

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS  
CABINET MEMBER**

**LANDLORD ACCREDITATION SCHEME**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council currently has a landlord accreditation scheme.
- 1.2 To improve the existing scheme by creating a two tier scheme incorporating both landlord and property accreditation.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Currently the council operates a landlord accreditation scheme with 28 accredited landlords who collectively manage 794 properties.
- 2.2 The private rented sector is also involved with assistance provided to individuals through the Housing Advice Team. In appropriate circumstances assistance is provided in the form of a bond and/or advance rent for individuals who are or are at risk of becoming homeless to help secure a new property. These properties are inspected by the Housing Standards team to ensure they meet statutory obligations and the landlord has all the necessary documentation. This is currently done outside of the accreditation scheme.
- 2.3 The majority of landlords only have one or two properties and it is these landlords that are often unaware of their legal responsibilities and fail to meet their statutory obligations and need the greatest support.
- 2.4 Landlord accreditation requires that all of the landlord's properties must meet the standards of the scheme and the landlord must meet a certain standard of management.
- 2.5 From the recent consultation with landlords on the Housing Enforcement Policy, landlords generally think that poor housing standards and management give landlords a bad name and that the idea of dealing with rogue landlords is supported. Also that they would welcome greater self regulation for those that manage properties in a responsible way and ensure high standards. They would also welcome greater support, including advice, training etc.

2.6 The proposal is therefore to improve the existing scheme to create a two tier scheme incorporating both landlord and property accreditation. The proposal is also to apply the scheme to properties receiving bond payments to ensure a prescribed set of standards for those properties and reduce the overall number of visits necessary.

2.7 The scheme will then consist of a basic property (entry) level and an option for the landlord then to graduate to the second tier or full landlord accreditation once they can demonstrate the required level of management competency and property standards

### 3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Option 1 – keep the scheme as landlord accreditation only.

3.2 Option 2 – amend the scheme to allow for a two tier scheme with the basic (entry) level being property accreditation and enhanced or full being landlord accreditation.

### 4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

#### 4.1 **Option 1**

4.1.1 The current scheme is time consuming and onerous, particularly for landlords with less than 5 properties.

#### 4.2 **Option 2**

4.2.1 The amended scheme would allow greater support for those landlords with only one or two properties and who are often the ones most likely to fall foul of their legal obligations. Applying the scheme to properties receiving bond payments would also ensure a prescribed set of standards for those properties and reduce the number of visits necessary.

### 5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 **Staffing** – administration of the scheme will be achieved within existing resources.

### 6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out with regards to this proposal. The assessment highlights impacts in the following areas:-

#### 6.1.1 **Health**

The scheme impacts positively on health. The impact of poor housing is well documented. Accreditation aims to promote better housing conditions and lead to improvements in the management of properties. Both impact on the health of tenants.

#### 6.1.2 Distributional

Any landlord will be able to join. However, the basic level will be aimed at smaller landlords who are most likely to be local. The aim of the scheme is to help landlords meet their statutory obligations and by doing so, it will help them attract better tenants.

#### 6.1.3 Economical and Social Inclusion

The scheme relates to private sector housing and the most deprived or vulnerable tend to live in the poorest housing. Whether its property or landlord accreditation it aims to improve health through the improved conditions.

#### 6.1.4 Statutory Legal Processes

Increasing the number of accredited properties allows housing enforcement officers to concentrate on those properties and landlords that fail to comply with the minimum requirements.

6.2 A record of the integrated impact assessment is available.

### 7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 No specific consultation on this proposal has taken place.

### 8. **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 To agree that the current accredited landlord scheme is amended and improved to become a two tier scheme with property accreditation as the basic (entry) level and an optional second tier of full landlord accreditation.

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report** None.