



NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 9 October 2019

Time: 2.00 pm

Place: Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Councillors are requested to attend the above meeting to transact the following business

Corporate Director for Strategy and Resources

Senior Governance Officer: Laura Wilson **Direct Dial:** 0115 876 4301

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|----------|---|---------|
| 1 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 2 | DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS | |
| 3 | MINUTES
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2019 | 3 - 10 |
| 4 | HOUSING LICENSING - SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE
Report of the Head of Legal and Governance | 11 - 22 |
| 5 | NOTTINGHAM CREDIT UNION UPDATE
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| 6 | WORK PROGRAMME
Report of the Head of Legal and Governance | 29 - 34 |

IF YOU NEED ANY ADVICE ON DECLARING AN INTEREST IN ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA, PLEASE CONTACT THE GOVERNANCE OFFICER SHOWN ABOVE, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE THE DAY OF THE MEETING

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CITIZENS ARE ADVISED THAT THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. ANY RECORDING OR REPORTING ON THIS MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON RECORDING AND

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NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held in the Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on Wednesday 4 September 2019 from 2:00pm to 4:22pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Anne Peach (Chair)
Councillor Carole McCulloch (Vice Chair, items 16-19)
Councillor Georgia Power (Vice Chair, items 19-21)
Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Maria Joannou
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis
Councillor Jane Lakey
Councillor Ethan Radford
Councillor Andrew Rule
Councillor Cate Woodward

Absent

Councillor Sue Johnson
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ian Bentley	- Strategy and Commissioning Manager
Rachael Harding	- Housing Strategy Specialist
Bobby Lowen	- Commissioning Lead
Tajinder Madahar	- Head of Extensive and Specialist Services
Adrian Mann	- Governance Officer
Christine Oliver	- Head of Commissioning
Kimberley Pike	- Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator
Laura Wilson	- Senior Governance Officer
Councillor Linda Woodings	- Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Heritage

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan - Council business

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

In relation to items 19 and 20, in the interests of transparency, Councillor Jane Lakey stated that she is a private landlord in the City and derives income from the leasing of property.

18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

19 UPDATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING, PLANNING AND HERITAGE

Councillor Linda Woodings, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Heritage, gave a verbal report on her main priorities and challenges for the 2019/20 municipal year. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the budget for the next financial year is under consideration and processes are in place to ensure that the spending in this financial year adheres to the budget;
- (b) a submission will be made to the Government in support of abolishing the use of the 'no-fault' Section 21 notice, which landlords can use to evict tenants on an assured shorthold tenancy without the requirement to provide a specific reason for taking back possession of the property;
- (c) after the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety following the Grenfell Tower disaster, the Council will ensure full compliance with its statutory responsibilities across its housing stock, and that the right fire safety measures are in place. The cladding of some high-rise buildings is being replaced. New sprinkler systems are being rolled out across all Council homes (starting with the high-rise buildings most at risk) and repair teams are assessing the fire safety and repair works required. The important work of the Safer Housing Team will be discussed at a future meeting;
- (d) the Council is committed to building 1000 more social homes and the development of brownfield sites is being explored, with potential funding applications to Homes England. A consultation on the Social Housing Allocation Policy is underway and the returns will be used to inform the final version of the document. Nottingham City Homes (NCH), which is celebrating 100 years of Council housing, is moving to a new governance structure with a strategic group board, to represent the voice of the tenants and act as a risk management, compliance and audit board. The Partnership Agreement between NCH and the Council will also be reviewed. Work is underway to explore what assistance can be given to struggling NCH tenants to help them avoid going into rent arrears;
- (e) the Land and Planning Policies document (LAPP), which represents Part 2 of the new Local Plan, contains policies to guide the development of Nottingham and identifies sites for development and for protection. Its current version is undergoing consultation, for final presentation to the Council for adoption at its November meeting. A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), including documents on Open Space, Biodiversity and Caves, are being drafted in support of the LAPP. These SPDs add further detail to policies and provide additional guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. SPDs are also being considered for other areas, such as for achieving 0% net carbon emissions, and the balance to be struck in building redevelopment between the needs for new student accommodation and affordable family housing;
- (f) revised plans on access to minerals and waste disposal are going forward, and a number of public rights of way are being formalised. A new Local List of heritage

assets is being created and further grants for Heritage Action Zones in the City (which may be expanded) are being sought, to ensure that Nottingham's historic structures and environments have additional protection and can be developed sensitively to serve a practical and sustainable purpose, going forward;

- (g) applications for the development of Houses in Multiple Occupation are managed by both Planning Officers and the Safer Housing Team, who ensure that the minimum space standards are adhered to and that there is adequate waste disposal, storage and parking provision in place. Work is also being carried out to ensure that natural water drainage is maintained across Nottingham wherever possible, to reduce the contribution of water running off hard surfaces to flooding;
- (h) close attention is paid to the value of the Section 106 Agreements negotiated with developers (with reviews carried out every twelve months), in consultation with the District Valuer, to ensure that the right amount is invested in local community facilities and infrastructure when new developments are built.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) request that the roll-out timetable is provided for the installation of new sprinkler systems across the Council's housing stock;**
- (2) request that information is provided on how the number of parking spaces appropriate for a new housing development is calculated and agreed by Planning Officers.**

