

<b>Subject:</b>	Rogue Landlord Scheme Outcomes Report	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<b>Date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Health, Housing and Regeneration	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: /No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	<b>RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>
1.1	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the Rogue Landlord Scheme and the associated outcomes report.

## 3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.

## 4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

## 5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Rogue Landlords Outcomes Report at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and expressed concern that the majority of the outcomes had not been achieved and requested a further update on progress be given.

5.2 The Rogue Landlords Scheme was funded by DCLG on a pilot basis. It's remit was to instigate and take co-ordinated action against Rogue Landlords many of whom have property holdings across Pennine Lancashire and North Manchester.

5.3 The pilot project was focused on Rossendale but its aim was to:-

- Empower and inform tenants.
- Raise housing standards in poor rented housing stock.
- Undertake enforcement through collated, accurate intelligence; tackling benefit fraud, money laundering, illegal immigrants, loan sharks, dangerous housing

conditions, tax evasion, drug dealing and supply.

- 5.4 The Outcomes Report attached summarises the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny following the Rogue Landlords Task and Finish Groups.
- 5.5 Updates are contained within the attached report but the following issues should be noted.

### **Recommendation 1**

Officers have been unable to find any examples of Fit and Proper Landlord policies which exist without there being any reward scheme in place for example a selective licensing scheme.

However, Housing Benefit legislation does exist which allows the Council to consider whether a landlord is a 'fit and proper person' to receive Housing Benefit and we will ensure that this is implemented appropriately.

### **Recommendation 2**

This action will take place as prosecutions are secured. The 'Landlord' page of the Council's website is about to go live and will contain information on other actions which have been taken against landlords and which were resolved ahead of Court proceedings.

### **Recommendations 3 and 4**

These actions have now been included within the new website page

### **Recommendation 5**

Selective Licensing could be a consideration of the Council in future years as resources permit. However, experience from neighbouring authorities has been that it can be a long, complex and costly process.

- 5.6 Finally, it should be noted that the funding for the Rogue Landlord Scheme ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and further funding for the scheme was not forthcoming.

## **COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

### **6. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 6.1 Any financial implications arising will be contained within existing budgets.

### **7. MONITORING OFFICER**

- 7.1 No additional comments.

### **8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT**

- 8.1 No HR implications.

Consultation has been carried out by Members of the Task and Finish Group, Members of the Public, other organisations and various Officers from Rossendale Borough Council.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Rogue Landlord Scheme was a pilot scheme which tested a pro-active approach to dealing with illegal activities amongst landlords.
- 9.2 An element of the scheme was to promote tenant's rights and empower and inform tenants to enable them to seek redress where appropriate.
- 9.3 Funding for the scheme has now ended and a 'pack' of information is now available on the Council's website to provide appropriate advice to tenants and landlords.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection