

Insert report title / subject here

Date: 24th February 2022

Report of: Head of Service Private Sector Housing

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report is to provide an update to the Board on key areas of Private Sector Housing activity during the last 12 months including the following:
 - Leeds Rental Standard
 - Rogue Landlord Unit
 - Selective Licensing – Beeston and Harehills
 - HMO's
 - Landlords' Letting Scheme
 - Leeds Neighbourhood Approach
 - Empty Homes

- A detailed update is provided in Appendix one of this report

- Housing is a theme in the Best Council Plan, with priorities to ensure housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places, minimise homelessness through a greater focus on prevention, and improving the energy performance of homes and reducing fuel poverty.

Recommendations

- a) The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board are asked to note and comment on the update on private sector housing activity over the last 12 months

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board requested an update on private sector housing activity as part of its forward plan.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 2 The report will provide an update to the Board on housing activity along with an opportunity for Board members to provide comment and scrutiny.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 3 Regular consultation occurs with representatives of the sector including the Board of the Leeds Rental Standard Leeds, Property Association, Unipol, and the National Residential Landlords' Association.

What are the resource implications?

- 4 Resource implications are linked to the Council's overall financial pressures and the fee income received from licensing both mandatory and discretionary.

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no legal implications in relation to the update.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 There are several risks which impact on the service which include:
 - COVID has impacted on the delivery of services which has meant a different way of working to ensure safe working practise. This has impacted on proactive HMO compliance inspections and selective licensing. It has also impacted on the ability to process licences as this has had to occur remotely rather than in the office.
 - Staffing has been affected as support for other priorities including secondments has impacted on staffing levels.
 - Training of new staff into the service has been impacted by remote working.
- 7 The service has its own risk register in place which is overseen by the Head of Service and feeds into the Housing Leeds Risk Register. This is monitored by the Housing Leeds Senior Management Team, with significant corporate risks reported into the directorate risk register. For each of these, risks plans are in place to closely monitor impacts and agree actions to minimise service impacts.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 8 Inclusive Growth – supporting communities to increase financial inclusion through investment in energy improvements to homes and support to maximise income, multi-agency working to provide enhanced support in priority neighbourhoods, maximising social value offered by contractors via procurement and contract management.

- 9 Health and Wellbeing – health and housing is a theme of the Leeds Housing Strategy, with priorities to raise awareness of health and housing issues and pathways across all tenures, addressing issues such as mental health, homelessness prevention, ensuring good quality homes and contributing to improving neighbourhoods.
- 10 Climate Emergency – investment in private sector homes to increase the energy performance of homes in support of the reduction in climate emission targets through investment in insulation and efficient heating systems and the enforcement of standards to improve energy efficiency in the privately rented sector.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

11 This is not a decision report and so consideration of other options was not needed.

b) How will success be measured?

12 As above

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

13 As above

Appendices

14 Appendix One - Private sector Housing Update February 2022

Background papers

15 None