

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW PANEL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18 November 2019
<b>Scrutiny Panel / Executive Member:</b>	<p>Councillor Mike Glover - Chair of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>Councillor Gerald Cooney – Executive Member (Housing, Planning and Employment)</p> <p>Councillor Allison Gwynne – Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment)</p>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY INTERIM REPORT - IMPROVING QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The Chair of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel to comment on the Executive Response ( <b>Appendix 1</b> ), and the interim report on Improving Quality and Standards in the Private Rented Sector with recommendations made to support future services ( <b>Appendix 2</b> ).
<b>Recommendations:</b>	To note the recommendations detailed in Section 7 of <b>Appendix 2</b> .
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The review itself has no specific policy implications. Should the recommendations of this report be accepted by Tameside Council's Executive, the relevant services will need to assess the policy implications of putting individual recommendations in place.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	<p>The initial review is expected to cost approximately £80k, with longer term investment of approximately £1.5m required to support the on-going work program.</p> <p>There is currently no funding for this, this will need to be outlined and addressed in the report to Elected Members expected in December 2019.</p>
<b>Legal Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	This is a constructive review seeking to support the Executive in advance of any policy/priority decisions. The approval of expenditure by the Executive of £80K will enable decisions to be made about priorities when it comes to annual Budget setting in February 2020.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Reports of Scrutiny Panels are integral to processes which exist to hold the Executive of the authority to account
<b>Access to Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe by:
	 Telephone: 0161 342 2199  e-mail: <a href="mailto:paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk">paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk</a>



## APPENDIX 1

### Scrutiny - Executive Response

<b>In Respect of:</b>	Scrutiny Interim Report – Improving Quality and Standards in the Private Rented Sector
<b>Date:</b>	24 October 2019
<b>Response of:</b>	Councillor Gerald Cooney, Executive Member (Housing, Planning and Employment) Councillor Allison Gwynne, Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment)
<b>Coordinating Officer:</b>	Gregg Stott, Interim Assistant Director, Investment and Development Emma Varnam, Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods

Recommendations	Accepted/ Rejected	Executive Response	Officer Responsible	Action By (Date)
1. That the Council may benefit from targeted work undertaken across areas with the highest proportion of privately rented properties, to gain views and insight from tenants and landlords to inform scale and size of presenting issues on quality of accommodation in the PRS.	Accepted	Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) have completed an ethnographic study of the lived experiences of households living in the PRS. These experiences are likely to be the same in Tameside. However, if the Panel wants a localised version then the Council could use an equivalent methodology to provide the required scope. The divergence to the Salford study will be the input from PRS Landlords and possibly letting or management agencies. Housing Growth has a list of local PRS Landlords that are currently members of the National Landlords Association (NLA). Additional budget will be required if this is agreed.	Gregg Stott Jack Gould John Hughes	February 2020

Recommendations	Accepted/ Rejected	Executive Response	Officer Responsible	Action By (Date)
<p>2. That the Council seeks to review the range and utilisation of enforcement and non-statutory measures to improve quality in the PRS, as part of the considerations being given to the development of a selective licensing scheme.</p>	Accepted	<p>A review of the powers available to the PRS has already completed by the GM Private Sector Group and was used to inform the recent GM Housing Strategy.</p> <p>The timescales and stages involved in introducing selective licencing can be obtained from GM Authorities where already established (Oldham, Manchester)</p>	<p>Emma Varnam Sharon Smith Gary Mongan</p>	December 2019
<p>3. That should circumstances arise, based on a need to review evidence (recommendations 1 &amp; 2), the Executive considers options and benefits of the Council introducing a selective licensing scheme in designated areas of the borough. To reflect on the 'Independent Review of the Use and Effectiveness of Selective Licensing', and possible need for a comprehensive evidence appraisal, feasibility study and impact assessment to be undertaken.</p>	Accepted	<p>Recommendation 1 &amp; 2 should provide the context for an independent options appraisal /review of the proposal to introduce selective licencing. A literature review of the subject area and other interventions such as study trips and external expert interviews could also be considered.</p> <p>To commission research (Arc 4) to gather data that would be required as evidence to demonstrate criteria that would be necessary to meet to determine a selective licensing area.</p>	<p>John Hughes Jack Gould Sharon Smith Gary Mongan</p>	<p>February 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p>

