

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 21 October 2013	Report to: Housing, Environment, Transport and Community Safety.
Report title:		Overview and Scrutiny Report on Private Rented Sector (PRS) Housing - Southwark Rental Standard and Temporary Accommodation Accreditation	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From		Paul Langford, Head of Operations and David Littleton, Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager	

SUMMARY

1. Subsequent to the previous paper dated 15th July 2013 a project manager has been appointed to take the project forward.
2. This paper sets out initial proposals for Landlord Accreditation including the adoption of a Southwark Private Rental Standard. These proposals have been presented to the Joint Deputy Cabinet Member Briefing - Private Sector Housing on the 16th and 26th September
3. After considerable analysis it is proposed that the project is built up in a number of stages.
 - Firstly the adoption of a Southwark Rental Standard, a document which clarifies and advised landlords on our minimum expectations for the management and repair of Private Rental Property.
 - Secondly Southwark Rental Standard will be used as a basis for the accreditation of the temporary accommodation Southwark procures in discharging its duty as the Local Housing Authority.
4. We are going out to consult widely on the Draft Southwark Private Rented Sector Standard, with a view to adopting this as the basis of guidance and good practice for the management and maintenance of rented domestic property in Southwark. This consultation will be open from the 16th October 2013 to the 22nd November 2013.

PROJECT PLAN OVERVIEW

5. The project will go forward as several linked workstreams.
6. The first element will be to introduce a standard for management and maintenance that acts as a guide to acceptable practice and can in future be used as a regulation threshold for owners and landlords who fail to apply its terms.
7. The second part will be a project to apply the terms of the standard by inspection and accreditation to the properties let by and for the Council in the discharge of its duty as the local housing authority. Both these parts of the project are now in hand and are intended to be complete by January 2014.
8. There will then be a review of the operation of the PRS in Southwark and proposals to introduce areas of selective licensing and accreditation may be put forward. This review will gather evidence to support to support any licensing proposals

9. Concurrently a method for registration of PRS properties will be developed. This will allow the Council to record PRS stock and identify landlords.
10. The system will be simple to use and though there will obviously be a fee structure it is intended to cover costs of operation only.
11. There will also need to be a review of regulatory activity to provide proof that existing regulatory tools are used robustly to address PRS problems. This is a requirement in the development of proposals to introduce extended or selective licensing

Structure of the Project

12. Though this project is cross-departmental, it will be 'owned' initially by Paul Langford as Head of Operations in Housing and Community Services. As the project moves towards managing, regulating and licensing of the PRS so the ownership will move across to David Littleton as Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards.

Key Initial Workstreams (In provisional order of priority)

13. Draft and consult on an Accreditation Standard for PRS property (By December 6th 2013)
 - a. Consult draft standard internally & externally.
 - b. Agree and incorporate revisions.
 - c. Approve and adopt standard.
14. Prepare for introduction of Standard to LA funded property (By end January 2014)
 - d. Review current data recording and assess for consistency of application with the new standard.
 - e. Assess resource requirements for property inspections and new data recording.
 - f. Produce resource bids for inspection staff and IT development.
 - g. Engage with existing suppliers to assist with handover to new standards.
15. Define plan for Licensing Proposals in the wider PRS.
 - h. Strategy & timing.
 - i. Select initial operating areas.
 - j. Consultations.
 - k. Communications and marketing.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Draft Southwark Private Rental Standard		John Daley

APPENDICES

No.	Title

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Paul Langford, Head of Operations, Housing and Community Services , David Littleton, Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager	
Report Author	. John Daley, Private Sector Housing Accreditation Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 October 2013	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Head of Procurement	N/a	N/a
Director of Legal Services	N/a	N/a
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	N/a	N/a
Head of Specialist Housing Services	N/a	N/a
Cabinet Member	N/a	N/a
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	15 October 2013	