



Public Document Pack
Boston Borough Council

**Chief Executive
Rob Barlow**

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Wednesday, 15 January 2025

Notice of meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee
on **Thursday, 23rd January, 2025 at 6.30 pm**
in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow
Chief Executive**

Membership:

Chairman:	Councillor Paul Gleeson
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Suzanne Welberry
Councillors:	Jyothi Arayambath, Richard Austin BEM, David Brown, Anton Dani, Neil Drayton, Andy Izard, Chris Mountain, Barrie Pierpoint and Helen Staples

Members of the public are welcome to attend the committee meeting as observers except during the consideration of exempt or confidential items.

This meeting may be subject to being recorded.

Agenda

Part I - Preliminaries

A Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutes (*if any*).

B Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

C Minutes

(Pages 1 - 8)

To sign and confirm the minutes of the last meeting.

D Public Questions

To answer any written questions received from members of the public no later than 5 p.m. two clear working days prior to the meeting – for this meeting the deadline is 5 p.m. on Monday 20th January 2025.

Part II - Agenda Items

1 South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Private Sector Housing Strategy

(Pages 9 - 38)

(A report by Emily Spicer, Assistant Director – Wellbeing & Community Leadership)

2 Budget Overview 2025/26 - 2029/30 (Including Budget Consultation) (To Follow)

(A report by Christine Marshall, Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate Development (S151))

3 Work Programme

(Pages 39 - 42)

(For Members to note/discuss the Committee's current work programme)

Notes:

Please contact Democratic Services (demservices@boston.gov.uk) if you have any queries about the agenda and documents for this meeting.

Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Democratic Services as soon as possible.

Alternative Versions

Should you wish to have the agenda or report in an alternative format such as larger text, Braille or a specific language, please telephone 01205 314226.

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny - Corporate & Community Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Thursday, 14th November, 2024 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Paul Gleeson, in the Chair.

Councillors Richard Austin BEM, David Brown, Anton Dani, Neil Drayton, Andy Izard, Barrie Pierpoint and Helen Staples.

In attendance:

Councillor Anne Dorrian, Leader

Councillor Dale Broughton, Deputy Leader

Councillor John Baxter, Portfolio Holder - Housing

Councillor Emma Cresswell, Portfolio Holder - Communities (People),

Councillor Sandeep Ghosh, Portfolio Holder - Finance.

Officers:

Interim Deputy Chief Executive – Programme Delivery and Assistant Director - Assets, Deputy Chief Executive - Communities, Assistant Director - Regulatory, Assistant Director – Corporate, Information Manager and Data Protection Officer, Group Manager Building Control, Chief Finance Officer (PSPS), Head of Corporate Services PSPS, Head of Revenues and Benefits, Democratic Services Officer and Democratic Services Officer.

110 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were tabled by Councillors Jyothi Arayambath and Chris Mountain. No substitute members.

111 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paul Gleeson declared he would absent from the final item of business on the agenda due to a conflict with his role within PSPS.

112 Minutes

With the agreement of the committee the Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting.

113 Public Questions

No public question were tabled.

114 Review of the Boston Town Centre Strategy

The Portfolio Holder Councillor Dale Broughton presented the report, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive for Communities advising members that the report afforded committee with the first annual review of the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan covering the period 2023-2027. The Strategy and Action Plan provided a vision and seven

strategic objectives along with over seventy actions that cover the themes of 1) Clean and Safe, 2) Open for Business 3) Culture, Heritage, and Events and 4) Transformation. The Strategy and Action Plan had been approved by Boston Borough Council's Cabinet on 25th October 2023. The report provided feedback on progress against the Strategy and its associated action plan to date. In summary 24 actions have been completed, 47 are on target and 3 required further attention.

The first year of the plan has seen delivery of a host of activities/initiatives including: -

- A deep clean of the marketplace had taken place on 27th February 2024 to 2nd March 2024.
- A four-day Christmas Festival and Illuminate Parade.
- A Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy was approved and adopted by full council on 15th July 2024.
- Enhanced floral displays had been provided in partnership with North Sea Camp Prison.
- A volunteer co-ordinator post had been introduced to support volunteering.
- A Changing Places toilet had been installed in Central Park.
- A joint operation with the police and the Council called Operation Plotting continued which focused on addressing anti-social behaviour, street-based violence, and serious harm. This work had been enhanced through the introduction of Community Rangers.
- The production of town centre specific promotional material.
- The production of a Market Development Plan that was agreed by Boston Borough Council's Cabinet.
- A Public Space Protection Order regarding feeding wild birds in designated areas in the town center (which was a new action in the Strategy/Action Plan) has been agreed at Cabinet.
- A Street Art Policy had been produced and agreed by Boston Borough Council's Cabinet.
- A Business Development Plan for the Guildhall in Boston had been developed and agreed at Boston Borough Council's Cabinet.
- A business forum had been established for the town.
- The installation of twenty-six new car park ticket machines.
- Additional significant events that had happened in the town centre such as the Foodfest and Boston's Strongest event on 14th July 2024, boosting community cohesion and enhancing trade.

Boston Town Centre remained a key economic and social hub for the borough of Boston. Importantly it was a sub-regional retail centre, second in the county to Lincoln that provided retail employment and a variety of visitor attractions. Boston's town centre has like many places suffered in recent times due to a number of factors. However, as a town centre Boston had a lot to offer and the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan that had been adopted in 2023 was a key strategic document that has been developed to help tackle, along with other initiatives, the challenges that are impacting this important place within the borough.

During year two of the strategy/action plan it was proposed to conduct analysis work that will pull together an up-to-date profile of the town centre which would cover matters such as the health of the retail and leisure sector, skills, and demand studies. That would support the further targeting of resources (where available) towards town centre improvements. This analysis work is helpfully being commissioned by the Town Board.

Member deliberation followed which included:

Referencing the loss of the Boston Big Local funding members sought confirmation that alternative funding would be in place to ensure the continuity of the beach event and other similar events and the Portfolio Holder confirmed such events would continue and funding would be available. There was recognition from a number of members at the success of the recent events programme, including those events which had taken place for the first time.

On questioning the promotion of the town, a member also asked if anything was being undertaken to encourage the coach companies to bring in visitors from further afield, especially during the summer season from the coast with holidaymakers visiting the market, which had been so popular historically. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that negotiations had and continued to take place with the coach operators.

Citing his own impression that the ongoing issue of residents feeling intimidated by groups of foreign nationals within the market place, appeared to have improved, a member sought clarification on what measures had been taken to dispel the public fears. The Portfolio Holder advised that a new role had been created with an officer working with the different communities to help their integration in the town. which was proving very successful, and the Council had also worked alongside the Police in Operation Plotting. Members were advised that there was not one single action to improve things, but that through the strategy there were a number of methods which were working in bringing people together. Foreign nationals had also taken on market stalls and businesses.

The Portfolio Holder further advised that events had been held in collaboration with businesses and work was ongoing in encouraging those businesses, along with the various communities within the town, to take ownership of events moving forward.

A member further voiced their recognition of the work of the Town Rangers which was also having an import impact on the town centre.

In summary the Chairman congratulated the Portfolio Holder for the work to date, noting the change in atmosphere within the market place and the praise from the public at the events which had taken place.

115 Local Council Tax Support Scheme (Consultation) 2025/26

The Portfolio Holder Councillor Sandeep Ghosh presented the report supported by the Head of Revenues and Benefits. The report updated Members on the performance of the current Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme and provided details of the fundamental review in respect of 2025/26.

