



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update by the Department of Communities (DfC) on the Review of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Scheme</b>
<b>Date:</b>	19 May 2021
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kevin Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager, Ext. 5910
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<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of the report is to hear from the Department for Communities (DfC) on the progress of the review into the HMO licensing scheme.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Members of the Committee are asked to hear from the DfC officials in attendance on their review of the HMO licensing scheme and recommended that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to note the content of the report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
3.1	The DfC wrote to Belfast City Council on 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2020 to indicate that it wished to seek views in relation to the review of The Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 which is the enabling legislation for the HMO licensing scheme. <b>(Appendix 1)</b>
3.2	On the 10 March 2021 the Licensing Committee agreed the Council's proposed response to the on-line questionnaire issued by DfC in respect of their review of the HMO licensing scheme. <b>(Appendix 2 and 3)</b>
3.3	The Committee further agreed an additional submission to the DfC to be considered as part of their review highlighting legislative anomalies and omissions with suggested amendments to improve the delivery and administration of the HMO licensing scheme. <b>(Appendix 4)</b>

<p>3.4</p> <p>3.6</p> <p>3.7</p>	<p>On the 21 April 2021 Committee Members were updated on the Department for Communities response to the Licensing Committee’s request to attend a meeting to discuss the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act and the Review of the HMO Licensing Scheme <b>(Appendix 5)</b></p> <p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None. The cost of assessing the application and officer inspections are provided for within existing budgets.</p> <p><b><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></b></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.</p>
	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> – DfC correspondence dated 22nd December 2020</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> – Licensing Committee paper dated 10 March 2021 titled – “Department for Communities On-Line Questionnaire as part of the Review of Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing Scheme” – Page 65 - 70</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> – Proposed response to DfC Review of HMO Licensing Scheme dated 11th March 2021</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> – List of suggested legislative amendments to the HMO Act (NI) 2016</p> <p><b>Appendix 5</b> – Response from DfC to invitation to attend Licensing Committee 21st April 2021</p>