20 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING

Rachael Harding (Housing Strategy Specialist), Tajinder Madahar (Head of Extensive and Specialist Services), Christine Oliver (Head of Commissioning) and Kimberley Pike (Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator) presented a report on homelessness and rough sleeping in Nottingham, including the work of Housing Aid. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the Government has announced extra funding for addressing homelessness, but it may be that funds must be bid for on a project basis, so an assessment is being made of any current gaps in service provision. As Government financial support for homelessness has reduced by over £21million between 2010 and 2019 (representing a funding cut of 53% across the East Midlands), with the £6.98million available split £4.1million for Homelessness and £2.88million for Adult Social Care, Housing Aid has a very high and challenging caseload;
- (b) levels of homelessness have risen, nationally. Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, a new monitoring regime is in place, which captures a wider range of data. The Act introduced a duty to support all households that come to Housing Aid, so the number of households that the Council is required to support more than doubled between 2017 and 2018. Officers now have much more contact with struggling households over a longer period of time, and the primary strategy is to seek to prevent homelessness through early intervention;

- (c) the main two reasons for homelessness are eviction from a rented property, or being asked to leave the property of parents or a relative. These have been the primary reasons for some years, though the number of people becoming homeless following eviction from rented property has increased in recent years. An assessment of the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) relative to existing rent levels suggests that only a very limited number of properties would be affordable to somebody reliant on the LHA. Nottingham City Homes (NCH) has Tenancy Sustainment Officers to offer support, while schemes are in place to provide access to skills and improve employability. Engagement is underway with private landlords through dedicated liaison officers to encourage and support them in taking on tenants on Universal Credit;
- (d) where people are asked to leave the property of their parents or a relative, a home visit and assessment takes place and a personalised housing plan is agreed to help people resolve their situation and live independently, in consultation with an employment adviser where appropriate. Mediation services are also available. Particular efforts are made to protect any child at risk of homelessness and being taken into the Council's care;
- (e) the Committee requested information on the groups of people most at risk of homelessness, and on what was being done to address their particular needs. It felt that, given the limited possibilities for renting in the private sector on the basis of the LHA, there is a clear need for social housing, and that there should be an appropriate social housing element in housing development schemes;
- (f) the Council seeks to ensure that 20% of the housing stock in new developments constitutes affordable housing, and that part of the income from the associated Section 106 Agreement is invested in NCH. However, there is no Government funding available to Local Authorities to build social housing – which can only fund housing projects by borrowing against their own rental incomes. Houses built by the Council are subject to 'Right to Buy' and the income received by the Council for a sale through this scheme is not enough to construct a replacement house for social housing – though, sometimes, the Council can purchase appropriate existing houses to use for social housing. Consideration is being given to whether NCH could establish a Housing Association arm to access housing development funding, but it would need to self-fund any house-building projects;
- (g) many individuals and families – though not all – come to the Council before they lose their home. Although the Council attempts to prevent homelessness from occurring, this has only been possible in around one-third of cases. This is because successful prevention depends upon when a person at risk of homelessness approaches the Council, and the willingness of any evicting party to engage in negotiation, financial or otherwise. Unfortunately, the relief funding associated with the Homelessness Reduction Act is not enough to keep all people at risk of homelessness in formal accommodation;
- (h) there is a high demand for temporary accommodation in the City, which has increased over recent years and is now at a peak level, with 277 households in temporary accommodation currently, compared to 54 in 2009. Although a lower proportion of households at risk of homelessness require temporary accommodation ultimately, families placed in temporary homes tend to need to

stay in them for longer periods before a more permanent solution is found. This can be due to a lack of affordable housing and the requirement of the Homelessness Reduction Act that people must spend 56 days seeking accommodation in the private rented sector before they can be offered a Council house;

- (i) the Committee noted that people who enter temporary accommodation often need to move into what is available at a particular time, wherever it is in the City. This can mean that families with children move out of the catchment areas of their schools, and they cannot necessarily meet the costs of the public transport required for their children to get to school. It advised that the current policy of meeting the travel costs of a child between their school and their temporary accommodation for six months only is reviewed and the cost implications of funding a child's travel for the full period of their temporary accommodation is assessed for affordability;
- (j) there is a £4.1million housing-related support services budget for 2019/20, including over 400 units of supported accommodation for singles and families, an independent living support service to help families and individuals sustain their tenancies, a Street Outreach and Enablement Service for rough sleepers, and the Housing Aid core service and homelessness strategy. A loan has been made to NCH to deliver at least 50 units of suitable family housing for temporary accommodation per year over three years, and £472,487 has been invested in 31 refuge spaces for survivors of domestic or sexual violence, with an additional £66,407 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support six further refuge beds;
- (k) for 2019/20, the Government has allocated a £600,000 Flexible Homeless Support Grant to fund flexible prevention activity, additional staffing capacity within Housing Aid service and additional temporary accommodation for families and singles, and a £165,000 New Burdens Grant, to fund IT for monitoring of the Homelessness Reduction Act, additional staffing capacity within the Housing Aid service and start-up costs for the NCH Private Sector Leasing Scheme for temporary accommodation;
- (l) the Council has also put in successful bids for a £245,000 Private Rented Access Scheme Grant to expand the existing private rented sector scheme based at Housing Aid into a social lettings service; a £690,000 Rapid Rehousing Pathway Grant to deliver the sit-up service, navigators, private rented sector access and tenancy support for rough sleepers; and a £460,000 Rough Sleeper Initiative Grant to fund the rough sleeper coordinator, winter shelter, complex needs hostel, housing first / move on, 'No First Night Out' and resettlement workers. However, there is high competition for these funds and the bidding process is time-intensive for officers. Given that the grants can only be used for pre-specified purposes and have a short time limit for spending, they are not an effective model for sustainable service provision in the long term;
- (m) 635 individuals were sleeping rough at some stage during 2018, with 55 identified at the August 2019 Street Count. These people were found in 33 locations across nine wards, with the majority within the City Centre – though more people are now

moving to the City's outskirts. There are 292 known locations across the City that are checked regularly by the Street Outreach Team;

