

Appendix 1

Action Plan in respect of motion surrounding the Protection and Engagement for Private Renters

Council Motion:

This Council is committed to protecting and engaging with private renters as no one should live in a home that is damp, in a poor state of repair, overcrowded or unaffordable. Private renters need to hear more from Worcester City Council about the rights they have and how to exercise them.

Council therefore resolves to instruct Officers to compile an Action Plan for consideration by the Council's Communities Committee identifying measures of how the Council can further protect and engage with private renters. Examples of such measures include:

1. The serving of compliance notices for excess cold in homes that fail Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards.
2. Training and information provided to Councillors on how the Council can help residents in rented properties.
3. Information Pack provided by the Council including how to access any help for private renters.
4. The feasibility of a confidential reporting system for tenants

Action Plan based on following facts:

1. 457 identified rental properties with an F or G rating
2. 30 properties claiming exemption from the regulations
3. One full time officer to be recruited to lead the work with some support from other team members as capacity allows.

Action	Target Deadline	Responsible Officer	Sponsor
To review the extent of properties that fall beneath MEES required standards to include the collation and cross reference of data against existing data.	Completed. 457 properties identified as F&G rated rental.	Richard Osborne	Tom Mountford
Development of an action plan to tackle the extent of non MEES compliant properties to include the evaluation of the properties and prioritisation based on severity of non compliance (those with the lowest EPC ratings) and those applied for exemptions	30 th November 2022	Richard Osborne/ Ismene Broad/ Private Sector Housing Team	Tom Mountford
Development of an awareness/ training plan and associated materials for delivery to members in an all member briefing to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Context of the environment and legislation surrounding property standards enforcement- Overview of the tools and powers available to the PSH team and where each power would be considered- Role, responsibilities and expectations of private landlords including statutory compliance	30 th November 2022	Richard Osborne/ Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of context of cost of living crisis and potential considerations re. property standards i.e. damp/ mould from lack of heating & ventilation - General advice for tenants surrounding their roles, responsibilities and rights - Q & A's 			
<p>Development of information to private renters rights in a range of formats including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a leaflet to be disseminated around points of contact, partner agencies, public buildings outlining private renting tenants rights and responsibilities including useful points of contact - Review and improvement of Council website with useful information and links to support sites - Social media to promote tenants rights and responsibilities and useful tips - Article in City Life surrounding grant options, dealing with damp and mould, how to keep warm etc. 	30 th November 2022	Richard Osborne / Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
<p>Explore and progress opportunity to recruit an Energy Efficiency officer to undertake MEES enforcement work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify budget - Develop Role Profile and undertake recruitment 	Completed.	Richard Osborne	Tom Mountford
Recruitment of a dedicated MEES lead officer to the Private Sector Housing Team	31 st November 2022	Richard Osborne/ Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Delivery of training/ awareness session to members at all member briefing session	31 st December 2022 (date tbc)	Richard Osborne/ Ismene Broad/ Tom Mountford	Lloyd Griffiths
Internal staff training on MEES regulations and enforcement and set up / review standard procedures, templates and models.	30 th November 2022	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
<p>Exploration and feasibility assessment of confidential reporting system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing ability to report confidentially but limited ability to respond if anonymous - Consider alternatives means including 'report it' functionality on website 	30 th November 2022	Tom Mountford	Lloyd Griffiths
Review of data sources to ensure any HMO or empty properties and other errors are removed from the EPC register spreadsheet.	31 st December 2022	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Issue advice letters to landlords of F&G rated properties, those claiming exemption and all local agents	20 th December 2022	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford

Review of all claimed exemptions and issue of compliance notices where needed	31 st January 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Issue of Penalty notices to exemption cases where appropriate	31 st March 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Service of compliance notice for cases not meeting MEES requirements - Follow schedule of properties requiring intervention based on priority need at a rate of approximately 10 per month	From November 2022.	Richard Osborne/ Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Quarterly review of the national EPC register data to update data locally and check any claimed improvements	Quarterly from March 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Review of national tenancy deposit data to identify rented properties classed as other on the EPC register data and to identify rental properties that do not have an EPC.	January to March 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Target housing act 2004 action on rented properties not having an EPC likely to be F or G based on assessments. Use of whole team as capacity allows.	From April 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Review progress on the action plan, numbers being achieved and team capacity.	September 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford
Monitor number of compliance notices issued, number of financial penalties issued, number of properties improved	Ongoing from end of March 2023	Ismene Broad	Tom Mountford