Boston's scheme currently provided for a maximum 75% support. Since its introduction in 2013, some changes to the scheme had been made, including restriction to Band D Council Tax liability, and discretion to assess Universal Credit earnings claims every three months. In 2024/25, a new class for Care Leavers was introduced.

Cabinet had previously recognised the need for a fundamental review of the scheme, with the current scheme now dated, being relatively unchanged since its introduction in 2013, and, having regard to the rollout of Universal Credit which replaced legacy benefits (including Housing Benefit).

The report provides information on the scheme review, and the options for 2025/26.

The total caseload and expenditure, at July 2024, was:

2024/25	Number of live claims	Amount of CTS
Working Age	2,703	£2,155,294.78
Pensioner	1,997	£2,224,798.49
Total	4,700	£4,380,093.27

A caseload comparison of data from 2023 showed a small overall increase of 190 live claims, being a reduction of 2 in pensioner group and an increase of 192 Working Age group, which may reflect the economic pressures on households.

The cost of Council Tax Support was shared across major preceptors as part of the collection fund accounting process:

Current Council Tax Support 2024/25	BBC	LCC	PCC
£4,380,093.24	£450,930.62	£3,294,366.52	£634,796.13
	10.30%	75.21%	14.49%

The analysis undertaken identified the make-up and distribution of CTS across Working Age (WA) household types, using data from May 2024. The data identified that almost 75% of the WA caseload received the current scheme maximum 75% support.

Household Type	Working Age Caseload	Of which on Max 75% CTS	Current Expenditure
Single	1196	990	£957,743
Single with Child(ren)	845	549	£578,617
Couple	280	214	£283,553
Couple with Child(ren)	264	178	£246,939
	2585	1931	£2,066,852
		74.70%	

A further analysis of the correlation between households currently receiving Council Tax Support and the level of Council Tax arrears in financial 2023/24 but did not include households currently on CTS with arrears in earlier years, nor did it include arrears for households which received CTS at some point previously but were not currently in receipt of CTS. As such the actual overall position of arrears in relation to CTS households would be greater than indicated. The data showed that almost 55% of the amount of arrears in CTS recipient households was in households with children.

The fundamental review had provided Boston BC with the opportunity to look at its current scheme and consider how it wishes to better support residents in the future, having regard to affordability. Engagement through the review has provided Members with information on scheme approaches and modifications, and the options proposed from the steer provided will enable consultation on proposals that provide a balance of recognising the need for increasing support for families, and the need for administrative simplification. Member deliberation followed which included:

Members were encouraged by the proposals. It was noted that within the proposal of maximum relief, as a result of the percentage which applied, many families would save around £300 extra a year.

Members followed suit in providing support to this proposal referring to the need of showing solidarity and humanity to residents of Boston.

A query was raised regarding the reduction of maximum capital allowance to £10,000 or less. The Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that based on the analysis of data and benchmarking of other authorities, the consultation had been based on two figures, £8000 and £10,000, and a steer had been taken to consult on those two potential values of reduction.

Members noted that 100% was currently offered by Lincoln City Council. However, the proposals for 2025/26 were yet to be confirmed. Additionally, it was noted that East Lindsey and South Holland are currently set at 75%, the same as Boston, and both were currently consulting on a potential increase.

The Chairman congratulated the administration for finding a balance within the parameters of the proposal.

Looking through the recommendations, Members agreed on 100% for households with children, 80% for single households, and that the maximum capital allowance should be reduced to £10,000, as detailed within the report.

The Chairman noted his preference on the Committee having received the report following completion of the consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee recommend to Cabinet that it agrees to 100% for households with children, 80% for single households, and that the maximum capital allowance should be reduced to £10,000, as detailed within the report.

116 Street Naming and Numbering Policy

The Portfolio Holder presented the report supported by the Group Manager, Building Control and the Assistant Director for Regulatory, which sought feedback on the proposed South East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

Members were advised that the Council had a duty to ensure that all roads in the district were named and all properties were numbered or named. Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard for naming streets and numbering or naming properties was essential to ensure post was delivered efficiently, to facilitate emergency services finding a property without undue delay, to provide consistency of property-based information across local government and national data sets, to facilitate the reliable delivery of services and products, and to enable the public to find where they wanted to go. The Portfolio Holder emphasised that a single policy would ensure there was a consistent approach across all three Councils within the Partnership, as well to deliver the objectives of the regulatory service review in facilitating the function within Regulatory Building Control. The proposed Street Naming and Numbering Policy was attached as Appendix A within the report.

Committee deliberation followed which included:

As a result of a previous experience where complaints had been received regarding a road in Wyberton in which properties were named but not numbered, causing issues in locating specific addresses, and being unable to resolve the matter by providing numbers due to

the lack of take up by residents the following changes were suggested in respect of paragraph 8.1 of the Appendix: 1) the heading should include the words 'or numbering' to read: Renumbering existing properties or numbering existing properties'; 2) that a 50% threshold should be included to make it a more sensible proportion; and 3) where there were no numbers on properties on a street or lane, they should be listed in the electoral list in their proper order. The importance of recognising local Bostonian community heroes by prioritising the naming of Boston Borough Council's streets after them was suggested, which would present an opportunity to inspire people, particularly young residents. An example was provided where a member noted that two streets had been named after a local fisherman and a local boxer who had won a Commonwealth medal. Consensus was that the preference was for a 2/3 threshold in order to avoid residents' frustration with a 50% split. Responding to a question regarding paragraph 6.3 within the Appendix about using a 'Development Name' for marketing purposes, the Group Manager, Building Control advised that it meant that if a developer was advertising a development in their name, it did not necessarily mean that when the formal address schedule was finalised, that the development name would be used as the actual street name. Appendix 2 Members were encouraged to receive confirmation that all street names would be subject to consultation with Parish and Ward Councillors. It was noted that the Council had no powers in respect of enforcing the display of house names in a prominent position, residents could only be encouraged.

The Committee agreed its support of the policy. The Portfolio Holder acknowledged the suggested changes, the majority of which were covered within the Policy, and thanked members for their comments. He also thanked officers for their work.

117 Customer Feedback Policy

The report was presented by the Information Manager and Data Protection Officer. The Council was responsible for ensuring it has a suitable policy in place for dealing with feedback and in particular complaints. The Council wanted to deal with complaints in a way that is open, fair, and proportionate. A policy-led approach helps staff understand what is expected of them, what options for action are available, and who can authorise these actions. Having a policy that can be shared with complainants can help in managing their expectations. Reviewing, updating, and aligning this policy meant the Council has a clear policy for dealing with feedback in general, and more specifically with complaints received.

The Policy had been aligned to be the same across the 3 Councils in the S&ELCP to provide consistency for all staff when dealing with these incidences.

The policy provided the Council with a framework to implement and take appropriate actions when dealing with complaints. It clearly defined what is and is not a complaint as well as steps that will be taken to address complaints.

- Confirmed how to give feedback or make a complaint.
- Highlighted any exceptions to the standard customer feedback procedure, for example where specific issues were treated by a defined complaints procedure.
- Defined the standard of service, including response times, to expect when making a complaint.
- Recognised the importance of customer feedback in providing insight to Council services and performance.
- Set out how the Council monitored customer feedback and used information to improve services and identify training needs.

It had been designed to include corporate oversight and monitoring and had also been reviewed against the LGSCO Complaint Handling Code (the Code). Some of the key updates in the Code related to response times and performance reporting. The Stage 1 response time had been changed to 15 working days to align with the updated LGSCO Code – previously at Boston the response time was 20 working days. The Policy also adopted the Code's suggested definitions for 'a service request' and 'a complaint' and confirms the approach the Council will take when responding to these.

As part of the implementation of the Policy, training and guidance would be offered to ensure Officers are aware of their responsibilities when dealing with and responding to complaints. The Council plans to use complaints review panel (a 'complaints clinic') to extract any lessons learnt from recent complaints to enable sharing across the organisation. The Council would also produce and publish an annual complaints performance and service improvement report to assess and analyse performance and improvements.

Committee deliberation followed which included:

On seeking the time scale in place to respond to a complaint, a member was advised that from the date of receipt of a complaint the Council had 5 working days to acknowledge the complaint. From the date they acknowledge the complaint they then had 10 working days in which to respond.

In the event that the complainant submitted a stage 2 complaint then the same 5 working days was applicable to acknowledge receipt of the stage 2 complaint and then the Council had 20 working days in which to respond. Powers were in place to extend the time line in the event of the complaint being very complex.

Members were advised that as at the date of the meeting for the current year, 39 complaints had been received which met the criteria for stage 1 or stage 2. Only 18% had led to a stage 2 complaint and there had only been one LGSO complaint.

In summary the Chairman agreed the need for all three Councils to have the same policy for the ease of officers facilitating the complaints. He further noted that the Policy itself was well written and aligned to the Ombudsman,

RECOMMENDED:

That the committee recommend approval and adoption of the Policy by Cabinet.

118 Work Programme

The Environmental Enforcement Officer advised that the Peer Review report scheduled for the January meeting would now be tabled at the March meeting at which an additional report had been scheduled in respect of HMOs in Boston.

The Chairman advised that a member briefing would be requested in respect of Child Poverty.

Addressing the following municipal year the Chairman further advised that the committee would be looking to seek representation in respect of the bus services and would also consider, any work streams from the Social Impact Population Change (SIPC) report from 2012 which the Lead Officer had recently reviewed with committee.

It is recorded that the Chairman Councillor Paul Gleeson absented from the meeting at this part in the proceedings and the Vice Chairman Councillor Suzanne Welberry chaired the meeting for the last item on business.

119 Council/PSPS Transformation and Service Modernisation programme

The Portfolio Holder presented the opening section for this item and confirmed that PSPS had been providing services to Boston Borough Council since 2021. The Transformation and Modernisation Plan was the first three-way Council Transformation Plan designed to provide support in modernising the Councils service delivery. It set out a number of ambitious projects for the Councils' split by the themes of customers and residents, looking at modernisation and efficiency and organisational development.

The range of projects included out of hours digital telephony solutions, leveraging automation and advancement in technology, through to a commitment to the use of plain language. Extensive partnership engagement had taken place throughout with stakeholders, with officers and with member briefings.

PSPS were seeking a total investment of £5,039,238,00 which they say would return savings of £9,613,221.00. The investment for Boston Borough Council would be £1,209,417,00 but returning a saving of £2,307,173,04.

Each project would be subject to its own business case and approval process and also have its own multi-stakeholder board.

At this point in the meeting the committee agreed to move into exempt measures to receive the appendix on the report.

120 Exclusion of the Public and Press

A separate minute for this item is lodged with the Council

The Meeting ended at 8.30 pm.



Report To:	Corporate and Community Committee
Date:	23 rd January 2025
Subject:	South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Private Sector Housing Strategy
Purpose:	To set the context as to how the Council intends to meet the private sector housing challenges and opportunities confronting the service and to set out the key priorities for action and delivery.
Key Decision:	Yes
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor John Baxter, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Report Of:	Emily Spicer, Assistant Director for Wellbeing & Community Leadership
Report Author:	Jonathan Challen – Service Manager for Safer Communities
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This strategy sets out the strategic direction for Private Sector Housing within the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership sub region. Our priorities will focus on:

- Raising standards in the private sector, paying particular attention to ensuring fire safety in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) and removing or reducing serious hazards across both single and multiple households.
- Working with private landlords to encourage and support them to improve standards and increase the supply of affordable accommodation.
- Taking robust action against landlords who fail to remedy hazards, licence HMOs or comply with property management regulations.
- Maximise existing housing stock by focused interventions to return empty homes to use with the development of an Empty Homes Policy.

Recommendations

To consider the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Private Sector Housing Strategy prior to adoption at Cabinet.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Strategy is an overarching document which gives a framework and objectives to use to further develop consistent approach to private sector housing across the Partnership. It demonstrates a clear commitment to shared objectives to improving housing standards for our residents.

Other Options Considered

To continue with individual strategies for each Council

1. Background

- 1.1 The quality of the homes we live in can have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives. Poor housing conditions, overcrowding and lack of affordability will all have an adverse effect on our residents.
- 1.2 This strategy sets out the key priorities to review housing conditions, improve standards, tackle rogue landlords and outline the approach the service will take to overcome these challenges.

2. Report

- 2.1 The Private Sector Housing Strategy sets out 4 key priorities, which are:

- Raising standards in the private sector,
- Maximising use of existing private sector stock,
- Regulating the private sector,
- Collaborative working.

- 2.1.1 Raising standards in the private sector – The overriding aim of our Housing Standards Team is to secure the best possible standards in the private sector. The team's core function is to ensure that statutory standards are met using enforcement powers as and when necessary. However, its work goes beyond that, advising and intervening to help tenants, owner occupiers and landlords with a wide range of housing issues.

- 2.1.2 Maximising use of existing private sector stock – Bringing empty homes back in to use will support our communities by improving the local environment and the quality of life of local residents. It will provide much needed accommodation for the private sector, easing the pressure for local residents wishing to remain in the area.
- 2.1.3 Regulating the private sector – Use of a wide range of options, including formal enforcement action, to ensure compliance is being met.
- 2.1.4 Collaborative working – Working with colleagues from other internal services and external agencies to improve resident's quality of life across a wider spectrum.

2.2 To develop this strategy we considered a number of key areas in the private housing sector, on both a national and local scale, as well as the needs of the service. From this we have developed four outcome-based commitments:

- 2.2.1 Commitment 1: We proactively and effectively tackle poor conditions across the private housing sector.
- 2.2.2 Commitment 2: We will continue to work with partners, Landlords and Registered Providers to ensure that homes meet required standards so that residents can thrive in a safe home.
- 2.2.3 Commitment 3: We will work effectively to reduce the number of empty homes across the sub-region.
- 2.2.4 Commitment 4: We will tackle unlicensed HMOs across the sub-region.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The strategy provides a single corporate document that outlines the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's vision and ensures a point of reference, accountability and governance to shared approach to private sector housing.
- 3.2. If the Strategy is adopted there will follow further operational policies and procedures to support its delivery across the sub-region.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

If adopted by each Council, the Private Sector Housing Strategy will provide a clear and consistent approach to Customer Experience across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. By working together services can drive efficiency and value for money for each Council.

Corporate Priorities

The development of this strategy supports the following priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy:

- Growth and Prosperity
- Safe and Resilient Communities

Staffing

Oversight and delivery of this strategy will be managed within existing staff and service resources. Any further developments of the service, to achieve future ambitions of the Council, could be subject to the requirement for additional resources, which would be incorporated within the relevant policy documents.

Workforce Capacity Implications

Oversight and delivery of this strategy will be managed within existing staff and service resources. Any further developments of the service, to achieve future ambitions of the Council, could be subject to the requirement for additional resources, which would be incorporated within the relevant policy documents.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

All constitutional and legal implications will be duly considered as part of the delivery of this strategy.

Data Protection

Whilst this strategy has no implications for data protection, any future policies that it supports will give due consideration to ensure that compliance is met.

Financial

There are no direct budget implications from adopting this strategic framework. Any decisions required for funding for actions or projects that arise as it is developed will be formally requested as appropriate.

Risk Management

The risk of a strategy not driving change at a pace that matches the ambition of South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership will be mitigated through managed delivery and oversight of the Annual Delivery Plan.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Relevant Portfolio Holder's across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership have been engaged in developing this strategy. Wider stakeholders will be consulted on future policy documents as appropriate.

Reputation

Adopting this strategy will benefit the reputation of the Council as it will demonstrate a consistent approach that will drive efficiency and standards across the private rented sector.

Contracts

There are no direct contract implications from adopting this strategy. Any decisions required for to deliver future actions or projects that arise as it is developed will be formally requested as appropriate.

Crime and Disorder

Adopting this strategy will provide opportunities to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

The strategy has been developed to ensure equal opportunities are provided for everyone and the diversity of our residents is recognised, respected and valued. Supporting vulnerable residents is a preventative approach to safeguarding.

Health and Wellbeing

Providing good quality housing conditions positively supports the wellbeing of our residents.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Improving the equality of energy performance in the private sector will positively impact on the Council's commitment to climate change.

Acronyms

HMO – House in Multiple Occupation
HHSRS – Housing Health and Safety Rating System
MEES – Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards
CPN – Civil Penalty Notice

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1	South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Private Sector Housing Strategy.
Appendix 2	Guidance and definitions

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

Report author:	Jonathan Challen – Service Manager for Safer Communities jonathan.challen@e-lindsey.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Emily Spicer, Assistant Director – Wellbeing & Community Leadership emily.spicer@sholland.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	Councillor John Baxter, Portfolio Holder for Housing john.baxter@boston.gov.uk



1ST JANUARY 2025

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY.



served by One Team

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY.

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FOREWORD.



Foreword by the three council Portfolio Holders with responsibility for Private Sector Housing within the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.



Councillor John Baxter
Portfolio Holder for Housing
Boston Borough Council



Councillor William Gray
Portfolio Holder for Communities and Better Ageing
East Lindsey District Council



Councillor Tracey Carter
Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing
South Holland District Council

It has long been established that good quality housing is important to individual health and wellbeing and is also an essential component of a safe and vibrant community. The quality of the homes we live in can have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives and poor housing conditions, overcrowding and lack of affordability will all have an adverse effect on public health and wellbeing and can exacerbate health inequalities.

This strategy sets out the key priorities to review housing conditions, improve standards, tackle rogue landlords and outline the approach the service will take to overcome these challenges. It reflects and helps to deliver the Councils ambitions for housing in the Annual Delivery Plan and further supports the broader strategic aims of health and wellbeing across the sub-region, recognising the impact housing quality has on people's physical and mental health and principally seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. It also is anticipated that this strategy will assist in attracting wider funding to tackle the issues faced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

This strategy sets out the strategic direction for Private Sector Housing as delivered by the Housing Standards Team within the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership sub region. Its purpose is to set the context as to how we intend to meet the challenges and opportunities confronting the service and to set out the key priorities for action and delivery.

Whilst housing conditions in the private sector are generally good, there are still a number of properties that present serious hazards within the private sector.

Our priorities will focus on raising standards in the private sector, paying particular attention to ensuring fire safety in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) and removing or reducing serious hazards across both single and multiple occupancy households. We will work with private landlords to encourage and support them to improve standards and increase the supply of affordable accommodation, taking robust action against landlords who fail to remedy hazards, licence HMOs or comply with property management regulations. We will consider using various means of enforcement under housing legislation to tackle rogue landlords with financial penalties being considered as an alternative to prosecution.

As housing supply continues to be a challenge with numerous empty homes, a priority will be to maximise existing housing stock by focused interventions to return empty homes to use with the development of an Empty Homes Policy.

INTRODUCTION.

The following sections of the strategy identify the key challenges facing the sub region in the pursuit of improving housing conditions within the private and public sector. Our vision is:

“WORKING TOGETHER WITH LANDLORDS, RESIDENTS AND PARTNERS TO PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY, SAFE AND HAZARD FREE HOMES FOR EVERYONE”.

In order to realise this vision the Council has agreed on the following 4 strategic priorities:

- Raising standards in the private sector
- Maximising use of existing private sector stock
- Regulating the private sector
- Collaborative working

STANDARD OF PRIVATE STOCK.

Nationally there has been an increase in the percentage of households in privately rented accommodation over the past decade. With this increasing trend it is important for the Council to understand the condition of the private sector accommodation within the area in order to plan effective resourcing. The most effective way of collating this information is to undertake a periodic stock condition survey, historically on a 10-year rolling programme, which the Council has been conducting for several decades. The current housing stock data for the sub-region shows the following breakdown of dwelling tenure:

Local authority	No. of dwellings			
	Private sector stock		Social	Total
	Owner occupied	Private rented		
Boston	16,770	7,200	5,790	29,760
East Lindsey	45,762	14,119	7,402	67,283
South Holland	28,082	6,971	4,952	40,005

The disrepair data for the sub-region is shown below:

Local Authority	No of dwellings in need of repair				
	Private sector stock			No. of social housing	Total stock in need of repair
	All private sector	No. owner occupied	No. private rented		
Boston	1,199	683	516	116	1,315
East Lindsey	2,994	1,908	1,086	148	3,142
South Holland	1,402	913	489	99	1,501

DECENT HOMES

For a dwelling to be considered 'decent' under the Decent Homes Standard it must:

- meet the statutory minimum standard for housing (the Housing Health and Safety System (HHSRS) since April 2006), homes which contain a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS are considered non-decent
- provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort
- be in a reasonable state of repair
- have reasonably modern facilities and services

In 2022, 15% or 3.7 million dwellings in England failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. Private rented dwellings had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (21%) while the social rented sector had the lowest (10%). Among owner occupied homes, 14% failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM (HHSRS)

The HHSRS is a risk-based assessment that identifies hazards in dwellings and evaluates their potential effects on the health and safety of occupants and their visitors, particularly vulnerable people. The most serious hazards are called Category 1 hazards and where these exist in a home it fails to meet the statutory minimum standard for housing in England.

In 2022, 8% or 2.1 million dwellings in England had a HHSRS Category 1 hazard, less than in 2021 (9%). Such hazards were more prevalent in the private rented dwellings (12%) than owner occupied (9%) or social rented dwellings (4%) (Department for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities). The table below shows the current data on category 1 hazards:

Local Authority	No. of dwellings with HHSRS category 1 hazards				
	Private sector stock			No. of social housing	Total of all stock with Cat 1
	All private sector	No. owner occupied	No. private rented		
Boston	5,033	3,439	1,594	579	5,612
East Lindsey	13,173	10,138	3,035	740	13,913
South Holland	5,608	4,352	1,256	594	6,202

DAMP

In the English Housing Survey, a home is considered to have damp or a problem with damp if the surveyor records damp which is significant enough to be taken into consideration when making their HHSRS assessments. Therefore, minor issues of damp are not recorded and, for consistency, would not be part of the modelled data.