- (n) in December 2018, the Office for National Statistics produced a report based on experimental statistics looking at deaths of homeless people in England and Wales since 2013. This data showed an increase of 24% in deaths from 2013 to 2017 – 84% were male (at an average age of 44). Of these deaths, 32% were due to a drug overdose, 10% were alcohol-related and 13% were suicides. Overall, drug overdoses and alcohol-related deaths have increased, while suicides have decreased. In Nottingham, four rough sleeper deaths have been reported in the last 12 months. One in three people who die when rough sleeping have long-term mental health conditions;
- (o) the current key challenges are that, in a period of ongoing austerity, there is limited affordable housing available, cuts to supporting infrastructure has reduced that capacity to deliver meaningful homelessness prevention, and the conditions of grant funding do not allow the use of bed-and-breakfasts as temporary accommodation, so it is difficult to fulfil the 'No First Night Out' programme. The probable gap between service demand and available provision is being forecast, but it is challenging to ensure that there is enough investment in prevention and a sufficient stock of temporary accommodation. Plans are in place, but it is difficult to achieve the necessary level of funding to achieve them.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) request that information is provided on the reasons why 47% of people at risk from homelessness during 2018 was due to their being asked to leave the home of their parents or other relatives, and what the particular outcomes of these cases were;**
- (2) request that information is provided on the groups of people most at risk of homelessness, and on what is being done to address their particular needs;**
- (3) recommend that the provision of school travel costs for children for the full duration of their time in temporary accommodation is assessed and provided;**
- (4) request that information on the cost definition for 'affordable housing' is provided, relative to the average family incomes in the Nottingham area.**

21 WORK PROGRAMME

Laura Wilson, Senior Governance Officer, presented the proposed work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) request a written response to the recommendation made the by the Committee at its July 2019 meeting that, after the next Nottingham Citizen Survey (which will be carried out in the context of the revised ward boundaries), following surveys are carried out every other year, in**

conjunction with any other surveys that can be procured as part of the same package, as a cost-saving measure, and that any further cost-saving measures should be explored in relation to the Citizen, be submitted to the November meeting;

- (2) add consultation to changes to Council policy to the work programme, after discussions have taken place with the Chair and Constitutional Services on whether a sub-group can be established to carry out the initial evidence-gathering process;**
- (3) schedule a review of the work to combat Hate Crime for the January 2020 meeting.**

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 OCTOBER 2019
HOUSING LICENSING - SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive information on the impact the implementation of the Selective Licensing Scheme, since its introduction on 1 August 2018.

