


<b>Individual Mayoral Decision Proforma</b>  Decision Log No: <u>  157  </u>	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Corporate Director, Place	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Tower Hamlets Private Renters' Charter</b>	

<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Decision Notice Publication Date:</b>	N/A
<b>General Exception or Urgency Notice published?</b>	<b>Not required</b>
<b>Restrictions:</b>	N/A
<b>Reason for seeking an Individual Mayoral Decision:</b>	Cabinet meeting cancelled and it is necessary to take a decision now to allow any call-in process to be completed by the end of June 2017.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Around 40 per cent of all homes in Tower Hamlets are now rented from private landlords. Whilst most of those homes are good quality, too many private renters live in conditions that are unacceptably poor. The Council has committed to raising standards across the Tower Hamlets private rented sector, including by adopting a Tenants' Charter.

This report recommends that the Mayor in Cabinet adopts and commits to promote a Tower Hamlets Private Renters' Charter. The Charter proposed will raise standards across the Tower Hamlets private rented sector by increasing tenants' awareness of rights, bringing about a positive behaviour change in landlords, and producing a culture in the borough that unambiguously rejects substandard conditions. The Charter will reinforce this culture with unambiguous messaging about sanctions presented by a broad alliance of organisations.

The report further recommends a one-off allocation of additional funding from reserves to create two temporary additional posts in the Trading Standards and Environmental Health service for 2017/18. During a period in which additional duties and powers are already creating new demands, those additional resources would enable the service to reinforce the Charter's culture change with additional enforcement and to quantify the rise in demand for enforcement pending a Growth Bid for 2018/19.

Full details of the decision sought, including setting out the reasons for the recommendations and/or all the options put forward; other options considered; background information; the comments of the Chief Finance Officer; the concurrent report of the Head of Legal Services; implications for One Tower Hamlets; Risk Assessment; Background Documents; and other relevant matters are set out in the attached report.

## **DECISION**

The Mayor is Recommended to:

1. Formally adopt a Tower Hamlets Private Renters' Charter. The Charter will set out clearly both the minimum standards any private renter can expect in the borough, and also the steps that the Council and its community partners will take to help individual tenants enforce their rights where those standards are not met.
2. Work towards a wide range of advice agencies and renters' groups signing the Charter alongside landlord and agent professional trade associations. The Council will not ask individual landlords to sign.
3. Launch the Charter on 29 June 2017, and thereafter commit the Council to publicise the Charter actively and widely in order to bring about a change in landlords' behaviour through increased awareness of tenants' rights.
4. Agree a one-off allocation of funding from reserves to the Trading Standards and Environmental Health service for the 2017/18 financial year. This one-off allocation would allow the service to employ on temporary contracts one additional Trading Standards Officer and one additional Environmental Health Officer for the remainder of the year. The required part-year funding for 2017/18 is estimated at £75,000. This will give the service the capacity it needs to respond to increased demand raised not only by the Charter but by new duties and powers; and to quantify that rise in workload pending a Growth Bid for 2018/19.

**APPROVALS**

**1. (If applicable) Corporate Director proposing the decision or his/her deputy**

I approve the attached report and proposed decision above for submission to the Mayor.

Signed ..... *AZ Lukeyfe* ..... Date ... *20/08/17* .....

**2. Chief Finance Officer or his/her deputy**

I have been consulted on the content of the attached report which includes my comments.

Signed ..... *[Signature]* ..... Date *21/06/17* .....

**3. Monitoring Officer or his/her deputy**

I have been consulted on the content of the attached report which includes my comments.

(For Key Decision only – delete as applicable)

I confirm that this decision:-

- (a) has been published in advance on the Council's Forward Plan OR
- (b) is urgent and subject to the 'General Exception' or 'Special Urgency' provision at paragraph 18 or 19 respectively of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

Signed ..... *[Signature]* ..... Date *19/06/17* .....

**4. Mayor**

I agree the decision proposed in the recommendations above for the reasons set out in Part 3 of the attached report.

Signed ..... *[Signature]* ..... Date *21/6/17* .....

\* I expect to be consulted only on the proposed grant bid; its statutory basis and options for its generation.

