly indicated by signs?	☐	☐	☐	

Annex 4- Incidents Log

Property	Incident description	Date of incident	Time of incident	Impact on people	Impact on property	Actions takes	Follow up