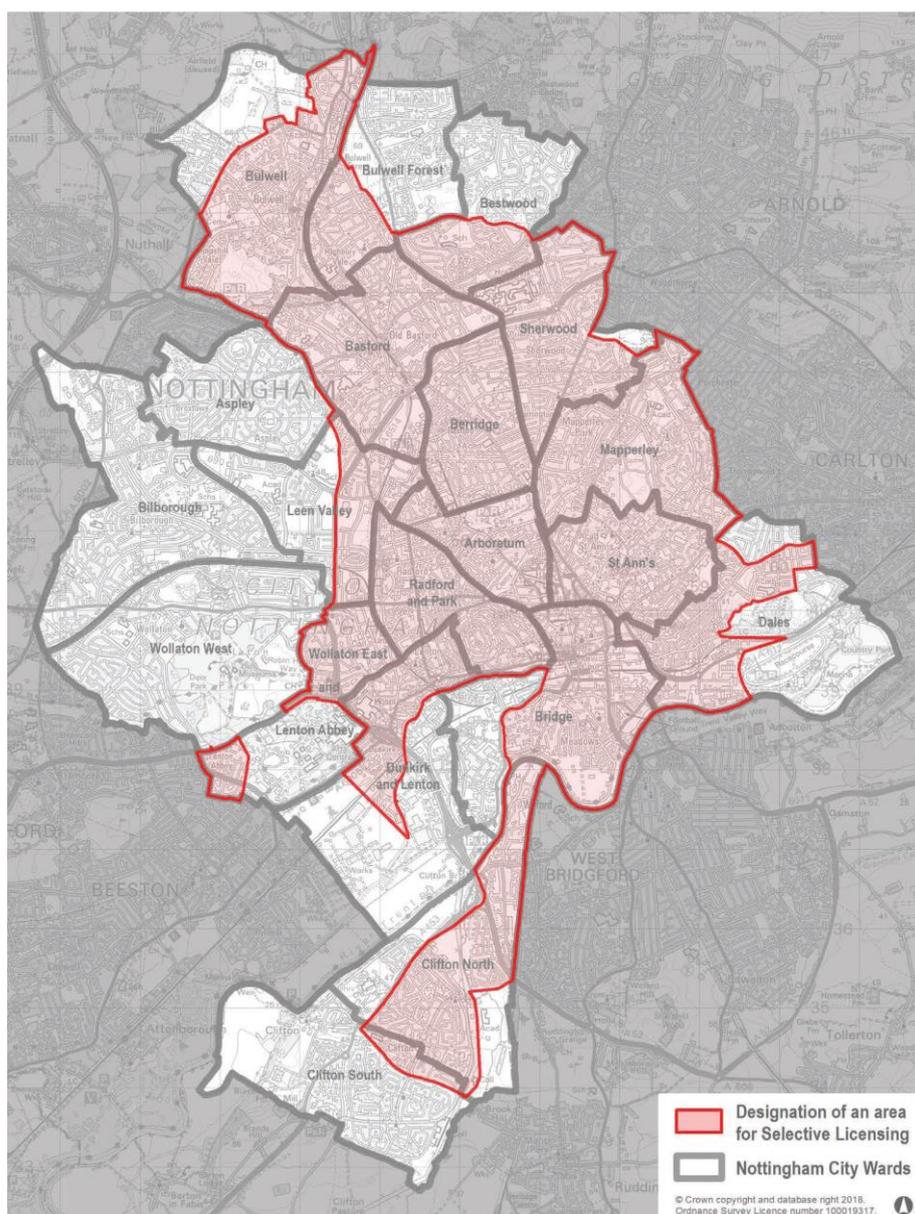
2 Action required

- 2.1 To consider the information provided and use it to inform questioning and make recommendations, where appropriate.

3 Background information

- 3.1 The Council introduced a new housing licensing scheme – Selective Licensing on 1 August 2018, which means that landlords in most areas of the city have to obtain a licence for each property they rent out.
- 3.2 The aim of the scheme is to raise the standards in the private rented sector (PRS) ensuring that all tenants are able to enjoy a safe, comfortable and well-managed home.
- 3.3 The evidence that the Council collected shows that, for many people living in the PRS, improvements can be made to their property. Problems associated with privately rented properties, include high crime, high anti-social behaviour, poor property conditions and high levels of deprivation.
- 3.4 The aims of the scheme are to:
- ensure that PRS properties are managed properly;
 - improve neighbourhoods in the designated area;
 - reduce complaints of noise, rubbish, housing disrepair and other anti-social behaviour related to the PRS, by making landlords accountable for their tenants;
 - continue to improve the PRS;
 - ensure the licence holder and manager are suitable;
 - ensure fundamental basic standards of accommodation are provided, including safe gas and electrics and room sizes for an appropriate number of occupants;
 - assist in identifying and dealing with rogue landlords.

3.5 The selective licensing scheme applies to the following areas of the city:



3.6 As it has been a year since the scheme was introduced, the Committee decided it would be appropriate to look at how implementation has gone, and colleagues from the Selective Licensing Team will be at the meeting to discuss performance, successes, and areas for improvement.

4 List of attached information

4.1 Briefing note from David Hobbs, Operations Manager, Selective Licensing.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 None.

7 Wards affected

7.1 All.

8 Contact information

8.1 Laura Wilson
Senior Governance Officer
0115 8764301
laura.wilson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9 October 2019 Selective Licensing Update

1. Summary

This ambitious scheme, one of the largest of its kind in the country, started on 1st August 2018 and is due to run to July 2023. Its implementation followed a pledge by the previous administration to introduce a city-wide licensing scheme which was part of an overall vision of 'Quality Housing for all'.

A team of 75 officers, across 12 different roles (many of whom were recruited from outside the authority) has been established, and there is at this stage satisfaction with how the scheme has developed. Appendix 1 and 2 offer some further key statistics, graphs and mini case studies.

2. Performance update

Key statistics (to end of Aug 2019, unless otherwise stated)

Licence applications received	17,523 *
Temporary exemption requests received	763 **
Draft licences issued	3903
Final licences issued	472
Pre-licensing inspections completed	475
Interventions (works required / improvements made)	237
Properties improved prior to our inspection, but because of the scheme	67
Properties improved through our intervention	160
Formal Enforcement (Civil Penalties and / or Prosecutions)	16

* Up to 32,000 properties are believed to be subject to selective licensing. However, due to reasons such as the uncertain and fluctuating housing market it is estimated that the Council will receive 24,000, which is what the fee is based on.

** Temporary exemptions notices (TENs) are given where there is evidence of the property being taken out of licensing e.g. selling a property. They last 3 months and can be extended once for a further 3 months, if after this time the property requires licensing a licence is required.

Commentary

The Council has received above the level of expected licence applications to date. A whole new team needed to be created, new processes and ways of working had to be developed whilst working within a new regulatory context. This has presented challenges, but we are already seeing some positive outcomes.

Higher than expected levels of temporary exemption requests have been received: these require a response and this has created an unexpected pressure on the team. The following are the priorities and delivery plan for the scheme as identified by the Executive Board report, April 2018:

Year	Promote	Process	Engage	Enforcement	Compliance	Review
1	■	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■	■
5	■	■	■	■	■	■

Based on this, implementation is proceeding as follows:

2.1 Scheme promotion

There was intensive, wide ranging promotion of the scheme prior to the scheme starting and during the initial first few months, which clearly had an impact, but it has been identified that this should have continued beyond the start of the scheme. This is an area of learning.

2.2 Application processing

It was anticipated that the first two years of the scheme would focus on the processing of licences. There is a long way to go, but the team is making significant inroads into processing, determining and issuing licences. The initial and on-going training, development and reviewing of staff, officers and procedures has been an area that has taken considerable time and effort. The team has reviewed the application process and continues to seek ways to improve it for both applicants and the team. Changes have been made and continue to be made to streamline the process where appropriate. In retrospect greater effort could have been made to keep information required at application stage to a minimum, and move more requirements to the compliance phase of the scheme. This has been another lesson learned.

2.3 Engagement

Significant resources and effort have been put into engaging with landlords in order to raise awareness of the scheme, better inform landlords and support them through the process. The programme has included:

- 30 events, with 400 landlords and agents engaged with proactively, including support for older landlords and landlords with English as a 2nd language at libraries and community centres;
- 4 larger landlord / managing agent events, another planned for the autumn, each with approximately 100 attending;
- landlord newsletter and updates being sent to over 2,500 signed up landlords;
- a commitment to introduce a landlord liaison group to improve dialogue and involve landlords as stakeholders, e.g. reviewing the website from a user perspective;
- use of social media and community radio to disseminate key messages.

