

## SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Report of:** Executive Director - Place

**To:** Policy Development Panel Thursday, 7 December 2017

**(Author:** Phil Stacey Housing Options Manager)

**Subject** Houses in Multiple Occupation

**Purpose:** To explain the processes and issues around HIMO's to assist PDP in forming a clear terms of reference for a Task Group

### **Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That the Policy Development Panel note the briefing report and research paper and provide feedback via any Task Group

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 On 25 July 2017, Policy Development Panel requested that a member of the Private Sector Housing team explain processes and issues around HIMO's to assist the panel in forming clear terms of reference for a Task Group. This work would commence following the completion of the Task Group looking at Planning Design
- 1.2 A briefing report has been produced which is attached at Appendix A to this report
- 1.3 A research paper produced by RRR Consultancy on HIMO dated 22 July 2017 is attached at Appendix B to this report

### **2.0 OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Option 1: That the Panel considers the information provided and provides feedback.
- 2.2 Option 2: Do nothing

### **3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 The reason for recommendation is for Policy Development Panel to consider the appended briefing report, research paper and provide feedback

### **4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 4.1 An increase in standards of Houses in Multiple Occupation, especially for those currently unlicensed, should result in a nett reduction of Homeless Persons in the district
- 4.2 Providing good quality, well-regulated Houses in Multiple Occupation should minimise disrepair, environmental and other health considerations in the district

## 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

### 5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 Effective processes to manage and enforce regulation on Houses in Multiple Occupation will minimise, for example, inefficient heating systems that contribute to the carbon footprint

### 5.2 **Corporate Priorities**

5.2.1 There is a strong link between work around Houses in Multiple Occupation and our corporate priorities, notably 'to have pride in South Holland by supporting the district and residents to develop and thrive'.

### 5.3 **Crime and Disorder**

5.3.1 There is often a link between Houses in Multiple Occupation and anti-social behaviour. Addressing the issue of Houses in Multiple Occupation should make a contribution to wider efforts to address anti-social behaviour)

### 5.4 **Financial**

5.4.1 The extension of licencing to large numbers will need to accurately reflect the cost to the authority to administer the scheme and consideration needs to be given as to an appropriate increase of fees given this, and that no increase has been applied since 2010/11.

5.4.2 In addition; there are additional powers available to the district, which if introduced, will have a financial impact

5.4.3 The application of Home Loss Payments when Houses in Multiple Occupation are prohibited, and persons are made Homeless as a result of our actions needs to be resolved and, dependant on the legal advice, any financial implications need to be considered

5.4.4 Failure to implement the new Statutory Duties could result in financial penalties

### 5.5 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.5.1 There is a positive link between increasing both the supply of housing, along with investing into the condition of private housing in the district and the broader Health and Wellbeing agenda

### 5.6 **Reputation**

5.6.1 Failure to implement the new statutory duties required could result in a direct intervention by the Secretary of State, with the resultant reputation and also possible financial damage

### 5.7 **Risk Management**

5.7.1 There are risks in taking enforcement action against Houses in Multiple Occupation; as these may result in Homelessness and would impose additional Statutory Duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act, as from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018

### 5.8 **Safeguarding**

5.8.1 Occupants of Houses in Multiple Occupation can often be some of the most vulnerable members of society. Any process or policy changes need to ensure that these persons remain safeguarded

### 5.9 **Staffing**

5.9.1 There is an addition of 2 full time officers made within the Place review. Staffing resources will need to be kept under review dependant on any adoption of recommendations made by

the Task Group

**5.10 Stakeholders / Constitution / Timescales**

5.10.1 There are no known implications for stakeholders, but Houses in Multiple Occupation work will require the Council to adopt a partnership approach. There are no known implications in terms of timescales and consultation.

**5.11 Transformation Programme**

5.11.1 There are likely to be several Information Technology changes required which will need to be worked up and costed

**6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All

**7.0 ACRONYMS**

7.1 HIMO = Houses in Multiple Occupation

7.2 HHSRS = Housing (and) Health Safety Rating System

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Background papers: -           None

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**Key Decision:**                N

**Exempt Decision:**           N

**This report refers to a Mandatory Service**

**Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A                   Houses in Multiple Occupation  
Appendix B                   Research on Houses in Multiple Occupation