

Selective Licensing Work Group – Action Plan for proposal to Prosperous Communities Committee

1. Context

Based on the feedback given by the four Councillors who put forward the motion and the subsequent discussion at Prosperous Communities Committee there are believed to be four 4 distinct themes that have emerged;

Theme 1: Overall approach to the Private Rented Sector

Theme 2: Approach to selective licensing

Theme 3: Specifics of selective licensing

Theme 4: Consultation and engagement

The specific areas for exploration within each theme are identified in table 2 in appendix 1.

2. Action plan timescales and milestones

Table 1 sets out the proposed timescales and milestones to be presented to Prosperous Communities Committee. The key dates are as follows:

- 19th July 2022 – submit proposed action plan for approval
- 1st November 2022 – seek approval for overall approach to the PRS

| Table 1: Timescales | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| PCC Date | Objective |
| 19 th July 2022 | Committee: Agree overall approach and timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Action plan - Draft Progress report <p><i>Committee Decision: to seek approval for proposed timeline and broader engagement with all Councillors on Theme 1.</i></p> |
| 13 th September 2022 | No item – run initial workshops on evidence and overall approach to the PRS |
| 1 st November 2022 | Committee: Feedback on workshops and overall approach to sector <p><i>Committee Decision: Relating to overall approach to the PRS in the future.</i></p> |
| 6 th December 2022 | No scheduled item: timeline to be determined based on decision at November 2022 committee. |
| 31 st January 2023 | No scheduled item: timeline to be determined based on decision at November 2022 committee. |
| 21 st March 2023 | No scheduled item: timeline to be determined based on decision at November 2022 committee. |
| 25 th April 2023 | No scheduled item: timeline to be determined based on decision at November 2022 committee. |

Any work beyond November 2022 will be determined subject to any decision made by Prosperous Communities Committee at its meeting in November 2022.

Working Group Action 1:

The working group are asked to provide feedback on the proposed timescales.

Working Group Action 2:

The working group are asked to provide feedback on the proposal for a broader workshop for all Councillors on the PRS in West Lindsey.

3. Approach to developing an action plan

Given the theming of the subjects raised shown in table 2 (appendix 1) there is a clear need to undertake work with Members to identify and establish what the preferred approach should be when looking to address issues identified within the PRS. Whilst the remit of this working group has come about due to the selective licensing proposals, the issues raised within the table suggest that there is a broader piece of work to engage members on as a whole in relation to the PRS.

Working Group Action 3:

The working group are asked confirm if they agree with how the concerns raised have been grouped into the four themes.

Working Group Action 4:

The working group are asked to approve that theme 1 is explored first to provide the framework and basis for any future proposals in relation to the PRS.

Working Group Action 5:

Within table 2, in relation to theme 1, the working group are asked to put their views forward on how the specific concern may be best addressed and/or explored further.

4. Future engagement of working group

The working group terms of reference seek to ensure that it is engaged at key stages of the process. On that basis, it is proposed that prior to its submission to Prosperous Communities Committee, the final version of this report is sent to working group members for comment.

Subject to approval at committee, it is then proposed to convene a meeting of the working group to develop the proposed approach to further engagement with Councillors.

END

Appendix 1

Table 2: Identified themes

| Theme 1 | |
|--|--|
| Overall Approach in Private Rented Sector | |
| | Comments from working group on approach to dealing with this issue. (prompts given) |
| Suggestion that we need to go back to basics in regards to our approach in dealing with the PRS and the whole rental sector | <i>How do we do this?</i> |
| Belief that the Council has existing tools to address the issues without the need for the approach proposed. | <i>Do Members need more information on these tools and their limitations?</i> |
| Concern that the evidence does not reflect the actual situation in regards to property conditions | <i>What evidence would be more suitable? What evidence is informing this view?</i> |
| View that the issues seeking to be addressed relate to the more built up urban areas. | <i>What evidence supports this view?</i> |
| Believe a broader partnership approach is required as there is a belief that the scheme needed to do more to address broader community issues and concerns such as crime, ASB and community development. | <i>Is this a PRS issue or a general issue?</i> |
| Suggested that Councillors have greater clarity on the objectives that are trying to be achieved to assess what is possible. | <i>Is this in relation to the PRS as whole (i.e. what are the Council's aims for the sector)</i> |
| Fundamental review of all tools available to us to be explored. | <i>Is this all tools relating to the PRS and standards within it?</i> |
| Theme 2 | |
| Approach to Selective Licensing | |
| Consensus that a radical re think of the overall proposals are needed. | |
| A belief that a more holistic approach is needed where Selective Licencing is one of a package of actions being taken in areas where improvements in asb/crime are also being sought. | |
| Concerns that the scheme wasn't "fair" for good landlords | |
| Concerns that this legislation wasn't appropriate to use in West Lindsey and the mix of rural and urban | |

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|---|--|
| Belief that the previous scheme has not delivered good outcomes for the community. | |
| Not all completely against selective licensing, but believe radical re-think of how it is delivered, in particular limiting the size of the designation, is needed | |
| Would like to look at what alternatives could be used. | |
| Concern that “incidental” landlords will be subjected to the scheme (i.e. those owning a property for a short period or a small number of properties) | |
| Belief that a Ward based approach creates unfairness and is too broad a geographic area | |
| Request to look at whether a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) data approach would improve the targeting of the scheme. | |
| Request to look at whether more specific smaller areas could be included based on evidence. | |
| Concern that the outcomes that the scheme seeks to deliver were not appropriate for the areas or reflective of the views of the stakeholders in the areas in which the scheme would be delivered. | |
| Suggested that options should include impact assessments of the scheme for core groups such as landlords and tenants. | |
| Theme 3 | |
| Specifics of Selective Licensing | |
| Fee was too high and should not be applicable to all landlords | |
| Concern that fees for both the licence and property improvements would be passed on to tenants | |
| Theme 4 | |

| Consultation and Engagement | |
|---|--|
| View that a number of face to face consultations with key stakeholders of tenants and landlords should form a part of any future pre-consultation engagement and subsequent consultation process. | |
| Concern that the consultation was not asking the right questions and therefore will not provide the right answers. | |
| Suggestion that more in depth, workshop style engagement is needed to enable a greater understanding of the housing sector, any data provided and the challenges the District is facing. | |