Recommendations	Accepted/ Rejected	Executive Response	Officer Responsible	Action By (Date)
<p>4. That the Executive fully involve Scrutiny in development stages and consultation to inform a future approach to improving quality and standards in the PRS. Scrutiny to now undertake further detailed work in this area.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The scoping of the independent review will be shared with the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Panel Working Group could be involved in interviewing specialist agencies.</p> <p>Any recommendations that emerge from an independent review will be shared with the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>A copy of the final report to be shared with Scrutiny Panel.</p>	<p>Emma Varnam Gregg Stott</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

# APPENDIX 2

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 With work priorities agreed for 2019/20, a decision was made at the panel meeting on 11 June 2019 that the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will review methods to improve quality and standards within Tameside's private rented sector (PRS). The Panel received an overview presentation at the meeting on 30 July 2019.
- 1.2 A working group was then established, consisting of six panel members, to examine the current position, options available to the Council and ways to progress work in this area. A number of presenting issues became clear with regard to the Council's ability to engage with private landlords and a need to address consistency of quality and standards across all properties made available for private rent.
- 1.3 Tameside's PRS is varied and the majority of properties will be of good quality. The focus for this review is to consider how the Council is able to make best use of all available measures to raise standards within the lower end of the market. It will be important to consider access to quality housing for Tameside's most vulnerable residents living in areas of higher deprivation.

## 2. KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Citizens Advice published 'Getting the house in order – how to improve standards in the private rented sector', in June 2019. Online surveys were conducted with responses from 2,127 renters in England and 1,023 private landlords. The surveys were carried out between 7 and 17 March 2019, and are representative of renters in England by age, ethnicity and region. Parts of the information and data below have been drawn from the report in question.
- 2.2 At a national level, the private rented sector provides homes for 4.7 million households. This includes 1.7 million families with children, which is three times as many as a decade ago. There are a range of rights and standards guaranteed by housing law, which entitles people to live in a property that is in a good state of repair and in return there is a personal responsibility to ensure general standards are maintained.
- 2.3 Tenants face widespread problems, with 60% experiencing disrepair and the majority of people not knowing whether this is the landlord's responsibility. There is a widespread view that landlords are not being held to account when it comes to required action and aspects of enforcement. When landlords fail to meet often routine and minimum standards, the first step for a tenant is to bring any problems to the attention of their landlord or letting agent. If this fails and the issue remains there are two main routes to enforce their rights through local authority Environmental Health teams, or through the county court.
- 2.4 Citizens Advice helped around 200,000 people with housing problems in 2018-19, with almost 60,000 being from the PRS, of which 24% needed help relating to repairs and maintenance. A certain number of landlords across all areas are failing to fix disrepair and meet legal obligations, which has a direct impact on the safety, health and wellbeing of tenants.
- 2.5 The survey asked landlords whether they had met a range of obligations, such as an annual gas inspection or installing and checking smoke alarms. Landlords reported that in the last year, for at least one of their rental properties:
  - 26% haven't carried out a gas safety inspection
  - 25% haven't ensured there are smoke alarms on every floor

- 2.6 Tenants were also asked whether their landlord had carried out the same obligations, with 50% saying their landlord hasn't met at least one of their obligations.
- 2.7 There is a question to ask about how responsive and effective enforcement action can be.
- Only one third of landlords who were contacted about disrepair or hazards by a tenant or by Environmental Health carried out repairs.
  - Only 4% of around 70,000 complaints made to Environmental Health resulted in improvement notices.
- 2.8 There is an inconsistent approach nationally to the enforcement action taken by local authorities, with a proportion of landlords not being held to account for neglecting their obligations. Research by Generation Rent found that in 2017-18, local authority inspections identified 12,600 category 1 hazards in privately rented homes, with only 3,000 improvement notices served. In addition:
- 1 in 5 local authorities in England and Wales didn't serve a single Improvement Notice in 2017-18.
  - 89% had not used their new Civil Penalty powers to fine rogue landlords. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 provides powers that permit local authorities to impose a civil penalty as an alternative to prosecution for a range of offences.
  - Over half reported that they did not have a policy in place to use these powers.

### **3. LOCAL PICTURE**

- 3.1 Tameside's housing stock is unique, with 88% of all properties located within council tax bands A, B and C. There is a high density of terraced properties within certain areas which is typical of the housing type made available for private rent. A number of areas/wards do have a higher proportion of cheaper properties (compared with comparable market values), of poorer quality and with lower levels of household income.
- 3.2 The PRS in Tameside has grown over recent years, with 14.2% of all properties (2017) being privately rented. This equates to almost 15,000 households and 40,000 residents, of which 12,000 are children. When taking account of all housing tenure, St Peters ward has the highest proportion of privately rented properties and is significantly above the borough average.
- 3.3 A wider range of residents are now living within the PRS and for longer. This includes older people, families with dependent children, single parents, single occupiers and residents with a disability, poor mental health or long-term condition. For the first time, there are now a higher number of older residents living in the PRS when compared to numbers housed with social landlords.
- 3.4 Housing remains a significant challenge in Tameside, with a large number of residents and families desperately in need of landlords to provide a secure and safe living environment so that they can get on in life. Data tells us that certain areas have more than 25% of housing located in the PRS, which is often in close proximity to town centres and areas of high deprivation. The assumption can be made that part of the PRS is housing some of the most vulnerable residents, with reduced choice or options due to limited economic and social mobility.
- 3.5 Tameside's low income households and single parents continue to be adversely affected by the impacts of welfare reform and Universal Credit. This also includes housing elements such as the Local Housing Allowance and pressures placed on single people in receipt of the shared room rate who continue to face limited housing options.
- 3.6 Examples often cited with regard to poor property management include:
- Failure to meet statutory requirements – tenancy agreements and protecting deposits etc

- Lack of transparency around fees
- Not meeting requests for repairs and maintenance in a timely manner
- Inconsistent methods and recording of rent collection and notice of rent increases

### What we know

- 3.7 The 2011 Census provides a wealth of information and data related to the PRS in Tameside. Data can be analysed to determine which areas have the highest proportion of privately rented properties. As a borough, Tameside consists of 141 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), with each equating to approximately 1,500 residents.
- 3.8 The Census showed that an average of 13.2% of properties in Tameside were located in the PRS. The variance between each LSOA can be significant and a number of areas have been identified to be above the borough average, with 46 of the 141 LSOAs (33.3%) having between 15.1% and 35.1% of properties in the PRS.
- 3.9 The table and map below highlight the top 20 LSOAs with the highest proportion of privately rented properties and those significantly above the borough average. Data ranges from 20.1% to 25% (orange), and 25.1% to 35.1% (red).

