

HARROW COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR HOUSING – DRAFT SCOPE

1	SUBJECT	Private Sector Housing
2	COMMITTEE	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
3	REVIEW GROUP	Councillor Sue Anderson Councillor Nana Asante Councillor Marilyn Ashton (Chairman) Councillor Camilla Bath Councillor Jean Lammiman Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane Councillor Victoria Silver Councillor Ben Wealthy Councillor Stephen Wright
4	AIMS/ OBJECTIVES/ OUTCOMES	The importance of the private rented sector in meeting the housing needs of Harrow residents is growing. This review will consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy – the development of the new Private Sector Housing Strategy, in the context of national policy changes • Quality and standards – the council’s enforcement role and actions that can be taken to encourage improved standards in the sector, including temporary accommodation
5	MEASURES OF SUCCESS OF REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of realistic options within the confines of resources available and the nature of the sector as a marketplace.
6	SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply side of the sector (in the context of national policy changes affecting the demand for private rented sector properties). • To examine the approach to enforcement from all relevant directorates. • To gather as much information as possible, given the constraints of the review, on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The quality of bed and breakfast provision locally; - The effect of inappropriate low quality accommodation on the health of citizens.

7	SERVICE PRIORITIES (Corporate/Dept)	Corporate priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads • Supporting and protecting people who are most in need
8	REVIEW SPONSOR	Lynne Pennington, Divisional Director, Housing Services
9	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGERS	Alison Pegg, Service Manager - Housing Partnerships & Strategy Jon Dalton, Service Manager - Housing Needs
10	SUPPORT OFFICER	Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer
11	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer
12	EXTERNAL INPUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlords – through the Council’s Landlord Forum (next meeting date 27 March 2012) • Tenant input • Planning (Place Shaping Directorate) • Enforcement (Community & Environment Directorate) • Best practice research – investigation of other councils’ strategies
13	METHODOLOGY	<p>Light touch review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefing – update for the review group on present situation in Harrow • Briefing on council’s enforcement approach • Briefing on the council’s planning approach to the sector – to include the intensification area • Discussions with landlords* • Discussions with tenants* <p>* In the context of the time constraints of the review.</p>
14	EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS	Current national policy developments have been assessed for their impact by the Government as part of the development of the Localism Act.
15	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	Time constraint – on ability to influence on the council’s strategy development.
16	SECTION 17 IMPLICATIONS	Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to give ‘due regard’ to the need to do all that they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in their areas. The section 17 definition includes anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the local environment as well as the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.
17	TIMESCALE	See section 15.
18	RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	To be met from existing scrutiny budget. No significant additional expenditure is anticipated.
19	REPORT AUTHOR	Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer

20	REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS	Outline of formal reporting process: O&S [X] 3 April 2012 Cabinet [X] 17 May 2012
21	FOLLOW UP ARRANGEMENTS (proposals)	6 month review by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny sub-committee after final report considered by Cabinet.

Version: 4

- 12 December 2011 – to Divisional Director, Housing Services
- 10 January 2012 – review group membership amended; accountable managers added
- 15 February 2012 – amendments arising from review group meeting held on 14 February
- 21 February 2012 – amendments arising from review group meeting held on 14 February

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Background papers: Housing Changes Review [Report to Cabinet, 15 December 2011]