



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

19th July 2022

Subject: Selective Licensing - Timeline and Action Plan

Report by:

Director of Change Management, ICT &
Regulatory Services

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To seek approval for the Selective Licensing
Working Group terms of reference and set out
proposals for the future direction of work.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Committee are asked to:

- a) Approve the terms of reference for the Selective Licensing Working Group as set out in appendix 1.
- b) Approve the proposed timescales put forward by the Selective Licensing Working Group to deliver a workshop to all Councillors during September/October 2022 to inform the Prosperous Communities Report due in November 2022, as set out in section 3.
- c) Approve the proposed approach to consider first, theme 1 "Overall Approach to the Private Rented Sector" and for this to form the basis of the workshops to be held in September/October 2022.
- d) Approve that £7,550 is released from budget remaining for Selective Licensing to carry out the initial Lower Super Output Area designation analysis.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

None.

Financial: FIN/47/23/SSc

The resources required to deliver the agreed action up until November 2022 are accommodated within existing revenue budgets.

The required £7,550 budget to carry out the initial work to consider LSOA designations for selective licensing is available within the remaining budget.

Staffing:

None.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

None.

Data Protection Implications:

None.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

None.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None.

Health Implications:

None.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Motion 2 approved at Full Council on 7th March 2022: <https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=17427>

Minutes from Prosperous Communities Committee on 3rd May 2022 : <https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=176&MId=2901&Ver=4>

Risk Assessment:

Financial: any future approach or proposals will be required to contain detail on any specific financial implications. These will be set out subject to the direction given in relation to any future preferred options.

Overall Strategy: The West Lindsey District Council Housing Strategy Refresh 2022 – 2024 set out challenges and opportunities across three themes, one of which is “Improving Homes and Transforming Places”. Any future approach will need to be in line with this previously approved strategy.

Government White Paper “A Fairer Private Rented Sector” (June 2022): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-fairer-private-rented-sector> The impact of these proposals will need to be further understood over the coming 12 to 24 months in regards to any future approach.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

1.1. At Prosperous Communities Committee (PCC) on the 3rd of May 2022 it was resolved that;

- a) the outcome of the consultation period at the time of the halt of the Selective Licensing consultation on 7 March 2022, and the associated report, be noted; and
- b) the questions set out in section 3.4 of the report, relating to the Full Council motion passed on 7 March 2022, be considered and clarity and direction be provided for Officers to enable them to take the next steps in line with the motion; and
- c) a progress report be brought back to Prosperous Communities Committee on 19 July 2022; and
- d) the Committee agrees to establishing a working group of Members to support Officers in developing the way forward; the members of the working group to include Cllrs Young, Bunney, Regis and Howitt-Cowan if wished, to be chaired by Cllr Coulson, with any changes to be agreed with the Assistant Director Change Management & Regulatory Services and Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee.

1.2. This report seeks to deal with recommendations c and d from PCC on 3rd of May 2022.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1. The proposed terms of reference for the Selective Licensing Working Group are shown in appendix 1. The terms of reference were discussed and put into final draft form following the initial meeting of the working group on 27th May 2022.

3. Proposed Timescales

3.1. The minutes from the first working group meeting on the 27th of May 2022 are shown in appendix 2.

3.2. At this meeting the working group considered a paper containing proposed timescales for a programme of work. These timescales are reflected in the terms of reference in relation to the length of time that the working group will initially be mandated (if approved) to be in place for.

3.3. The timescales proposed that during September and October 2022 a workshop will be delivered, open to all Councillors regarding the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and the overall approach taken within it by the Council. This will include information on;

- The current evidence available on the PRS and the challenges faced within it.

- Examples of other initiatives in the PRS such as accreditation and rogue landlord schemes and to include information on the outcomes they seek to achieve.
- Information on how the Council's existing tools work and the resources available within the work area.
- The potential for different approaches in the urban and rural areas of the district.
- The overall strategic approach being taken to ensure it aligns with the corporate position.

3.4. This workshop will also directly seek a clear steer from Councillors regarding any approaches that they wish to be explored further, which will form the basis of the work that officers progress.

3.5. Following on from the workshop a report will be scheduled for PCC on the 1st of November 2022 which will provide an overview of the feedback from the workshops and set out proposals for the future direction in regards to the approach within the PRS.

3.6. This timeline will set out the direction that the work in relation to the PRS will take and be determined by the feedback from the workshop and preferred approaches identified Councillors. The overall timeline will be dependant on the preferred approach or approaches and the future action plans may vary depending on this.

4. Development of Approach

4.1. In order to determine the most appropriate way to approach future work, all of the concerns raised via the Council Motion process and subsequent meetings with the Working Group were collated. These are shown in appendix 3, which was the working paper used within the first working group meeting on the 27th May 2022.

4.2. This working paper collates the concerns raised and groups them into four themes;

- a) Overall Approach to PRS;
- b) Approach to Selective Licensing;
- c) Specifics of Selective Licensing;
- d) Consultation and Engagement.

4.3. It is proposed by the working group that theme a) should be considered first as it will provide the overarching position in relation to the PRS. Whilst selective licensing may be a future consideration, the initial approach is aimed at ensuring that there is a clear understanding of all the options that may be available to the Council to enable direction to be provided.

4.4. Any details discussions on selective licensing will still occur, but it is not proposed to enter into any of these detailed discussions until further exploration has been made in regards to the overall approach to the sector. The workshops will discuss all options including selective licensing and the previous concerns raised in regards to selective licensing proposals have been documented as part of this process.

5. Engagement of Working Group

5.1. The working group also sought to set out the occasions on which it would be engaged in the development of the proposed work up until November 2022. It is proposed that this engagement occurs at the following points:

- Discussion to create the draft terms of reference for the working group
- Provision of comments prior to report being finalised for PCC in July 2022.
- Informing the development of the workshops for all Councillors.
- Attending the workshops for all Councillors
- Informing the development of the report to be presented to PCC in November 2022 relating to “Overall approach to the PRS”
- Provision of comments prior to report being finalised for PCC in November 2022.

6. Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Designation for Selective Licensing

6.1. Whilst the above approach will not look specifically at selective licensing, there is an opportunity to immediately deal with one of the main queries relating to the original designations, which will help to inform any future approach. Using the current evidence base, the Council is able to commission work to help to understand whether a designation done by LSOAs would have an impact on the geography of any future designations.

6.2. LSOAs do not all follow the same boundaries as wards (which were used for the original proposals) and are based on population, therefore may provide a different basis for making any future designations.

6.3. It is proposed that this work is completed during Summer 2022 so that it is able to inform the evidence that can be used at the proposed workshops. It will also provide a direct answer to the query as to whether designating by LSOAs will impact on the scale and geography of the scheme.

6.4. This work can be completed by utilising £7,550 of the remaining £42k budget agreed for selective licensing designations and will be carried out by the same organisation that completed the original evidence based to enable it to be consistent and comparable.

END