

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Port Health and Environmental Services	22 September 2015
Subject: City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation 2015	Public
Report of: Director of Markets and Consumer Protection	For Decision
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a property occupied by 3 or more unrelated people in 2 or more households and is fully defined under sections 254 & 257 of the Housing Act 2004. The Act also gives the City of London powers to deal with poor living conditions in HMO's.</p> <p>HMO's often have poorer physical and management standards than other privately rented properties and due to their occupation have greater risks e.g. fire. Occupiers of HMO's tend to have the least ability to choose their housing and hence it is appropriate that the standards at least meet the legal minimum.</p> <p>The City of London Corporation sets out the minimum standards within the attached document that are applicable to all HMOs and refer to basic minimum standards for fire protection, room sizes, management and amenity provision.</p> <p>The standards assist landlords in complying with minimum legal standards, dependent on the number of people living in the property.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>I recommend that your Committee approves the proposal set out in paragraph 9 that the attached draft Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation undergo external consultation until 10th December 2015, subject to any comments received at your meeting and a further report will be presented to your 19th January 2016 meeting to approve the subsequent new conditions.</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. The Housing Act 2004 introduced a risk based assessment of dwellings for disrepair, fire safety and other health and safety risks in the home. Under this assessment the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) ensures all properties are judged individually based on risk.
2. This set of standards aims to give guidelines which need to be achieved to ensure properties are brought up to and maintained at an acceptable standard within the recommendations of the HHSRS guidance.
3. These standards are, therefore, intended to be flexible, to allow for the variation of risk between individual properties.
4. The City has five licensed HMO's:

Williams, 22-24 Artillery Lane, E1 7LS

New Moon 89-90 Gracechurch Street, EC3 0DN

Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, 145 Fleet Street EC4Y 8DT

The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, EC3V 3PD

Railway Tavern, 15 Liverpool Street, London, EC2M 7NX

Key Policies and Proposals

5. The overall aim of this guidance is to set out the minimum standards the City of London expects landlords of HMO's to meet. The standards assist landlords in complying with minimum legal standards, dependent on the number of people living in the property.
6. The purpose of the guidance is to ensure that a proportionate "entry level" standard of protection is provided to occupiers. In many cases it is anticipated that these standards will be exceeded.
7. The standards cover management, space, amenity, heating and sign post to the relevant fire safety standard.

Proposals

8. I propose that, subject to comments received at your meeting, the attached draft City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation is

published for external consultation until 10th December 2015. A further report will be presented to your 19th January 2016 meeting to approve the new set of standards.

Financial Implications

9. Inspection and enforcement work (if required) will be funded using existing resources from within the Port Health and Public Protection Service. Assistance by way of information provision will be required from the Department of the Built Environment (DBE) and London Fire Brigade.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

10. The work on HMO's sits within Strategic Aims of the Corporate Plan: 'To provide modern, efficient and high quality local services, including policing, within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors and the following Key Policy Priority 'KPP2 Improving the value for money of our services within the constraints of reduced resources'

Consultees

11. Consultation has been carried out internally (Department of the Built Environment, Department of Community and Children's Services, Town Clerks, Comptrollers) and the results of this have been considered and incorporated in this draft.
12. The strategy will undergo full external consultation e.g. City HMO landlords, letting agents and the London Fire Brigade, neighbouring boroughs until the 10th December 2015 and consultation comments will be incorporated into the final set of standards where appropriate.

Conclusion

13. The City Corporation has produced a set of Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation designed to protect tenant's safety and health and assist landlords and developers to design, improve and maintain HMOs to a reasonable standard. Subject to comments received at your meeting, the HMO standards will be published for public consultation until 10th December 2015.

Background Papers:

None.

Appendix:

The City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation.

Contact:

Rachel Sambells

0207 332 3313

Rachel.sambells@cityoflondon.gov.uk