David Hobbs

Operations Manager – Selective Licensing

2.4 Compliance

The compliance work is planned to start in October 2019 with an expected 500 properties to be inspected by March 2020. This will be a focus throughout the remainder of the scheme.

2.5 Review

The scheme is just starting its 2nd year of five, so it is too early to provide any meaningful data on outcomes delivered by the scheme. These will be felt more as licences are in force and compliance work begins. However, it is extremely important that the systems to capture data and intelligence are in place now so that evaluation against the scheme's objectives and outcomes can be undertaken. Given the original grounds for the scheme were poor property conditions, ASB, crime, and deprivation, data collection and analysis is focusing on these areas.

Nationally, selective licensing appears to be having a positive impact. An independent review of selective licensing schemes¹ commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and drawing on evidence from schemes across the country concluded that selective licensing is an effective tool for tackling problems in the private rented sector (PRS).

3. Enforcement action

The council has and continues to use its powers to take action against landlords who do not comply with their legal obligations and apply for licences. Since August 2018 the council has issued 22 civil penalty notices and 5 prosecutions, with 9 of these relating to landlords failing to apply for a selective licence and 4 relating to landlord failing to licence under the mandatory or additional scheme.

There are over 230 investigations on-going and officers have written to landlords in relation to 1000 properties and door knocked 857 properties. There has been a response rate of 45% from landlords written to. The visits to unlicensed properties have uncovered imminent disrepair to properties and in particular has noted a trend of smoke alarm systems not working or being completely absent placing tenants at increased risk.

The Council is proposing to continue to undertake more proactive promotion of the scheme in areas where applications still have not been made, along with enforcement activity utilising a risk-based approach. This will include mailshots generated from council tax records.

¹ [An independent review of the use and effectiveness of selective licensing](#) (Opinion Research Services, June 2019)

4. Leadership, scheme management, and risk

The scheme is benefiting from a structural change in leadership which has brought together the various teams within Community Protection which interact with the PRS under the banner of Safer Housing. Bringing together the compliance and enforcement functions is leading to more effective delivery of the scheme, together with a higher level of co-ordination and cross-service risk management.

An internal audit of the scheme was carried out within the first 6 months of the scheme. Although there are a number of issues to be addressed the overall opinion was one of limited assurance. Given the size of the task to get the scheme up and running in a very short space of time, this represents a successful outcome; the recommendations of the audit will now provide a helpful framework via which delivery of the scheme can be improved.

5. Successes

It is very early days to identify successes in terms of the scheme outcomes. The successes identified link largely to setting up this substantial scheme. There has been significant work through engagement to raise awareness of housing as an issue more widely across the Council and its partners. We have and continue to review processes, listening to feedback from landlords and colleagues, for example not requiring certain documents up front e.g. floor plans and land registry, with a view to determining licences more efficiently. The proposal to re-introduce a Landlord Liaison Group has been well received, to increase and improve dialogue in the private rented sector.

Supporting wider outcomes

- Proactive engagement with tenants causing ASB and satisfactory resolution of cases (see Appendix 2, case studies).
- Significant increase in Energy Performance Certificates issued in the PRS.
- Proportion of PRS homes with energy rating below 'D' reduced from 25.9% in 2018 to 15.6% in 2019.

6. Challenges and other lessons learned

- Despite the significant amount of awareness raising there is still a large number of landlords that have not applied for a licence.
- On the back of the Grenfell disaster and Hackitt review blocks of flats (some recently built / converted) have come under more scrutiny which were not envisaged when the scheme was being developed. Joint working with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is on-going to audit the significant number of blocks of flats within the city to ensure they are safe, following some local concerns that the sign off of buildings by approved inspectors was not up always satisfactory. Licensing is providing opportunities to inspect and engage with a broader range of such buildings. Some blocks of flats within the city contain flats that fall under the 3 different licensing schemes, (mandatory, additional and selective), causing confusion.

David Hobbs

Operations Manager – Selective Licensing

- Due to a query about the legislation covering flats within blocks, the Council has committed to a fee review for such blocks; this will require an executive decision, likely in the Autumn.
- Need to licence alms houses and other charitably – provided properties, has prompted a discussion about support for these groups. The Council offered some financial support to become accredited. The Council also fed back to MHCLG as part of the review of Selective Licensing (above) that the Government is now considering.
- Digital by default for application forms has created difficulties for some landlords, with the Council offering support and a paper application form as appropriate.
- Engaging hard to reach landlords, ensuring maximum number of applications are received. We continue to identify a lack of awareness in neighbourhoods – amongst both landlords and tenants.
- Significant, and above expected levels of freedom of information, temporary exemption and subject access requests.
- The ruling in *Brown v Hyndburn Borough Council* in the Court of Appeal (2018) meant late changes to application forms, processes and licence conditions, causing frustration to both landlords and colleagues.

7. Particular successes – for shared learning

Engagement work has been positive with significant engagement with groups of landlords that have not been engaged with before.

Creating a diverse workforce and the Council was 'Highly Commended' by the prestigious, national UK Housing Awards for the work done in creating a diverse and inclusive workforce.

8. Areas for improvement and development

The following are areas for continued improvement:

- On-going scheme promotion to help identify unlicensed properties and bring them into the scheme.
- On-going project management and review of the scheme to work to ensure scheme outcomes are achieved.
- On-going work to consider the potential for co-location of the Selective Licensing team with wider Safer Housing team.

Appendix 1

Key statistics (to end of Aug 2019, unless otherwise stated)

Licence applications received	17,523 *
Temporary exemption requests received	763 **
Draft licences issued	3903
Final licences issued	472
Pre-licensing inspections completed	475
Interventions (where works / improvements required)	237
Properties improved prior to and because of the scheme	67
Properties improved through our intervention	160
Civil penalties issued (under selective licensing only)	16
Citizens requests for service (Jan - Dec 2018)	2,218
Enforcement notices served (Jan - Dec 2018) E.g. improvement notice, prohibition orders (Housing Act 2004)	912 (390 properties)
Properties Improved (Jan - Dec 2018)	1,147

Graph 1 Projected and actual draft and final licences issued to May 2020



Appendix 2 – Mini case studies

Without licensing, it is unlikely the interventions below would have been made to improve citizens' lives and support landlords.

Berridge ward – property conditions

Pre licence inspection found the only heating was two gas fires and the occupant was 70 years plus. Full gas central heating system has now been fitted and the tenant is very happy.

Pre licence inspection that flagged for a low energy performance certificate (EPC) found to have no fire detection. Letting agents fitted fire detection urgently and following improvement works they have obtained a new and better EPC. Four properties with the same letting agent have insufficient heating (gas fires etc.) and secure tenants. Working with the letting agency to fit full gas fired heating in all the properties. Work will be ongoing with the agent's portfolio as other properties have been identified with a low EPC.

Mapperley ward – property conditions

Works completed by a letting agency and partnership work with agencies such as Preventative Adaptions to complete additional works on the agreement of the owner to assist a vulnerable tenant. The result has seen an improvement in the living conditions for the tenants.

Reducing ASB, preventing illegal evictions

Following a councillor referral for Wollaton East and Lenton Abbey ward a Wollaton landlady who had a difficult tenants causing ASB called to say thank you and if it wasn't for the Selective Licensing team being in place she wouldn't know what to do and wouldn't have the support.

Over a number of weeks, working with both parties the ASB was very quickly resolved. The landlady's health deteriorated, which meant a relative is now looking to move in.

We have worked with social care and East Midlands Property Owners (EMPO) as she struggled to understand the basics around tenancy management. She was granted a temporary exemption notice (TEN) with our help and with advice from EMPO she served a correct legal notice to her tenant.

We have had highly effective partnership work with Adult social services, occupational health, EMPO, Housing Aid and Community Protection. This has assisted us and resulted in a successful resolution for the individuals concerned.

Housing Aid contacted us to confirm in a few weeks they are confident that the tenant will be allocated a ground floor council flat in her preferred area. The partnership work with Housing Aid means that we have prevented homelessness. The property is no longer licensable.

A Meadows (Bridge ward) landlord was threatening illegal eviction of a tenant due to rent arrears, who had also not provided the correct paperwork for their application. Through supporting and working with the landlord and tenant, rent arrears were reduced and the landlord stopped the eviction.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 OCTOBER 2019
CREDIT UNION UPDATE
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive an update on the nature of the relationship between Nottingham City Council and local credit unions, and Nottingham City Council's promotion of loans from credit unions as an alternative to payday lenders.

2 Action required

- 2.1 To consider the information provided and decide whether any further updates are required.

3 Background information

- 3.1 At its meeting on 6 February 2019, the Committee considered information on how the Council interacts with credit unions, the benefits of using them and whether they are an effective way of addressing the increasing use of payday lenders.
- 3.2 At the meeting, the Committee heard from Lynn Griffin-Pearce, HR Consultant - Reward, Nottingham City Council (NCC) and Jason Eaves, Manager of Nottingham Credit Union (NCU), and were provided with the following information:
- (a) banks have become less willing to lend to vulnerable people , and payday lenders have filled the vacuum. A rising proportion of working adults have no or little savings available to them meaning that they are not financially resilient;
 - (b) financial worries can lead to stress, anxiety and depression, as well as having an impact on relationships, sleep and work performance;
 - (c) a number of NCC employees use payday lenders, and a number also use the Credit Union for savings and loans;
 - (d) NCC has a commitment in its Council Plan to support the Credit Union. It provides financial support and Councillors sit on the NCU Board. Pop up shops and money management workshops have been held at Loxley House;
 - (e) the partnership between NCC and the NCU is due to continue, in order to encourage better money management, break cycles of debt, improve financial health and ultimately increase employees' disposable income;
 - (f) new benefits that complement the NCU offering are planned, and 'soft' market testing is currently underway in order to gain an understanding of external suppliers of financial wellbeing education;

- (g) NCU also offers low interest debt consolidation loans, with payments made directly from salaries;
- (h) the NCU is not for profit and owned by members, and it can be difficult to compete with commercial providers. The financial regulator insists on increasing reserves, so finding people who need loans is important;
- (i) some people are reluctant to use Credit Unions or seek debt advice as they associate them with deprived people;
- (j) the basic service of the NCU needs improvement and can involve a lot of paperwork. It is seeking additional volunteers to improve the website, social media presence and service;
- (k) NCU membership is higher in some areas of the city such as Bulwell which has a history of its own Credit Union;
- (l) the average loan amount from the NCU is £1,000. The minimum available is £100, and the maximum available is £15,000.

3.3 An update from Lynn Griffin-Pearce is attached outlining the progress that has been made since February 2019.

4 List of attached information

4.1 Update from Lynn Griffin-Pearce, HR Consultant – Reward, Nottingham City Council.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee report and minutes – 6 February 2019.