In 2022, 4% or 1 million dwellings in England had a problem with damp. Between 1996 and 2011, there was a sizable reduction in the prevalence of all dwellings with any damp problems, however incidences of damp have increased since 2019 from 3%. While this goes against the general trend of improvement, it is not necessarily surprising - due to the COVID-19 national lockdowns the rate of maintenance and repairs could have slowed or stalled, making remediation of damp problems difficult (Department for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities).

The timing of this strategy document coincides with the recommissioning of the stock modelling data for the sub-region. Due to the age of the previous district level stock condition data, it has not been included in this strategy document. Work on collating the latest stock condition information is expected to be completed during 2024.



RAISING STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR .

OFFERING INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SPECIALIST SUPPORT

The overriding aim of our Housing Standards Team is to secure the best possible standards in the private sector. The team's core function is to ensure that statutory standards are met using enforcement powers as and when necessary. However, its work goes beyond that, advising and intervening to help tenants, owner occupiers and landlords with a wide range of housing issues.

ENGAGING WITH LANDLORDS

As in many parts of the country, the privately rented sector makes a very valuable contribution to the supply of affordable housing. A well-managed, well maintained private rented sector can play a very valuable role in Lincolnshire by helping:

- to make more properties available to vulnerable households;
- help vulnerable households to find suitable accommodation;
- to reduce homelessness.

In recent years, officers in both the Housing Standards Team and the Homelessness/Housing Needs/Advice Team have worked to develop a positive working relationship with landlords who want to deliver good quality housing. Landlords Forums are run jointly with Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) as well as the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA). The Forums allow a positive exchange of information on housing issues and standards.

Accreditation schemes are increasingly used by local housing authorities. Here, advice and assistance are given to both landlords and tenants to promote satisfactory management standards. The South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) is part of the DASH Landlord Accreditation Scheme. Landlords participating in the scheme:

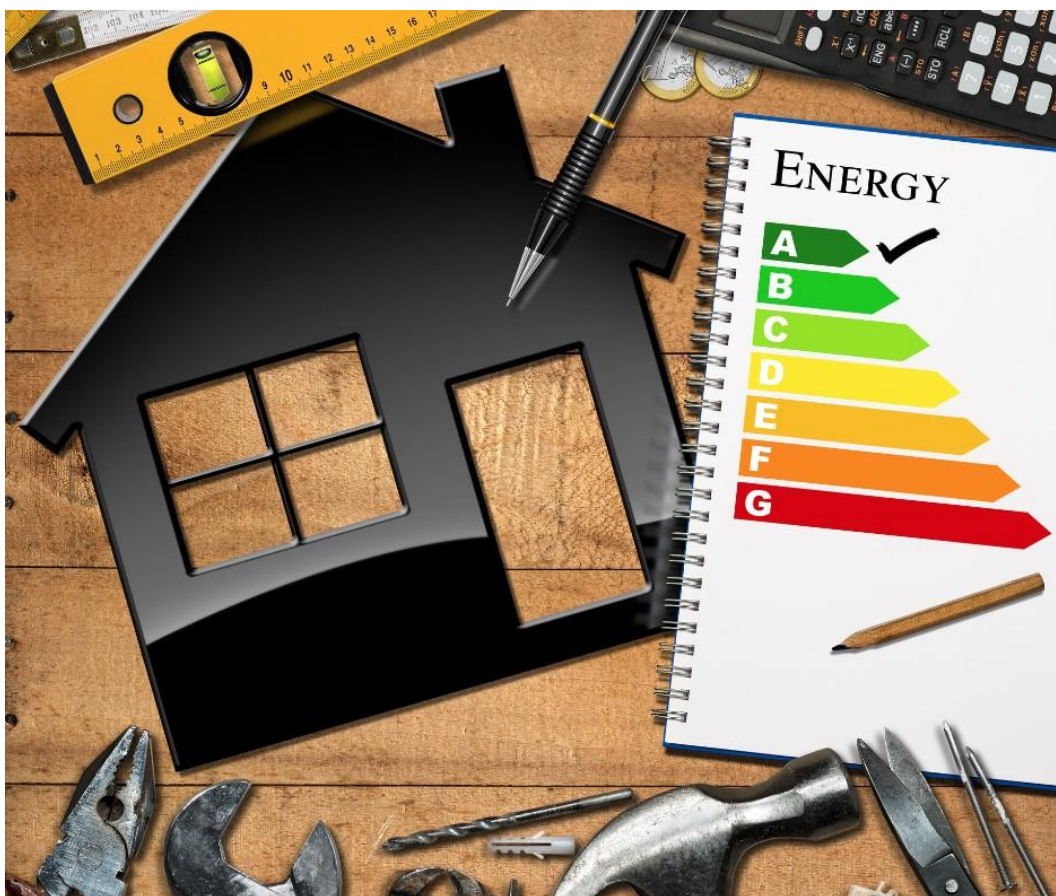
- attend a one-day development course to obtain or reinforce the knowledge/skills important in ensuring their business meets necessary standards;
- agree to follow a code of conduct and
- demonstrate they are a 'fit and proper person' to act as a residential landlord.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations set a minimum energy efficiency level for domestic private rented properties. Since 1 April 2020, landlords can no longer let or continue to let properties covered by the MEES Regulations if they have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating below E, unless they have a valid exemption in place. Government proposals have outlined plans to uplift the minimum standard to EPC rating C by 2030 with further consultation expected shortly.

Improving EPC ratings through measures such as insulation, solar panels and low-carbon heating achieves multiple outcomes: helping to reduce utility costs and tackle fuel poverty, reduce domestic carbon emissions and improve housing standards through addressing issues which can be linked to damp, mould and general disrepair.

The Councils Home Energy Advice and Retrofit Team is available to assist both landlords and tenants to improve energy efficiency standards and reduce utility costs through practical advice and support with accessing available funding for insulation and heating measures.





MAXIMISING USE OF EXISTING PRIVATE SECTOR STOCK.

Our vision is to bring long term empty homes back into use to improve the quality and supply of housing and to enable our residents to fulfil their potential.

It is estimated that there are a total of 1,586 empty homes across the sub-region (Boston: 265, East Lindsey: 1,027, South Holland: 294). Empty homes represent a wasted resource and a missed opportunity which can have a negative impact on local communities. The problems associated with empty homes include:

- Denying a home to those in housing need.
- Causing damage to neighbouring properties.
- Affecting neighbouring house prices.
- Becoming a potential focal point for illegal activities and anti-social behaviour.
- Attracting fly tipping and vermin.
- Presenting a strain on other public services, including the Police and Fire Service.
- Presenting a risk to the public through unsafe structures.

Bringing empty homes back in to use will support our communities by improving the local environment and the quality of life of local residents. It will provide much needed accommodation for the private sector, easing the pressure for local residents wishing to remain in the area. By removing boarded up and problematic empty properties it will improve the visual appearance of an area and reduce antisocial behaviour and crime and help to make our communities more sustainable. This will increase confidence in an area, encouraging investment in the repairs and renovation of properties, making our communities more sustainable.

