

## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KEY DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on 26 March 2020 by the Executive Director, Place.

Date notified to all members: 26 March 2020

The end of the call-in period is 4:00 pm on 1 April 2020

Unless called-in, the decision can be implemented from 2 April 2020

#### 1. **TITLE**

Pro-active Intervention in the Private Rented Sector in the East of Sheffield

#### 2. **DECISION TAKEN**

Agreed that the Council:

1. Approves the implementation of the proposal as detailed in this report that includes producing an ownership database of private rent housing in the East of Sheffield and sharing impact summary and other learning outcomes with Government colleagues to inform best practice;
2. Approves that the Private Housing Standards team to undertake a series of recruitment to the posts;
3. Notes that in order to undertake scoping work, three of the posts have already been filled in (as explained in paragraph 1.13); and
4. Notes the grant monies will be spent internally.

#### 3. **Reasons For Decision**

There are now well over 40,000 private rented properties in the city; around 19% of the city's housing stock. This sector has doubled in Sheffield in the last 10 years, and is predicted to reach 25% of all housing by 2025. In 2008 there were 18,000 properties within the private sector with around PHS 60 officers managing this work. At present there are around 40,000 properties and the PHS service has a team of around 30 officers, so the service has had to prioritise work to tackle the most serious statutory and regulatory breaches. Despite this, Sheffield has one of the strongest enforcement track records in the country for tackling poor housing conditions, but the additional funding would allow for enhanced work above that which is currently possible.

The use of CMF grant as detailed in this proposal will allow a range of outcomes and benefits, and these are fully outlined in the Logic Model & Tabular Summary of Project Objectives attached as Appendices B & C

4. **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

Local Authorities have a legal duty to address poor housing conditions in the private rented sector. The PHS service is the regulatory and prosecuting authority for this activity in Sheffield. As such, there is no real 'do-nothing' option in terms of tackling poor housing conditions in the east of the city.

Continuing with the existing reactive work, without use of the awarded funds, is the closest to a 'do-nothing' option. This would not allow for any programme of proactive intelligence-led property inspections and investigations, and mean current budgetary pressures are not alleviated.

Using the funding for a programme of interventions that deviates substantially from that set out in the original bid could represent a breach of the grant conditions, and bring a real risk of claw back of the funds, as well as possibly negatively impacting any possible future bids.

5. **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

6. **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service

7. **Relevant Scrutiny Committee If Decision Called In**

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee