

Operational Decision Record

Publication Date 05/07/2022	Decision Reference Number 4665
Decision Title	
Unipol funding 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2223/24	
Decision Value	
£73,341	
Revenue or Capital Spend?	
Revenue	
Department	
Residents	
Contact Officer (Name, job title, and contact details)	
Pete Mitchell Head of Regulation pete.mitchell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Decision Taken	
To approve payment to Unipol Student Homes for the delivery of the voluntary student landlord accreditation scheme during 2021/2022 - 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 2021/22 £29,353 2022/23 £21,994 2023/24 £21,994	
Reasons for Decision and Background Information	
<p>Unipol have been administering a voluntary student landlord accreditation scheme on behalf of the Council since 2007.</p> <p>During this time the accreditation scheme has helped improve the standards of a large number of student properties across the City to help students make informed choices before moving into accommodation within the private rented sector.</p> <p>This has been achieved through the inspection of properties to ensure adherence to accreditation standards and the provision of advisory services for both students and accredited landlords.</p>	

In June 2018, 1435 properties (6624 bed spaces) were deemed accredited under the scheme, despite this being the first year of the Unipol Code three year membership renewal cycle.

Authorisation is required for payment to be made for the following three years 2021 to 2023 as per review which was completed in 2022.

Unipol provide advice and support to students and landlords in Nottingham.

The support the Nottingham standard for accommodation, ensuring student houses are fit for purpose for a core city with 2 leading universities

It provides support to the Council about the housing market and changes in this sector.

It acts a beacon of good practice, running a housing hub for students and landlords.

Unipol bridges the gap between the universities, the student housing sector and the statutory bodies, working with partners to ensure student accommodation is fit for purpose and in the right place.

Unipol is the only provider of services in this field and therefore it has not been possible to tender for the services. Updates on performance are provided at the end of each year.

A value for money exercise has taken place, with the amount reducing from the 20/21 payment down to the payment in 23/24. A further review will be carried out at the beginning of 23/24 to ensure value for money

Other Options Considered and why these were rejected

To not fund was rejected as Unipol have delivered this service for 2021/2022 as will be indicated in their performance reporting to the Council. The Unipol accreditation scheme has been supporting Nottingham's housing licensing schemes and will continue to do so in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

Reasons why this decision is classified as operational

The service has budget, is within the approval range for an operational decision and is within the current policy.

Additional Information

This decision seeks approval to pay a total of £73,341 over a 3 year period to Unipol for the administration of the voluntary student landlord accreditation scheme on behalf of Council. The payments cover NCC financial years 2022/23 (£29,353), 2023/24 (£21,994) and 2024/25 (£21,994) and will be paid out of the financial year that they relate to, at the end of the year and on an annual basis.

A value for money exercise has been undertaken which has seen the payments reduce as outlined above. All payments should be made in line with the payment agreement with Unipol. This cost is to funded from existing MTFP revenue budget held in the Safer Housing service area within Community Protection and has been allowed for in the finance forecast outturn.

Advice provided by Philip Gretton (Finance Analyst) on 30/06/2022.

Decision Maker (Name and Job Title)
Andrew Errington  Director Community Protection
Scheme of Delegation Reference Number
127
Date Decision Taken
5 th July 2022