In order to effectively tackle the issue of empty homes the Council will seek to develop an Empty Homes Policy to explore options available to reduce the number of empty homes in the area.

REGULATING THE PRIVATE SECTOR .

THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM (HHSRS)

The means of assessing housing standards, as per section 9 of the Housing Act 2004, is the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Officers use it to risk rate the severity of a deficiency in a dwelling by determining how serious the health effect of that deficiency would be, on residents and potential visitors to the dwelling. Officers do all they can to educate, inform and encourage property owners and managing agents to fulfil their responsibilities. However, enforcement action to protect the health and safety of tenants, occupiers and others will sometimes be required. The initiation of formal enforcement action will only occur when other measures have failed to produce the necessary response or where there is an urgent need for action. Upon consideration of all available evidence, the Council has a number of options to resolve a housing issue with these ranging from; taking no action, offering informal advice, service of a statutory notice, issuing of a formal caution, carrying out works in default, service of a financial penalty (also known as a civil penalty) and in the most extreme cases, prosecution at a magistrates' court. These courses of action are not necessarily mutually exclusive and an act of enforcement could involve a number of these options. We have adopted an enforcement protocol to assist with consistent and proportional legal action. Housing Standards enforcement guidelines linked to this strategy have been established and are reproduced within the Corporate Enforcement Policy.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOs - INCLUDING LICENSING)

Some privately rented houses are let to people from several different families, either as bedsits or as shared houses. Houses like this are known as houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). HMOs provide a valuable source of affordable rented housing to primarily single people in the area. However, this form of housing is traditionally focussed on deprived areas and can be problematic due to fire safety issues and poor standards such as dampness, lack of affordable heating etc.

HMOs represent higher risk accommodation particularly when considering fire safety. For that reason, larger HMOs (housing 5 or more people) require a licence. The table below details the number of licensed HMOs, in comparison to the estimated number of non-licensable HMOs for each Council area (data as of March 2024)



HMOs that fall below the 5-person threshold are not required to be licensed. As such the number of HMOs across the sub-region fluctuates on a regular basis. Throughout recent years there has been a growth in HMO accommodation. Officers are working proactively to identify HMOs in order to safeguard the occupiers.

	Number of Licensable HMOs	Estimated number of Non-Licensable HMOs
Boston Borough Council	132	200
East Lindsey District Council	56	20
South Holland District Council	114	150

In order to align the HMO licensing process across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership sub-region, each Council will seek to adopt a shared HMO Licensing Policy.

CIVIL PENALTIES

Under the Housing and Planning Act 2016, financial penalties (also known as civil penalties) are able to be issued as an alternative to prosecution for relevant housing offences under section 249A of the Housing Act 2004. The maximum amount per offence is capped at £30,000. Officers will consider serving financial penalties where there is clear evidence of a relevant housing offence having been committed or with the conduct still occurring following the local housing authority's involvement. The Crown Prosecution Service Code for Crown Prosecutors shall be consulted in conjunction with all local policies as well as the Enforcement Concordat as it provides advice on the extent to which there is likely to be sufficient evidence to secure a conviction. The Code has two stages: (i) the evidential stage and (ii) the public interest stage. There are seven factors to which the local housing authority will take into consideration upon service of a civil penalty and these are outlined within the Private Sector Housing Policy Framework, available to view on the council's website.

Banning orders for the most serious offenders, as well as a database of rogue landlords/property agents against whom a banning order has been made, are available to each Council. The database may include persons convicted of a banning order offence or who received two or more financial penalties within a twelve-month calendar period.

COLLABORATIVE WORKING.



Due to the nature of the enforcement work carried out by the team, it is essential that the team works closely with colleagues from other internal services and external agencies, including:

Homelessness & Housing Options Teams play a crucial role in assisting residents who find themselves homeless or in need of alternative accommodation. Due to the nature of enforcement work there are occasions when residents may require assistance from the Homelessness / Housing Options Team, such as when Emergency Prohibition Orders are served.

Neighbourhood Services & Community Safety Teams working together to tackle a range of issues such as waste collection, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour.

Police / Home Office / Fire & Rescue will regularly gain intelligence of multi-occupied, overcrowded and sub- standard properties within the area. Through information sharing agreements officers from the Council share and receive intelligence with the emergency services in relation to private sector accommodation. Immigration inspections to verify that the accommodation being provided is suitable for those coming overseas. Also to verify tenure is lawful, having the right to reside and recourse to public funds to begin with.

Wellbeing Lincs is a countywide service, funded by Lincolnshire County Council supporting adults across Lincolnshire to achieve confident, fulfilled and independent living. Many of the residents who request assistance from the Housing Standards Team may also need a helping hand through life's changes, such as ill health, disability, changes to financial circumstances.

DASH Services is a Private Rented Sector service for Local Authorities, Landlords & Tenants and is hosted by Derby City Council on behalf of numerous Councils across England. The service has operated successfully across the East Midlands region for almost 20 years, providing a valuable, low cost, service for local authorities and a place for Landlords to gain useful information to aid their businesses. The Council has worked closely with DASH to provide Landlord Forums, Newsletters and guidance on housing standards to private sector landlords and agents. In addition to their work with landlords DASH has provided the Council with training for enforcement officers to ensure competence and consistency is achieved in the work that is being carried out.

Good Home Lincs provides a one-stop-shop for information and advice on all aspects of housing improvement, maintenance and repair to help people stay safe, warm and well at home. Funded by Lincolnshire Councils, the service provides information and signposting to residents of all tenures as well as targeted advice and support. Linking with a range of services across Lincolnshire who have direct contact with households and connecting with organisations, both statutory and voluntary, that provide housing, health and wellbeing related services. The goal is to ensure residents receive the advice and support they need to help them live in a good home.

OUR COMMITTMENTS.



To develop this strategy we considered a number of key areas in the private housing sector, on both a national and local scale, as well as the needs of the service. By refreshing our housing stock condition survey data, we will shape this further by identifying dwellings in the private sector and allocating them into categories, likely tenure, condition and household vulnerability of the stock and the geographical distribution of properties, which helps to understand the issues by tenure type across the sub-region. This helps to; establish the extent of dwellings suffering from the presence of a HHSRS Category 1 hazard, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating bands, the number of empty homes across the sub-region and a robust approach to mandatory HMO licensing.

From this we have developed four outcome-based commitments:

Commitment 1: We proactively and effectively tackle poor conditions across the private housing sector.

Commitment 2: We will continue to work with partners, Landlords and Registered Providers to ensure that homes meet required standards so that residents can thrive in a safe home.

Commitment 3: We will work effectively to reduce the number of empty homes across the sub-region.

Commitment 4: We will tackle unlicensed HMOs across the sub-region.

COMMITMENT 1: We proactively and effectively tackle poor conditions across the private housing sector.

This commitment focuses on the development of our approach to regulating and improving conditions in the private housing sector within the sub-region. It is important that we build a robust approach to tackling rogue landlords and strive to ensure that the private sector offers a safe and suitable housing option for our residents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Take appropriate enforcement action when required, following our enforcement policy, that sets out how we will tackle rogue landlords and sub-standard property conditions.
- Work with landlords to identify and appropriately license all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the sub-region.
- Review our approach to supporting tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector.





COMMITMENT 2: We will continue to work with partners, Landlords and Registered Providers to ensure that homes meet required standards so that residents can thrive in a safe home.

