

Report of the Director of City Development

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 5th February 2009

Subject: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Electoral Wards Affected: 	Specific Implications For: Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/> Women <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled people <input type="checkbox"/>	
Council Function <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

This paper outlines the significance and importance of a document (HMO Report), which was recently written by officers, summarising a report that has been published by Community & Local Government (CLG) regarding Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Attached at Appendix 2 is a Executive Summary of the private rented sector: its contribution and potential, a research paper by Julie Rugg and David Rhodes.

1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to make Members of the Area Committee aware of the recent research that was conducted into Houses of Multiple Occupation and the possible planning responses to this. The report outlining the research, finding, and recommendations was produced by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd on behalf of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 1.2 The attached document (appendix one) has been written by officers to brief members on Leeds City Council's involvement in the research and outline the findings and recommendations of the report produced by ECOTEC. In addition to this, the paper advises what the implications of the findings are for Leeds.
- 1.3 The report produced by officers has also been circulated to West, Central, and East Plans Panels. The research conducted by ECOTEC considers issues relating to

high concentrations of HMOs/shared housing, and does not focus on one particular type of household. Therefore, the findings and implications of this study are relevant for the whole city.

2.0 Main Issues

- 2.1 The attached report firstly outlines the background to why Leeds and other Local Authorities have lobbied for legislative change with regards to HMOs. The approach taken by Northern Ireland in relation to HMOs, and how this could be incorporated into the planning system relating to England and Wales, is discussed.
- 2.2 The purpose of the evidence gather exercise conducted by ECOTEC and the conclusions that are drawn from this are summarised. Particular attention is made in relation to the three options that are suggested, and how these are related to the short, medium, and long term.
- 2.3 The implications of this research in terms of local policy and resources for Leeds are outlined.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The paper concludes that the areas of good practice that the ECOTEC report documents (see appendix A) are dealing with the symptoms of the effects of high concentrations of HMOs and not the causes. Leeds does many of the initiatives that are outlined, and there are clearly still problems arising from high concentrations of HMOs. Considering this, continuing to lobby for legislative change with support from the Core Cities, MPs, the National HMO Lobby and community groups is an appropriate action. In addition to this, we must continue to expand on our own best practice and learn from other Local Authorities.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the contents and recommendations of the attached report and comment as they feel appropriate.

5.0 Background reports

- 5.1 Report of the Director of City Development (LCC), 2008. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
- 5.2 Communities & Local Government, 2008. Evidence Gathering – Housing in Multiple Occupation and possible planning responses. *Communities & Local Government*, [Online], Available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/evidencegatheringresearch>