

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Port Health and Environmental Services – For Decision	19 January 2016
Health and Wellbeing Board – For Information	29 January 2016
Subject: City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation 2016	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 HMOs.</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 HMOs 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 (Appendix 1) 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>The document, a draft of which was presented to your Committee in July 2015, has been consulted upon widely to ensure that recent developments in this area are taken into account, and the draft has been amended accordingly.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>I recommend that your Committee approves the proposal set out in paragraph 8 that the attached Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation (Appendix 1) be approved, subject to any comments received at your meeting.</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. The document in Appendix 1 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 HMOs:

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 HMOs 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.
8. Draft guidance was considered by your Committee in September 2015, and was subsequently circulated widely for consultation.

Proposals

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

Financial Implications

10. 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

11. 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

12. 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.
13. The strategy has undergone full external consultation e.g. City HMO landlords, letting agents, the London Fire Brigade and neighbouring boroughs; details can be found in Appendix 2. Consultation comments have been incorporated into the final set of standards. A peer review was carried out on the strategy in December 2015 and the document has been updated to reflect recent potential legislative changes from The Housing and Planning Bill, the new proposed HMO Regulations (due next October) and recent case law.

Conclusion

14. 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 City of London HMO Standards will be published.

Background Papers:

Report to Port Health and Environmental Service Committee, 22 September 2015, City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation 2015.

Appendix 1:

The City of London Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation

Appendix 2:

Consultees.

Contact:

Rachel Sambells

0207 332 3313

Rachel.sambells@cityoflondon.gov.uk