**Table 1: LSOAs (Ward) with properties in PRS above 20.1% (Census 2011)**

10 LSOAs (25.1% - 35.1%)		
Numbers	Lower Super Output Area (Ward)	% of housing in PRS
1	Town Centre (Mossley)	29.1
2	Stocks Lane – close proximity to town centre (Stalybridge South)	30.8
3	Castle Hall – close proximity to town centre (Dukinfield / Stalybridge)	26.2
4	Currier / Cockbrook (Ashton St Michaels)	25.5
5	Beaufort / St James (Ashton St Michaels)	28.7
6	Russell Street (Ashton St Michaels)	26.2
7	Ashton Town Centre (St Peters)	35.1
8	Katherine / Police Station – close proximity to town centre (St Peters)	30.5
9	Crown Point / Morrisons / Town Centre (Denton North East)	28.0
10	Town Hall / Grid Iron / Kingston (Hyde Werneth & Hyde Godley)	28.0
10 LSOAs (20.1% - 25%)		
11	St George's / Bradbury (Hyde Werneth)	21.8
12	James North / Library (Hyde Godley)	20.9
13	Portland Place / Cocker Hill (Stalybridge North)	20.1
14	Cedar (Ashton St Michaels)	21.6
15	King George / Henrietta (St Peters)	21.7
16	Charlestown (Ashton Waterloo)	20.7
17	Trafalgar Square (St Peters)	22.5
18	Guide Bridge (St Peters / Audenshaw)	24.4
19	Fairfield High School / Farleys Estate (Droylsden East)	24.3
20	Greenside South (Droylsden West)	23.5

- 3.10 The table above shows that 7 LSOAs are more than double the borough average of 13.2%. Areas with the highest proportion of privately rented properties are:
- Ashton Town Centre (St Peters) – 35.1%
  - Stocks Lane (Stalybridge South) – 30.8%
  - Katherine / Police Station (St Peters) – 30.5%
  - Town Centre (Mossley) – 29.1%
  - Beaufort / St James – 28.7%
  - Crown Point / Morrisons / Town Centre (Denton North East) – 28.0%
  - Town Hall / Grid Iron / Kingston (Hyde Werneth & Hyde Godley) – 28.0%

3.11 Data from the Census provides a good benchmark, in order to assess tenure type and inform future trends based on what we know about growth in the PRS from 2011 to 2019. A total of 12 out of the 19 electoral wards in Tameside are identified in the table above. When looking closely at the mapped areas, it becomes increasingly clear that some of the highest levels of housing in the PRS are located either within, or in close proximity to, a number of town centres in Tameside.

### Enforcement

3.12 Tenants can ask their local authority to inspect a property under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Environmental Health can take action if a home is judged to be unsafe. The Council must take action if serious problems are found. This could include:

- informal negotiation with the landlord to improve the property
- formal enforcement action against the landlord

3.13 A category 1 hazard is something that poses a serious threat to the health or safety of people living in or visiting the property. Examples include, exposed wiring or overloaded electrical sockets. The table below shows the enforcement action taken in Tameside between 2012 and 2017.

**Table 2: Complaints and enforcement action in PRS (2012-2017)**

Enforcement Action in PRS 2012-2017					
Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Complaints received	275	170	145	272	211
Inspections	275	170	145	272	211
Hazard Awareness Notices	1	1	0	2	1
Improvement Notices (Cat 1 and 2 hazards)	1	2	0	0	3
Prohibition Orders	0	0	0	1	2
Emergency Remedial Action	0	0	0	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0	0	0	0

3.14 Between 2012 and 2017 the Council received 1,073 complaints, with an inspection conducted for each and a total of 6 Improvements Notices issued. The table shows that in 2016/17, based on 211 inspections a total of 3 Improvement Notices were issued which equates to 1.4% which is below the national average of 4% quoted in paragraph 2.8.

### Supporting tenants

3.15 Tameside Housing Advice is a frontline service that provides residents with help and advice for all aspects of housing and directly supports individuals and families to resolve housing problems. The demand for advice and support is increasing, with the following data drawn from 2018/19.