It is important that we continue to build good relationships and education for tenants and landlords.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure the Landlords Forum meets the needs of the Landlords, by providing a wide range of advice, education from a variety of departments, agencies and local services.
- Continue to work with landlords to promote good housing management and to enable tenants to remain in their homes.
- Review the information provided on our website.
- Carry out consultation surveys with tenants & landlords to promote education and to ensure we are meeting customer satisfaction.

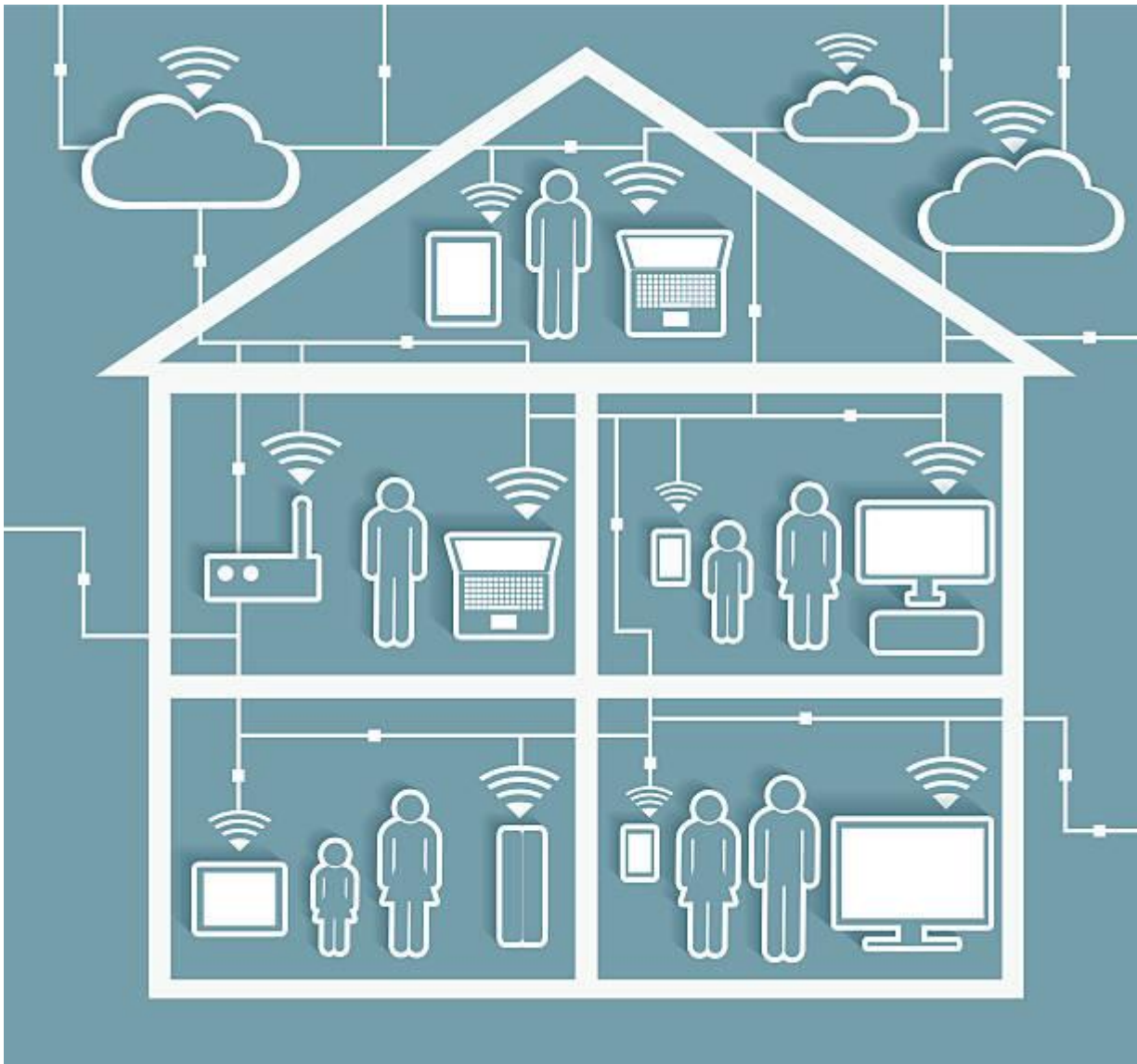
COMMITTMENT 3: We will work effectively to reduce the number of empty homes across the sub-region.

Working effectively to reduce the number of empty homes across the sub-region and bringing them back into use for the community will assist in addressing the local shortage of affordable residential properties. This will also reduce the detrimental impact that empty properties can have on the local area.

To achieve this, we will:

- Develop a strategic approach to identify and investigate empty homes throughout the sub-region both reactively and proactively.
- Engage with owners to encourage and support them in bringing empty homes back into use.
- Consider rent schemes, grant programmes and other available options to assist owners in bringing empty homes back into use.
- Take appropriate enforcement action when required.





COMMITMENT 4: We will tackle unlicensed HMOs across the sub-region.

Tackling unlicensed HMOs across the sub-region to proactively ensure landlords are meeting the minimum housing standards, fire safety and management standards will ensure that this type of housing is always a safe option for those needing an affordable home of their own.

To achieve this, we will:

- Carry out proactive project work, including partnership working with other departments across the Council and external partners, to identify and investigate all suspected HMOs across the sub-region.
- Target enforcement work towards non-compliant landlords.
- Encourage landlords to obtain accreditation to ensure good management standards and an understanding of legislation.



DELIVERY.

All 3 Councils within the Partnership will look to procure up to date stock condition data in order to shape the policies and procedures that will compliment this strategy.

The 3 Councils will aim to develop a shared Houses of Multiple Occupation Licensing Policy. The policy will cover how the Council will apply the relevant legislation to applications for licences for Houses of Multiple Occupation to ensure that all actions undertaken are fair, equitable and consistent.

The 3 Councils will aim to develop a shared Empty Homes Policy to explore options available to reduce the number of empty homes across the sub-region. The policy will identify the approaches available to all 3 Councils, along with the resources required to tackle the issue of empty homes.



WORKING TOGETHER TO OFFER A CLEAR AND CONSISTENT EXPERIENCE.



served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

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Appendix 2 – Guidance and definitions

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

The Housing Act 2004 transformed the way in which the standard of properties is assessed. For over 40 years properties were assessed using the 'fitness standard', which over the course of time did not address the hazards present in all homes. The 2004 Act introduced the concept of applying a risk assessment to dwellings contained within the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) sets out 29 hazards listed below:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| • Damp & mould growth | • Food safety |
| • Excess cold | • Personal hygiene |
| • Excess heat | • Water supply |
| • Asbestos & MMF | • Falls (baths) |
| • Biocides | • Falls (level surfaces) |
| • Carbon monoxide | • Falls (stairs) |
| • Lead | • Falls (between levels) |
| • Radiation | • Electrical hazards |
| • Uncombusted fuels | • Fire |
| • Volatile organic compounds | • Flames, hot surfaces |
| • Crowding and space | • Collision & entrapment |
| • Entry by intruders | • Explosions |
| • Lighting | • Position and operability of amenities |
| • Noise | • Structural collapse |
| • Domestic hygiene | |

The assessment of hazards is a two-stage process: addressing first the likelihood of an occurrence and then the range of probable harm outcomes.

