

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor George Davies
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Housing and Communities
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. GOOD QUALITY HOUSING

The Council has received Selective Licensing applications for 970 properties to date, 362 of which have been issued. A further 220 properties have been identified that are likely to be privately rented and formal letters will be sent out to these properties requiring them to submit Selective License applications within 14 days of the letter being received. A final reminder letter will be sent out to them, after which time prosecution files will be prepared. This formal action is likely to start in the New Year, but it is hoped a significant proportion of identified unlicensed privately rented properties will become licensed in the meantime.

Further work is continuing on the ground with the Healthy Homes Team, Fire Service, Livewell Teams and Energy Projects Plus working up joint door-knocking campaigns with the Selective Licensing Team in the 4 Selective Licensing Areas starting in December and likely to continue until next summer. Further unlicensed properties are likely to be identified as a result and support offered to vulnerable households in these areas focusing on home safety and wellbeing and fuel poverty.

As part of providing a greater level of support to residents and landlords within the Selective Licensing areas, following an OJEU tender process, Energy Projects Plus has been awarded a contract to deliver energy efficiency awareness and fuel poverty support. The same tender sought a scheme manager for Cosy Homes Solid Wall Insulation Grants for low income

households; Wessex Energy have been awarded this contract and grants will be in place by January 2016.

A successful bid was made to the Department of Communities and Local Government's Single Homeless Fund, by the Liverpool City Region Councils. We have worked together to commission a new support service, intended to assist the most vulnerable homeless people with multiple and complex needs in each Authority.

The tendering exercise was carried out by Liverpool City Council on behalf of the other LCR Councils at the end of the summer. The tenders were evaluated by officers from across the whole city region and the contract was awarded to The Whitechapel Centre; a Liverpool-based homeless service that will commence operations in Wirral in the next couple of months.

The main aim of the service is to identify and review the 6 most complex and entrenched homeless people within each authority area. It will ensure that their needs are met in a joined up and person-centered way. The service will work on the basis of a key worker making contact with each individual and endeavoring to engage with them through their journey from crisis, into care, treatment and support that meets their needs with the aim of ending the cycle of homelessness. The key worker will work in collaboration with existing homelessness service provider in Wirral. The LCR wide project will also enable the sharing and development of best practice in this area.