



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY PANEL 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (including HIMOs)

1. Purpose/Objectives of the Review

- To investigate the regulation and management of private lettings, both by landlords and agencies

2. Outcomes Required

- To agree the priorities for private sector housing towards achieving high quality, affordable private sector lettings
- To ensure that private lettings make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
- To consider the options for licensing and make recommendations to Cabinet
- To consider the legislative options available to the Council and make recommendations to Cabinet
- To produce a best practice guide for Northampton's private sector landlords

3. Information Required

- Background data
- Background reports and presentation
- Best practice data
- Desktop research
- Evidence from expert external witnesses
- Evidence from expert internal witnesses
- Site visits

4. Format of Information

- Background data:
 - Presentation setting the context of private sector housing market
 - Changes over the last ten years
 - Future trends

- Map identifying known private rental properties including HIMOs
 - Private Sector Housing Strategy
 - Existing legislation and options available to local Councils for additional legislation
 - Options for licensing of HIMOs
 - Empty Homes Programme
- Evidence from:
 - Cabinet Member for Housing, Northampton Borough Council
 - Housing Options Team Leader, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
 - Licensing (HIMOs) Consultation Manager, NBC
 - Community Safety Manager, NBC
 - Neighbourhood Wardens, NBC
 - Environmental Services Manager, NBC
 - Ward Councillors
 - Fire Safety, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
 - HMRC
 - Landlords' Association, Northampton
 - Letting Agents
 - Student Accommodation Officer and students - Northampton University
 - Northamptonshire Federation of Residents' Association
 - Secretary of Semilong Community Forum
 - Shelter
 - Representatives - Minority Groups
- Desktop research identifying best practice elsewhere
- Site visits to a variety of private letting accommodation within the borough

5. Methods Used to Gather Information

- Minutes of meetings
- Desktop research
- Site visits (if applicable)
- Officer reports
- Presentations
- Examples of best practice
- Witness Evidence:-
 - Key witnesses as detailed in section 4 of this scope

6. Co-Options to the Review

- None specifically identified for this Review

7 Equality Impact Screening Assessment

- An Equality Impact Screening Assessment to be undertaken on the scope of the Review

8 Evidence gathering Timetable

July 2013 to April 2014

- 8 July 2013 - Scoping meeting
- 17 October - Evidence gathering
- 18 November - Evidence gathering
- 5 December - Evidence gathering
- 23 January 2014 - Evidence gathering
- 13 February - Evidence gathering
- 30 April - Approval final report

Meetings to commence at 6.00 pm

Various site visits will be programmed during this period.

9. Responsible Officers

Lead Officers Julie Seddon, Director of Customers and Communities
Steve Elsey, Head of Public Protection
Paul Bryon, Interim Private Sector Housing Manager

Co-ordinator Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

10. Resources and Budgets

Julie Seddon, Director of Customers and Communities, Steve Elsey, Head of Public Protection, and Paul Bryon (Interim Senior Private Sector Housing Manager) to provide internal advice.

11. Final report presented by:

Completed by 30 April 2014. Presented by the Chair of the Panel to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

12. Monitoring procedure:

Review the impact of the report after six months (approximately December 2014/January 2015)