Stage 1: Likelihood of an occurrence

The first stage is to assess the likelihood (over and above the average as defined within the rating system for that type and age of property) of a "relevant occupier" (i.e. the most vulnerable type of occupier) suffering any harm as a result of the identified hazard.

Stage 2: Range of probable harm outcomes

The next stage is to assess which of the four classes of harm a relevant occupier is most likely to suffer. The classes of harm are as follows:

- Class I – Extreme harm, including:
 - Death
 - Lung cancer
 - Permanent paralysis
 - 80% burns
- Class II – Severe harm, including:
 - Cardio-respiratory diseases

- Mild stroke
 - Loss of hand or foot
 - Serious burns
- Class III – Serious harm, including:
 - Gastro-enteritis
 - Diarrhoea
 - Mild heart attack
 - Loss of a finger
- Class IV – Moderate harm including:
 - Pleural plaques
 - Broken finger
 - Moderate cuts to face or body
 - Regular serious coughs or colds.

Having completed these two stages the officer will arrive at a hazard score and in turn a hazard banding, detailed below:

Numerical Score Range	Band
5,000 or more	A
2,000 – 4,999	B
1,000 – 1,999	C
500 – 999	D
200 – 499	E
100 – 199	F
50 – 99	G
20 – 49	H
10 – 19	I
9 or less	J

Hazards that fall within Band A – C are classed as Category 1 hazards, for which the Council has a duty to carry out enforcement action. Hazards that fall within bands D – J are classed as Category 2 hazards, for which the Council has the option to carry out enforcement action. The choice of enforcement action available to the Council include:

- An improvement notice;
- A prohibition order
- A hazard awareness notice
- Emergency remediation action
- Emergency prohibition order
- A demolition order
- Declaration of a clearance area

What is an House in Multiple Occupation ?

The Housing Act 2004 has introduced a new definition of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). In general terms, a premise will be an HMO if it is one of the following:

- **A shared house** lived in by people who belong to more than one family and who share one or more facilities.
- **A house in bedsits** lived in by people who belong to more than one family and who share one or more facilities.
- **An individual flat** lived in by people who belong to more than one family and who share one or more facilities.
- **A building of self-contained flats** that do not meet 1991 Building Regulation standards.

Definitions

Family – husband, wife, co-habitee, child, step-child, foster-child, grandchild, parent, step-parent, foster-parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, half-sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin.

Facilities – basic amenities: wc; wash hand basin, shower, bath; cooking facilities.

One of the other significant changes effected by the 2004 Act is the introduction of mandatory licensing for certain HMOs. In general terms, the mandatory licensing requirements only apply to HMOs that:

- Are occupied by at least five persons; and,
- Are occupied by persons living in two or more single households.
- And comprises of wholly or partly shared facilities, or where the accommodation is not fully self-contained.

The intention of this threshold is to ensure that those HMOs that constitute the greatest fire risk are subject to licensing. As part of the application for a licence, certain prescribed information must be submitted to the Council.

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Corporate and Community Committee Work Programme 2023–24

THIS COMMITTEE'S REMIT IS ALIGNED TO COPORATE PRIORITIES: CP2 PEOPLE and CP4 PUBLIC SERVICE

MEETING	AGENDA ITEMS	REPORT AUTHOR <i>A.D = Assistant Director</i> <i>D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive</i>	PORTFOLIO	CABINET
8 June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Scrutiny work between partner councils in the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership' Work Programme 	A.D - Corporate Lead Officer for committee	Cllr A Dorrian	28 June 23
20 July 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of New Procurement Strategy Partnership Communications Strategy Work Programme 	Head of Procurement A.D. Corporate Lead Officer for committee	Cllr A Dorrian Cllr S Ghosh	2 nd Aug. 23
21 Sept 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Experience Strategy Boston Town Centre Strategy. Work Programme 	A.D. - Wellbeing/ Community Leadership Dept. C X – Communities Lead Officer for committee	Cllr E Cresswell Cllr D Broughton	25 Oct. 23
9 Nov 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SELCP Customer Experience Strategy F.O.I and Environmental Information Regulations Local Council Tax Support Scheme - Consultation Lincolnshire Discretionary Housing Financial Assistance Policy. Work Programme. 	A.D – Wellbeing / Community Leadership A.D – Governance and Monitoring Officer D.C.X - Corporate Development Section A.D. - Wellbeing/ Community Leadership	Cllr B Broughton Cllr S Ghosh Cllr S Ghosh Cllr J Baxter	6 Dec. 23
1 Feb 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 - Partnership Policy Verbal update on Boston Transport Strategy 	Section 151 Officer A.D – Regulatory A.D – Planning & Strategic Infrastructure	Cllr S Ghosh Cllr A Dorrian Cllr A Dorrian	7 Feb. 24
21 Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Charter for the Partnership. Healthy Living Plan Unreasonable Behaviour Policy Update: S.I.P.C Social Impact of Population Change 	Communications Manager A.D Wellbeing and Community Leadership A.D Governance and Monitoring Officer AD – General Fund Assets	Cllr A Dorrian Cllr E Cresswell Cllr E Cresswell	27 Mar. 24

Corporate and Community Committee Work Programme 2024–25

THIS COMMITTEE'S REMIT IS ALIGNED TO COPORATE PRIORITIES: CP2 PEOPLE and CP4 PUBLIC SERVICE

MEETING	AGENDA ITEMS	REPORT AUTHOR A.D = Assistant Director D.C.X = Deputy Chief Executive	PORTFOLIO	CABINET
30 May '24	<i>Meeting cancelled – Workshop held for Work Programme</i>			
25 July '24	Artificial Intelligence Policy Working in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector	A.D – Corporate DCX - Communities	Cllr S Ghosh Cllr E Creswell	25 Sept.24
19 Sept '24	Cancelled			
14 Nov '24	Review of Boston Town Centre Council Tax Support Customer Feedback Policy Street Naming and Numbering Policy Council / PSPS Modernisation	DCX – Communities Head of Revenues and Benefits A.D – Governance & Monitoring Officer Group Manager, Building Control	Cllr D Broughton Cllr S Ghosh Cllr E Cresswell Cllr J Baxter Cllr A Dorrian	12 Dec '24
23 Jan '25	Private Sector Housing Budget	Safer Communities Service Manager DCX – Section 151 Officer	Cllr J Baxter Cllr S Ghosh	19 Feb '25
06 Mar '25	Healthy Living Board Update LGA Peer Review HMO Position in Boston.	A.D Wellbeing and Community Leadership A.D – Corporate A.D Housing	Cllr E Cresswell Cllr A Dorrian Cllr J Baxter	23 Mar '25

Alternative options for Scrutiny working.	
Task and Finish Group Reviews	Review of the Town Centre – from Environment and Performance committee. Schedule of meetings to be confirmed.
Member Working Group	
Inquiry Session	
All Member Briefings <i>pending at issue of agenda</i>	Child Poverty – requested from November 2024 meeting. Update on PE21 – requested from Environment and Performance December 2024 meeting.

Pending Confirmation:

2025 – 2026: Bus Services. Possible work streams from the SICP report on Social Impact Population Change.

Chairman: Councillor Paul Gleeson

Lead Officer: DCX Programme Delivery /
Assistant Director – General Fund Assets

Vice Chairman: Councillor Suzanne Welberry

Clerk: Democratic Services Officer

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