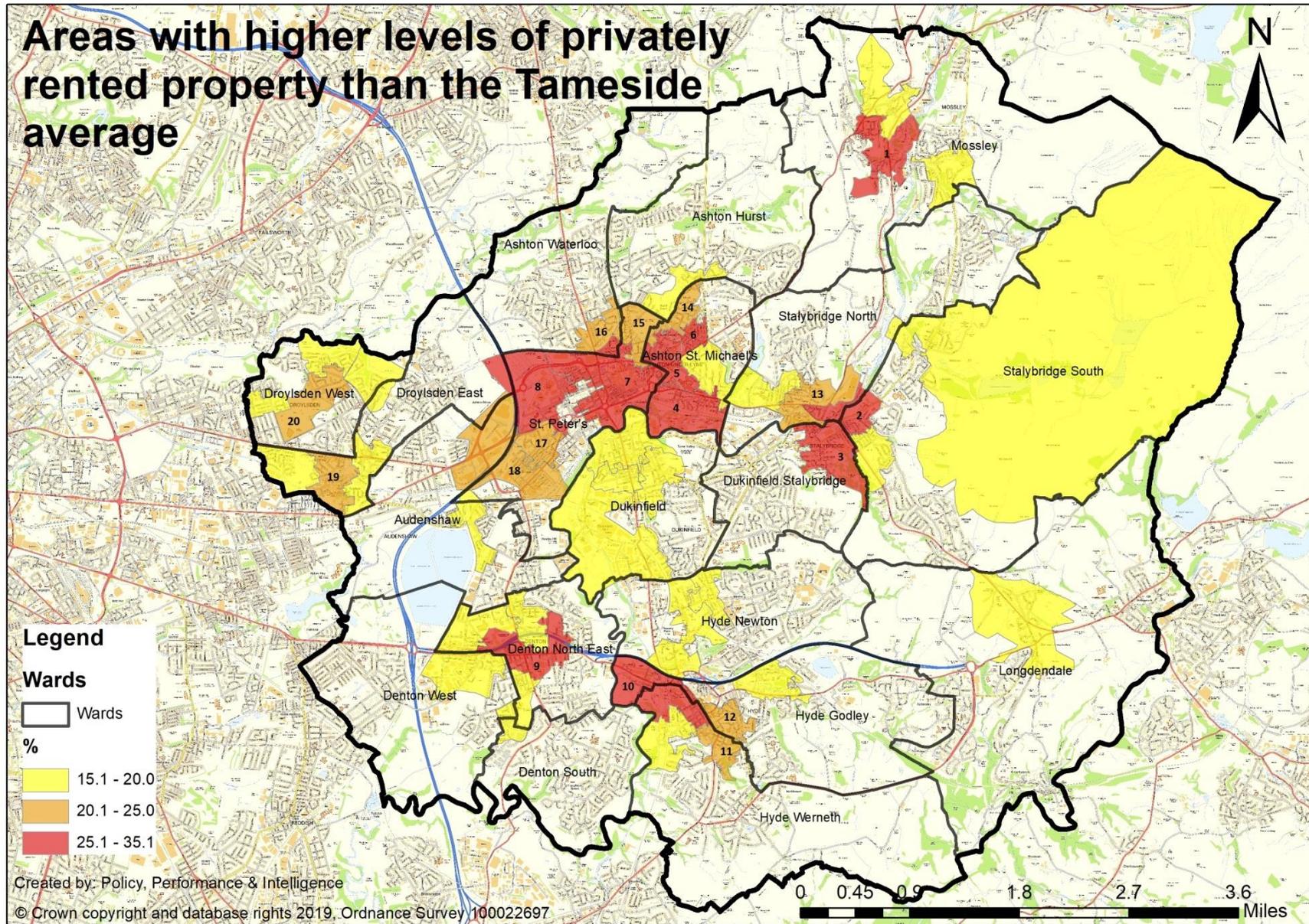
- 657 households accepted as being owed a homeless relief duty or main homeless duty.
- 276 households homeless or at risk of being made homeless as result of loss of property in PRS.
- 97 households became homeless as result of loss of property in PRS (Section 21 notices).

3.16 Tameside residents are facing real impacts of Section 21 eviction notices, with the Council supportive of measures to improve standards and security for both tenants and landlords, while seeking to protect our most vulnerable. It is important that tenants feel confident and comfortable to report issues of poor quality, with future proposals for a change in legislation to remove the option for 'no fault eviction'.

