

PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM MEETING

Thursday 26 January 2023

In Attendance:

Eddie Hamilton (Landlord)
Sagheer Akhtar (Managing Agent)
Tristan Barr (Landlord)

Officers

Clare Jackson
Paul Gatrell
Lauren Dickens
Amjad Rana
Cllr Baker
Cllr Harbour

1.	Apologies: Majeeb Rehman (RPC)	
2.	Housing Benefit Update Amjad updated the group with a few points from the Autumn Statement bulletin from the DWP <u>Housing Benefit allowances and premiums</u> are increasing in line with other welfare benefits – 10.1% from April 2023. As both incomes and allowances are increasing, a claimant’s entitlement will be broadly similar to the current year. <u>Discretionary Housing Payment</u> There are still funds available in this pot for households to apply for, asked for promotion of this to tenants struggling with rent payments. <u>Local Housing Allowance</u> Local Housing Allowance will be published 31/01/2023, await results. General discussion around rent figures for LHA and how information collated, also how tenants on low income are managing to cover top up rent when in receipt of Universal Credit, discussed how that “gap” seems to be getting bigger for a lot of households which is causing a lot of financial distress for households, and how the cost of living crisis is impacting property maintenance as households struggle to fund utilities and not putting heating on for instance, this can cause damp/mould in properties.	
3	Universal Credit No update provided, Officer did not attend.	
4	Selective Licensing Interim Report LD thanked members for feedback on the interim report which is currently with Graphics to be formatted for release to stakeholders. LD presented the selective licensing update report which was included in the forum papers. LD mentioned the decrease in numbers of non-application. Continued work processing applications across all areas. Audits are ongoing that include checks on Gas and Electric certificates and estate walkabouts. Last audits were Green/Mark/Furness St	

	<p>area of Queensgate and Woodbine Road/Oak St area of Gannow. Next audits take place in Feb in Cog Lane area of Trinity and north part of Daneshouse.</p> <p>General discussion around what and how audits happen and what is covered in the audit.</p> <p>Cllr Baker asked about the uptake for applications in the Burnley Wood/Leyland Rd area, and asked if the data from the previous designation was being used to chase non-application. LD explained that data from the previous designation is being used to write to landlords to encourage an application for a licence.</p> <p>TB asked whether Calico was included in licensing. CJ explained that the legislation for selective licensing did not cover any social landlords as they were regulated by another body. PG explained the regulation of the social rented sector through the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman. CJ explained that the Council do however enforce housing conditions in the social sector as well as the private rented sector and that in the main social landlords do comply.</p>	
5	<p>GLAS</p> <p>CJ, thanked everyone for their feedback in connection with the Code of Practice update, and mentioned the need to promote the GLAS project more with local Landlords.</p> <p>All agreed the Code of Practice should contain a section on Damp and Mould, and suggestions made to make that section easy to read and not baffle with science and technical terminology. Further discussion around causes and remedies of damp/mould generally.</p> <p>Several suggestions made around documents to give to new tenants and these to be added to the updated Code of Proactive.</p> <p>CJ discussed EPC legislation and a project to encourage Landlords to work towards a “C” rating, that we (Burnley Borough Council) are aware of the potential barriers to achieving this rating consistently.</p> <p>EH, mentioned he is trailing several ways of improving the EPC ratings in his properties, EH will feed back to the Forum at next meeting if data available.</p>	
6.	<p>Damp and Mould</p> <p>Continued general discussion around causes of and remedies for damp and mould and the effects of damp and mould on rented properties.</p> <p>Also discussed the request from the Secretary of State for information around damp and mould and the number of cases address through housing enforcement for the previous 3 years</p> <p>CJ, discussed the report (available in the meeting pack) and looked at some of the statistics for Burnley, briefly mentioning HHSRS and Cat1 and Cat2 hazards.</p> <p>Cllr HB asked how Cat1&2’s are scored and what constitutes a Cat1 and how is the risk assessed.</p> <p>CJ answered this with a brief explanation of scoring method.</p>	
7.	<p>A.O.B.</p> <p>Landlord Evening – suggestions for content:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damp and Mould – what grants are available if any. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EPC Ratings – how to achieve and any grants/financial help available• Information around Cost of Living Crisis and what's out there to help tenants etc.	
	Next Meeting AGM 30.03.23	