7 Wards affected

7.1 All.

8 Contact information

8.1 Laura Wilson
Senior Governance Officer
0115 8764301
laura.wilson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Briefing for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Update on Nottingham City Councils partnership working and Nottingham Credit Union - 9 October 2019

Introduction

This paper provides a written update on the partnership working between Nottingham City Council (NCC) and Nottingham Credit Union (NCU), as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), to be discussed at its meeting on 9 October 2019. This briefing summarises latest developments at NCU and how this is impacting on Nottingham citizens, as well as financial education and support packages for employees that NCC is currently investigating. The paper informs OSC on how the partnership working between NCU and NCC continues to progress, including an update on the number of NCU members/loans/savings accounts since this was originally reported on 6 February 2019.

Background

Although NCC has a long established link with NCU, unfortunately NCC has not been able to provide funding or support this financial year. However, one of the Council Plan priorities for 2019-23 that will be adopted is 'to serve Nottingham better, we will also help people on low incomes to budget and manage their finances better and promote Nottingham's Credit Union as an ethical alternative bank'. NCU is a local not-for-profit and solvent Credit Union, helping and employing local people in Nottingham, with any profits distributed to its Members. During 2019, NCC has continued to promote NCU to the workforce, and the HR Consultant-Reward met with Jason Eaves (JE) - NCU Manager in first quarter of 2019 to review the Soft Market test exercise (as previously reported to OSC).

Current position

Both organisations continue to work in partnership to promote Holiday and Christmas savings schemes to existing and new NCC colleagues:

- NCU have run eight 'pop up' shops at Loxley House (since November 2018). However, due to colleagues cancelling appointments, no further sessions have been planned to date, although there is the intention to run some Money Tip Workshops in the future.
- NCU attended quarterly (induction) Welcome Event at the Council House in 2018 but due to resourcing issues, have not had a presence for new starters in 2019, although they did provide a stall at the Works Perks (Employee Benefit) refresh event in April 2019.
- There continues to be a range of general communications promoting NCU in the Works Perks newsletter, intranet, plasma screens and NCC website.
- JE has offered to attend team meetings (including Eastcroft), to talk to managers/team leaders and recruit colleagues to become NCU champions.
- JE has also delivered a Money Aware workshop for UNISON on 19th September 2019 to complement the Lighthouse Financial Surgery (on investment advice/retirement planning).
- Since February 2019, 82 loans for NCC staff have been approved (out of 109 applications), totalling £238,123. 54 new members have joined NCU and 22 have had loans approved (out of 27), totalling £69,172.
- There are now 488 NCC members who collectively have £326,438 in savings. Of this total staff figure, 173 have taken out loans totalling £494,179, which is currently outstanding.

Briefing for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Update on Nottingham City Councils partnership working and Nottingham Credit Union - 9 October 2019

Future plans – NCC Employees

HR continues to aspire to providing a financial 'product' which colleagues value, including financial education and support, that appeals to the whole workforce, with the aim of positively impacting on stress-related absence and sleeplessness, and thus improving performance and productivity at work. The Corporate Institute for Personnel & Development (CIPD)'s view is that 'employers who recognise this and who support staff with the many and complex financial choices they now face, will benefit from more financially secure staff who make well informed decisions and who, as a consequence, will be more engaged, happier and more productive at work'. As approximately 50% of UK adults have numeracy skills equivalent to that expected of primary school children, this means that dealing with numbers is a real challenge to many employees. Therefore, employers like NCC need to start with the basics and build on that foundation, through the provision of broad, persistent educational resources, which are available/ accessible to all (including allowing for privacy), across the whole of the organisation, from senior management downwards, so people feel secure and not singled out, being supported with specialist services where appropriate.

NCU's priority continues to focus on providing finance to colleagues with 'limited choice', who may have difficulty in obtaining credit and/or obtaining affordable reasonably priced credit, particularly families with young children, as this is where NCU can add 'most value'. This means that NCU are potentially less appealing to parts of the workforce who are home owners and/or have more established and secure credit scores, meaning a high number of employees are excluded. NCU have, however, made a commitment to price match on 'like for like' loans in terms of interest rates applied e.g. if an employees has a £15,000 5 year loan with Sainsbury's bank at 5%, NCU will beat the loan rate by at least 0.25% APR. NCU continue to offer a range of loan products up to £15,000 in their effort to appeal to more NCC employees including those who would have used high cost lenders, loan sharks, etc, in the past. According to the CIPD 'in the absence of support from their employer, most employees turn to friends, family and comparison websites for help and none of these can provide expert insight or guidance'. This highlights how important it is for NCC to provide a financial wellbeing and education offering.

As a result of the recent review and with the aim of improving the current financial wellbeing offering, Councillor Graham Chapman, in his previous role as Deputy Leader, gave HR the 'go ahead' to undertake a Soft Market Test in the early part of 2019. Four external suppliers of Financial Wellbeing and Education completed this exercise, and two prize winning companies demonstrated their potential ability to provide a range of options to NCC employees, including debt consolidation loans (NCU also provide debt consolidation), to help people better manage their finances and get them on a more financially secure footing. Both companies are able to work in partnership with NCU and provide a complementary offering that provides colleagues with a wider choice, enables them to both borrow and save together (with low interest rates being applied), thus helping to reduce credit costs. NCU are also happy to work with NCC in the most appropriate way to meet the best interests of employees.

