

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL

SCRUTINY RESPONSE: HMO, PRIVATE AND SOCIAL HOUSING

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

To provide a briefing response for the Place Scrutiny Panel in relation to:

- 1.1 The effectiveness of what is being done locally to reduce the ever-increasing number of unlicensed Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) and to ensure that children in such HMOs are safe.
- 1.2 North Lincolnshire Council's responsibility and oversight of the social and private rented housing market'. The Panel is extremely keen to speak to the many housing associations that operate in North Lincolnshire but first wants to know what involvement and influence the council has on the social and private rented housing market in North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 HMOs and Private Housing

- 2.1.1 Houses in multiple occupation are only eligible for a mandatory license if they are evidenced to home 5 or more unrelated individuals / families. Homes of 4 or less and homes which may be overcrowded yet contain family and relations do not form part of the HMO licensing requirements.
- 2.1.2 Expected standards for housing (including small unlicensed HMOs) are set out and managed primarily through the Housing Act (2004). Part 1 of the Act – Housing Conditions and Part 2 - Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory licensing). The Housing Act is supplemented by the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which introduced amendments to enable Councils to impose civil penalty as an alternative to prosecution for specific offences.
- 2.1.3 We look to work in collaboration with private landlords and have an active Landlords form and a voluntary landlord housing scheme.

2.1.4 In recognition that management of the private rented sector, particularly in Scunthorpe North requires additional approaches – NLC have amended the Civil Penalties Guidance 2023 (Appendix 1) and are preparing a business case to consider the need for selective licensing (appendix 2).

2.2 Social Housing

2.2.1 The council has several duties and responsibilities under housing legislation, including the requirement to set up and maintain a social housing allocations scheme under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. Since 2010, NLC in partnership with Northeast Lincs Council have fulfilled this responsibility via the Home Choice Lincs (HCL) Choice Based Letting System.

2.2.2 Along with both local authorities a number of stock owning registered social landlords are also signed up the HCL partnership. These are Longhurst Group, Lincolnshire Housing Partnership, Ongo Homes, Sanctuary Housing Association and The Guinness Partnership.

2.2.3 The Home Choice Lincs Board recently undertook a procurement exercise and in August 2023 have appointed Campbell Tickell consultants to undertake a strategic review of the Northern Lincolnshire Choice Based Housing Allocations System 'Home Choice Lincs'. We expect a feedback presentation be delivered to the HCL board by 30th November 2023 and a final report to be submitted by 31st January 2024.

2.2.4 NLC Housing Advice and Homelessness Team have a portfolio of temporary accommodation properties (approx. 100 across NL) these are private rented properties, leased direct and managed by the council. Scrutiny will be receiving a specific update on Housing Advise / Housing support and offer around vulnerable people in October 2023.

2.3 Future Housing Development

2.3.1 Detailed in the attached Housing Plan at appendix 1.

2.4 Safeguarding

2.4.1 The Council have robust safeguarding processes, to protect every tenant (adult and child) which will be enacted should a concern be raised. This includes proactive identification and partnership approaches for example: Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Slavery, etc.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Not applicable.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Not applicable.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 Not applicable.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 In the provision of the current offer and interventions made by the Council, due consideration is taken on our duties for Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Equalities Act 2010, links with Council Plan and priorities and impact on our commitment to be a carbon net zero organisation by 2030.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 In the provision of the current offer and interventions all due consultation, interests and decision making have been considered.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That scrutiny note the content of the report.

DIRECTOR: ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: Lisa Swainston
Date: 31.8.23

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

Appendix 1 Civil Penalties Amended 2023



Civil Penalties
Enforcement Guidanc

Appendix 2 Selective Licensing



Selective Licensing
Business Case and cor

Appendix 3 Housing Plan



Housing Plan -
2023_PROOF.pdf