



**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 April 2014**

**BRIEFING NOTE:**

**SCRUTINY PANEL 2 – MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION  
OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (INCLUDING HIMOs)**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Since the report to the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, three further evidence gathering meetings have taken place.

**2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 At the meeting held on 23 January 2014, the Scrutiny Panel received evidence from a variety of expert advisors including:

- Team Leader, Fire Safety, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Community Safety Partnership Manager, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
- National Landlords Association, (Northampton)
- Association of Residential Letting Agents

- 2.2 The Scrutiny Panel considered a research paper detailing best practice elsewhere and the licensing options.

- 2.3 At its meeting held on 13 February 2014, the Scrutiny Panel received further responses to its core questions from key expert advisers:

- Planet Too Co-Ordinator, Students' Union, University of Northampton
- Student Accommodation Services, Northampton University
- Environmental Health Manager (Environmental Protection), Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
- Neighbourhood Wardens, NBC
- Northampton Diverse Equalities Community Forum
- HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC)

- 2.4 A research paper, produced by the Local Government Information Unit, – “House Proud – How Council’s can raise standards in the private rented sector “ was also received by the Scrutiny Panel.
- 2.5 The Scrutiny Panel agreed the need for an additional meeting. A meeting was scheduled for 13 March 2014, which considered:
- A response to its core questions from Northamptonshire Federation of Residents’ Association
  - An update on the consultation regarding Additional Licensing of HIMOs and a briefing paper detailing background to the organisation – Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) and details regarding the licensing scheme that Boston Borough Council recently consulted upon.
- 2.5 A final meeting of the Scrutiny Panel is scheduled for 30 April, at which a response to the core questions will be received from DASH along with further details about the consultation regarding additional licensing and the Scrutiny Panel will consider the draft report.
- 2.6 It is envisaged that the Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2 will present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2014.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the update is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of Councillor Joy Capstick, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs)

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