### **Empty properties**

- 3.17 At a local level, empty properties can have a negative impact on communities, with a growing need for the Council, housing partners and property owners to work more closely together to find sustainable improvement solutions. The council tax base at 7 October 2019 showed a total of 1,654 empty properties in Tameside, made up of both short-term and long-term empties. Bringing a proportion of these properties back to use can improve local areas and provide additional and much needed accommodation for residents.
- 3.18 Significant investment may be required to bring an empty property back to use. A local scheme is now available in partnership with Ashton Pioneer Homes (APH), to work with the owners of empty properties in Tameside to raise awareness of grants and match funding opportunities to support renovation or refurbishment work.
- 3.19 The lease and repair scheme means that the property is renovated, a tenant is found, council tax is paid, with management and maintenance services provided. A scheme of this nature can further support a local ambition for housing by removing opportunities for poor quality empty properties to be bought and made available for private rent without required investment and standards being met.

Figure 1: Areas with higher levels of privately rented property than the Tameside average (Census 2011)



#### **4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE (HOUSING ACT 2004)**

- 4.1 The Housing Act 2004 provides an authority with the power to introduce the licensing of privately rented homes within a designated area. The aim of selective licensing is to improve the overall management of properties to ensure they have a positive impact on the local area. Such an authority can make a designation that covers up to 20% of its geographical area or privately rented properties. A designation greater than 20% requires a further application for approval to the Secretary of State, provided the authority has consulted for at least 10 weeks on the proposed designation.
- 4.2 Authorities must consider whether there are any alternative courses of action available that have potential to achieve the same objectives as a proposed licensing scheme and without the need for a designation to be made. Only where there is no practical and beneficial alternative to a designation should a scheme be proposed.
- 4.3 The designation must only be made if satisfied a scheme will achieve its objectives in conjunction with other actions the authority and partners may be taking. A scheme must look to adopt a coordinated approach in connection to dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour.
- 4.4 A selective licensing scheme must satisfy one or more of the following conditions: The area is experiencing:
- Low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area)
  - A significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour
  - Poor property conditions
  - High levels of migration
  - High level of deprivation
  - High levels of crime
- 4.5 Selective licensing is not a tool that can be used in isolation. The authority must show how such a designation will be part of the overall strategic approach of a borough and fits with existing policies on:
- Homelessness
  - Empty properties
  - Regeneration
  - Anti-social behaviour associated with privately renting tenants
- 4.6 It is important for authorities to consider some of the possible impacts of making a designation and to undertake any appropriate risk assessments. For example, has there been an assessment of the likelihood of possible displacement of unprofessional landlords to other areas.
- 4.7 When considering the designation of an area an authority must:
- Take reasonable steps to consult persons who are likely to be affected by the scheme
  - Consider any representations made in accordance with the consultation
- 4.8 A comprehensive consultation must be undertaken to include local residents, tenants, landlords and managing agents. The consultation should be widely publicised using various channels of communication. Consultation on a proposed scheme must take place for at least 10 weeks. When a decision is made the designation cannot come into force until 3 months after it is made.

#### **Low Housing Demand**

- 4.9 When determining if an area is suffering from, or likely to become, an area of low housing demand, it is recommended that the authority consider the following factors:

- The value of residential premises in the area compared with the value of similar premises the authority consider to be comparable
- The turnover of occupiers of residential premises (in both rented and owner occupied)
- The number of properties available to buy or rent and the length of time they remain unoccupied
- The general appearance of the locality

4.10 An objective of a scheme should be to reduce or eliminate the low demand and lead to identifiable improvements of the social and economic conditions of the sector.

#### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

4.11 In considering whether an area is suffering from anti-social behaviour which a landlord should address, a review must conclude that behaviour is in the immediate vicinity of the rented properties and includes acts of (but not limited to):

- Intimidation and harassment of tenants and neighbours
- Noise, rowdy and nuisance behaviour affecting persons living in or visiting the vicinity
- Animal related problems
- Vehicle related nuisance
- Anti-social drinking, drug taking or dealing
- Graffiti, litter and waste within close proximity of the property

4.12 A scheme should state what measures will be taken to address the problems associated with anti-social behaviour, for example including conditions within a licence that requires landlords to take action to deal with such behaviour; to ensure a property is not let to persons with a known record of anti-social behaviour and relating to the use of the property.

#### **Poor Property Conditions**

4.13 It is recommended that an authority consider the following factors to help determine whether there are poor property conditions in the area:

- The age and visual appearance of properties in the area and that a high proportion of those properties are in the PRS.
- Following a review of housing conditions an authority considers a significant number of properties in the PRS need to be inspected. It would be appropriate to introduce a scheme if only a few individual properties needed attention.

#### **High Levels of Migration**

4.14 A selective licensing designation can be made, as part of a wider strategy, to preserve or improve the economic conditions of an area to which migrants have moved and ensure people occupying private rented accommodation do not live in poorly managed housing or unacceptable conditions.

4.15 Consideration should be given to whether an area has experienced a relatively large increase in the size of the population over a short period of time. To determine whether net migration to a designated area has increased by 15% or more over a 12 month period. The area must contain a high proportion of privately rented properties, with a significant number of migrants to the area occupying them.

#### **High Level of Deprivation**

4.16 A designation can be made if an area is experiencing a high level of deprivation. It must however be clear that by introducing a scheme it will, together with other measures as part of a wider strategy, improve housing conditions in the private rented sector in that area.

4.17 It is recommended that an authority considers the following factors when compared with similar neighbourhoods in the area:

- The employment status of adults
- The average income of households

- The health of households
- Availability and access to education, training and other services
- Housing conditions
- Physical environment
- Levels of crime

4.18 The authority may only make a designation within this category if a high proportion of housing in the area is in the PRS.

#### **The 'Fit and Proper Person' Test**

4.19 Local authorities must refuse an application for a licence if not satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to let houses. The fit and proper person test is intended to provide a level of assurance that the landlord or agent is a suitable person to let privately rented property. It is a standard that all private landlords are required to uphold throughout the time that they operate.

4.20 A council must take account of the information prescribed in section 85 of the 2004 Act when carrying out the fit and proper person test.

## **5. CASE STUDIES**

5.1 At January 2019, a total of 44 local authorities have introduced a selective licensing scheme, this includes local examples in Manchester, Salford and Oldham. The majority of schemes are operating within the 20% limit, with only four authorities having introduced a scheme covering the entire authority area and private rental market (Liverpool, Newham, Waltham Forest and Croydon).

- **Oldham** – designated 8 areas for selective licensing of private landlords on the grounds of low housing demand, introduced from 2015.
- **Salford** – designated 4 areas for selective licensing, the first designation was made in January 2015, with a recent addition in November 2019.
- **Manchester** – small designated area for named streets in Crumpsall, introduced in March 2017.

5.2 It can often be difficult for a local authority to hold reliable information on the PRS, outside of council tax and housing benefit records. The transfer of housing payments to Universal Credit will start to reduce the data that is readily available. Benefits are reported based on the compulsory nature of the licence being helpful for landlords and tenants to better understand roles and responsibilities. Such schemes can also improve the platform for authorities to better engage with landlords and promoting joint working with agencies such as the Police, HMRC and Social Care Services.

5.3 Authorities that have introduced a selective licensing scheme are starting to gain improved information on the local housing market. Rotherham Council has noted that the data gathered has significantly improved in relation to knowledge and monitoring of tenure-type and property use across the designated areas.

