

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR ACCESS SCHEME POLICY

**LICENSING PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION - PROPOSAL TO MAKE A SELECTIVE
LICENSING DESIGNATION IN PART OF CANALSIDE WARD**

Extract from the Draft Executive Minutes – 14 September 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

OF A MEETING OF THE

EXECUTIVE

held on 14 September 2017

Present:

	Cllr D J Bittleston (Chairman)	
	Cllr C S Kemp (Vice-Chairman)	
Cllr A Azad		Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks
Cllr A C L Bowes		Cllr S Hussain
	Cllr M Pengelly	

Also Present: Cllrs T Aziz, A-M Barker, J E Bond, K Howard, D E Hughes and I Johnson.

3. PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR ACCESS SCHEME POLICY

The Executive received a report which recommended to Council the adoption of the Private Rented Sector Access Scheme Policy. Councillor C S Kemp, Portfolio Holder for Private Sector Housing, explained that the Policy set out how the Council intended to assist homeless households access accommodation in the private rented sector to prevent and relieve homelessness, as well as encouraging landlords to engage with the Council. Following a question regarding the impact on existing tenants and bond holders from April 2018, it was noted that tenants with bonds would be given advice. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that a holistic approach would be taken when assisting tenants. The Executive was advised that the report would be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2017. EXE15-110

RECOMMENDED to Council

- That (i) the Private Rented Sector Access Scheme Policy, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be adopted;**
- (ii) the Strategic Director for Housing be delegated authority to agree leases with private landlords for accommodation to be used in accordance with the Policy;**
- (iii) the Strategic Director for Housing be delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Policy (specifically including changes to the scope and level of incentives) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder;**

- (iv) the Council's Allocation Policy be amended such that existing tenants accommodated through the Council's existing Private Rented Sector Access schemes cease to be eligible to apply for the Council's Housing Register after 31 March 2018; and
- (v) the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant be used to provide the additional £95k budget provision required to deliver the Let's Rent Connect scheme and £10k for the Let's Rent Complete scheme.

Reason: The adoption of a policy ensures that the Council acts consistently in providing incentives and other activities to procure private rented accommodation for homeless households. It also provides private landlords with transparent information on how the Council intends to work with them in helping homeless households secure accommodation and assists in marketing the Council's schemes to private landlords. The policy also ensures that the Council's offer to private landlords is competitive within the marketplace and that wherever possible homes across the Borough are secured for local families rather than homeless households from other local authority areas.

4. LICENSING PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION - PROPOSAL TO MAKE A SELECTIVE LICENSING DESIGNATION IN PART OF CANALSIDE WARD

The Executive received a report which recommended to Council the proposal to introduce a selective licensing scheme in part of Canalside Ward. It was noted that the scheme aimed to deliver improvements to the management of private rented accommodation through the imposition of licence conditions. The Portfolio Holder for Private Sector Housing, Councillor Kemp, reported that there would be opportunities for landlords to join the proposed scheme without paying a fee. Councillor Kemp advised that the report would be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 18 September 2017, which would provide an opportunity for Members to go through the proposal in detail. Concern was expressed about the suitability of the scheme, the cost of the scheme, the potential impact on tenants and the consultation responses to the proposal. Councillor I Johnson commented that information on the schemes used by other Borough's would be useful when the matter was discussed further at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

EXE17-041

RECOMMENDED to Council

- That (i) the Head of Democratic and Legal Services be delegated authority to designate a selective licensing designation under the Housing Act 2004 within the area of Canalside Ward set out in the report and at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report;
- (ii) the selective licensing designation come into force on 01 March 2018;
 - (iii) the selective licensing designation cease on 28 February 2023;
 - (iv) the fee structure for the selective licensing scheme set out in Appendix 9 to the report be adopted and subsequently reviewed as part of the Council's fees and charges setting

Scrutiny Review of the Recommendations of the Executive

process;

- (v) the Strategic Director for Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be delegated authority to amend the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Policy to incorporate the introduction of selective licensing and rename as the Housing Standards Licensing Policy; and
- (vi) the Strategic Director for Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Housing Standards Licensing Policy.

Reason: Following completion of the public consultation in respect of the proposal to introduce a selective licensing scheme in part of Canalside Ward, it is now appropriate for a decision to be made whether to proceed with the scheme.

If it is agreed that the scheme be introduced, the Council is required to make a designation for the scheme and delegated authority is required for this purpose.

The introduction of the scheme will also require amendments to the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Policy to incorporate the selective licensing scheme, and it is proposed that this policy be renamed. The provision of delegated authority to make minor amendments to this policy will ensure that the policy can readily be updated to reflect minor legislative change.