

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E3079

Additional HMO Licensing Scheme

Date of Meeting	5-Sep-18
The Issue	<i>This report informs Cabinet of the results of a recent public consultation exercise and seeks a decision on whether to designate all, or part of Bath, as an area subject to additional licensing for specified types of HMOs.</i>
The decision	<p>RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Having studied the evidence base it is satisfied that there is a sufficiency of evidence to justify the new scheme which accords with the Services Regulations 2009 and that any detriment to landlords is outweighed by the benefits to tenants and the wider community, sufficient safeguards are in place to mitigate the impact on affected landlords and the proposed scheme is the least intrusive means of achieving the Council's legitimate aims. 2) An HMO Additional Licensing scheme, as detailed within the designation report attached in appendix 1, is introduced for a period of 5 years commencing on the 1st January 2019. 3) The Head of Housing undertakes the appropriate and statutory steps to enable the introduction of the proposed licensing scheme.
Rationale for decision	<p>The private rented sector continues to undergo significant expansion. As part of this expansion there are now an estimated 3,000 HMOs within Bath City, fuelled by a combination of increased student numbers and the demand for affordable housing options for single households. The introduction of a targeted Additional Licencing scheme would provide the LHA with a platform to effectively identify these HMOs and work with landlords, tenants and other interested parties to address housing condition and management issues to the benefit of all concerned, including the wider community.</p> <p>The scheme would be reviewed annually.</p>
Other options considered	<p>A range of other options have been considered in detail and are documented within the attached Designation Report and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing - given the information contained in the Designation Report this is not considered an option. • Targeted proactive enforcement - a fully funded pro-active inspection programme is not realistic given scale of the issue and current financial climate. • Reactive enforcement - this will continue, however, it only address individual properties and is reliant upon the tenant making a formal complaint to the Council. • Voluntary initiatives - past experience has shown that whilst they can be successful in improving standards a significant proportion of landlords, often those with poorer quality stock, will not engage. • Different geographical area – the evidence supports the proposed

area. This area also aligns with the Article 4 Planning Direction and thus simplifying the communication message to landlords and residents.

- Selective licensing – on the face of it there is not the evidence to support such a scheme. However, this has not been considered in detail given our focus on HMOs