

Report of the Chief Executive

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION1. Purpose of report

To advise members of changes to mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and to seek approval of property and management standards for HMOs in the Borough. A copy of the standards is circulated separately with this agenda.

2. Detail

Mandatory licensing of HMOs came into force in 2006 and applies to those HMOs of three storeys or more, lived in by five or more people, in two or more separate households. The licence lasts for a five year period after which an application for renewal has to be made. At the present time, there are 82 licensed HMOs in the borough.

The purpose of the mandatory licensing regime is to ensure that those HMOs likely to present the most significant health and safety risks are known to the local authority, with evidence provided that appropriate management arrangements have been made for the property.

The introduction of The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018 will mean that from 1 October 2018, the scope of mandatory licensing will be extended to include properties operating as HMOs which are less than three storeys high. This will bring a further 136 known HMOs under the licensing regime in Broxtowe. However, Government estimates of percentage increases would indicate the number could be 246. A report will be submitted to Policy and Performance Committee detailing the staffing implications of the new requirements.

A second statutory instrument, The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018 introduces new conditions that must be included in mandatory HMO licences. These are:

- Minimum sizes for rooms used as sleeping accommodation ; and
- Storage and disposal of household waste pending collection.

The regulations set out minimum sizes for rooms used as sleeping accommodation but local authorities are free to set their own.

It is therefore proposed to introduce the standards contained in appendix 1 for all HMOs in Broxtowe. This standard is higher in terms of sleeping room sizes than the nationally legislated minimum. However, it is based on the standards set by Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) – an organisation which promotes good practice in housing enforcement in the East Midlands. The DASH sleeping room standard is used by most Nottinghamshire local authorities. The standards proposed also reference other room sizes, provision of facilities and certain aspects of management.

Recommendation

Committee is asked to NOTE the changes to the mandatory HMO licensing regime and RESOLVE that the standards for HMOs in Broxtowe be approved.

Background papers: Nil