These two companies are also able to provide an end-to end service that provides employees with education, mechanisms for borrowing/saving, which will help break the cycle of debt and improve financial wellbeing. The HR Director is currently discussing the Soft Market test findings with Councillors Eunice Campbell-Clark (Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and

Briefing for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Update on Nottingham City Councils partnership working and Nottingham Credit Union - 9 October 2019

Equalities), and Sam Webster (Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre). Nottingham City Homes (NCH) are also interested in the outcome of these discussions, so there is a possibility of widening the financial wellbeing and education 'product' to NCH as well as NCC employees. With the pre-retirement provision currently being reviewed, there is also the potential that this (in addition to mid-life MOT's) could be included as part of the Financial Wellbeing package in the future. In addition, there is the intention to include Financial Wellbeing within the overall Total Reward Strategy with greater links to Mental Health, Employee Engagement & Wellbeing as part of 2019-2023 People Strategy.

Future Plans - NCU and NCC Children's Integrated Services

NCU will shortly be opening 300 - 600 Young savers accounts for children in care to facilitate holding of savings for children in care with the intention that these savings are passed to the child when they reach the age of 18. The Credit Union is absorbing all costs associated with opening and maintaining these accounts.

Future Plans – NCU and Nottingham Residents

In last 12 months, membership of the Credit Union has increased by 7%, the total amount those members have saved with the Credit Union has increased by 18% and the total value of loans to members has increased by 41%.

Working with HM Treasury and a number of other Credit Unions, NCU will shortly launch a new prize linked savings account designed to incentivise modest savings for people who currently do not save. This will be widely publicised to residents in Nottingham and is available to NCC employees via Payroll deductions.

In 2020, The Credit Union is able to lend £3M of new money to local residents who currently use High Cost Credit providers – this will save local families £2.2M , keeping more money in family budgets and local communities.

The work of the Housing Licensing (Selective Licensing) team is seeking to promote services to residents within Nottingham when undertaking inspections of properties to add value. As part of this work it will promote Nottingham Credit Union along with other services to residents living in the private rented sector.

Conclusion

Lack of financial wellbeing and employee financial stress continues to be a big issue for employers, particularly as it is a major cause of mental health concerns and it is estimated that time lost due to sickness, reduced productivity through loss of sleep and strained relationships, etc, due to money worries, amounts to the equivalent of 13-17% of payroll costs. This is one of the many reasons currently driving organisations to take steps to challenge internal assumptions and invest in workers financial education in order to improve their overall health, happiness and wellbeing. The CIPD state that 'integral to any successful wellbeing programme is an understanding of the importance of how financial concerns can affect employee mental and physical health, as well as recognition that, as income providers, organisations play a vital role in their workers financial lives' and 'while it can differ by salary,

**Briefing for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on
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location, grade, anyone-irrespective of age, gender, pay and so on-can suffer from stress as a result of money worries' and 'there has never been more of an important time for employers to support their people in becoming financially independent'.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 OCTOBER 2019
WORK PROGRAMME
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

1.1 To consider the Committee's work programme for 2019/20.

2 Action required

2.1 To discuss the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year and make any necessary amendments.

3 Background information

3.1 The Committee is responsible for setting and managing its own work programme.

3.2 In setting the work programme, the Committee should aim for an outcome-focussed work programme that has clear priorities and a clear link to its roles and responsibilities.

3.3 The work programme needs to be flexible so that issues which arise as the year progresses can be considered appropriately.

3.4 Where there are a number of potential items that could be scrutinised in a given year, consideration of what represents the highest priority or area of risk will assist with work programme planning.

3.5 Changes and/or additions to the work programme will need to take account of the resources available to the Committee.

4 List of attached information

4.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 Work Programme.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports and minutes.

7 Wards affected

7.1 All.

8 Contact information

8.1 Laura Wilson
Senior Governance Officer
0115 8764301
laura.wilson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019-20

DATE	ITEMS
6 November 2019	<p>Discussion with the Leader/Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Safety and Communications – Councillor David Mellen To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p> <p>Workplace Parking Levy To update the Committee on the performance of the Levy</p> <p>Universal Credit To update the Committee on the progress of the implementation of Universal Credit in Nottingham</p> <p>Citizen Survey Written response to the recommendation made by the Committee in July 2019</p> <p>Work Programme To agree the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year</p>
4 December 2019	<p>Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre – Councillor Sam Webster To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p> <p>Flooding To consider the recent work carried out in the City to reduce incidents of flooding</p> <p>Work Programme To agree the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year</p>

DATE	ITEMS
8 January 2020	<p>Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Early Years, Education and Employment (with a focus on the employment remit) – Councillor Neghat Khan To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges within the employment remit</p> <p>Hate Crime To consider the impact of Hate Crime in the City</p> <p>Work Programme To agree the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year</p>
5 February 2020	<p>Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and IT – Councillor Dave Trimble To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p> <p>Nottingham City Homes Repairs To consider information on the repairs service provided by Nottingham City Homes, including tenant satisfaction</p> <p>Work Programme To agree the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year</p>
4 March 2020	<p>Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Local Transport (with a focus on the local transport remit) – Councillor Adele Williams To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p> <p>Fire Prevention and Safety To consider information from the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service on the work they do on fire prevention and safety</p> <p>Work Programme 2020/21 Development To discuss the work programme for 2019/20</p>

DATE	ITEMS
8 April 2020	<p data-bbox="425 156 1713 194">Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Communities – Councillor Rebecca Langton</p> <p data-bbox="425 194 1429 233">To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p> <p data-bbox="425 268 2116 341">Discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and Equalities (with a focus on the HR and Equalities remit) – Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark</p> <p data-bbox="425 341 1429 379">To consider information on priorities, budget pressures and challenges</p>

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