5.4 A selective licensing scheme also provides an authority with the power to enter a property for issues relating to housing standards and enforcement. Ordinarily this would have required the authority to provide 24 hours' notice or having to obtain a warrant. A number of councils have highlighted the benefit this can bring when working with partners such as the Fire Service to undertake a range of inspections at a property.

## **Nottingham City Council**

- 5.5 Evidence suggested that too many people in Nottingham were paying rent on private properties that were deemed to be unsafe or of a decent standard. The licence conditions will cover:
- Public liability insurance
  - Gas and electrical safety certificates
  - Fire safety
  - Written statement of terms for the occupiers (tenancy agreement)
  - Property maintenance
  - Property inspections undertaken and recorded
  - Reasonable steps taken to deal with anti-social behaviour that may affect their 'fit and proper status'
  - To notify the council of changes to licence holder / property manager
  - Requirement to display the licence or provide a copy to occupants
- 5.6 'Nottingham Standard – Rent with Confidence' is an accreditation mark that has established a minimum standard for privately rented accommodation across the city. The standard refers to those who are accredited with DASH or UNIPOL. Where the licence holder is accredited they can access a discount to the licence fee. The licence holder must be accredited at the point of application and must remain accredited throughout the course of the scheme.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 There is a growing need for the Council to review standards within the PRS and to determine the long-term impacts for residents housed in poor quality or substandard accommodation.
- 6.2 The PRS has grown in Tameside over recent years, with high levels of privately rented properties across multiple locations of the borough.
- 6.3 There is a high likelihood that recent growth in the PRS has resulted in more areas being above the borough average, when compared with the data from the Census 2011. It will become increasingly important to ensure more recent information and data is captured on the PRS in Tameside.
- 6.4 Figure 1 highlights the density of privately rented properties in close proximity to town centres and areas with higher levels of deprivation.
- 6.5 Closer consideration is required to understand and assess future impacts on older residents and single occupiers living in the PRS.
- 6.6 While enforcement activity is taking place in Tameside the number of Improvement Notices issued between 2012 and 2017 is significantly below the national rate.
- 6.7 Tameside does appear to have similar characteristics to other authority areas that have introduced a selective licensing scheme. Certain areas of the borough are presenting associated issues related to deprivation and a high proportion of properties in the PRS.
- 6.8 The Council must be confident in its position that all available methods to improve housing standards in the PRS have been exhausted or will be further complemented by the introduction of a selective licensing scheme.
- 6.9 The Council needs to be in a strong and stable position with regards to the strategic direction for housing, homelessness and community safety, for which a selective licensing would become a key strand.

6.10 To consider the impact that non-compliance and failure to meet the 'fit and proper person' assessment will have on properties and the potential to disperse landlords within the borough.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That the Council may benefit from targeted work undertaken across areas with the highest proportion of privately rented properties, to gain views and insight from tenants and landlords to inform scale and size of presenting issues on quality of accommodation in the PRS.

7.2 That the Council seeks to review the range and utilisation of enforcement and non-statutory measures to improve quality in the PRS, as part of the considerations being given to the development of a selective licensing scheme.

7.3 That should circumstances arise, based on a need to review evidence (recommendations 1 & 2), the Executive considers options and benefits of the Council introducing a selective licensing scheme in designated areas of the borough. To reflect on the 'Independent Review of the Use and Effectiveness of Selective Licensing', and possible need for a comprehensive evidence appraisal, feasibility study and impact assessment to be undertaken.

7.4 That the Executive fully involve Scrutiny in development stages and consultation to inform a future approach to improving quality and standards in the PRS. Scrutiny to now undertake further detailed work in this area.

### **Sources include:**

- Census 2011
- Citizens Advice - Getting the house in order – how to improve standards in the private rented sector, 2019.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, English Housing Survey, 2017/18
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Independent Review of the Use and Effectiveness of Selective Licensing, 2019
- Generation Rent, Private renters denied protection from revenge eviction
- Tameside Council Tax Base, October 2019
- Information and data provided by the Development and Investment service, July 2019