

**MINUTES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING FORUM HELD ON
11 October 2017**

PRESENT: The following members signed the attendance record for the meeting.

Sam Jackson	NLCE
R Southcombe	NLCE
Mike Reading	NLCE
Debbie Sharkey	NLCE
Michael Paphitis	NLCE
Kim Huxtable	NLCE
Susan White	None
Lisa Osborn	NSC
Sue Steel	NLCE
Jane Barron	NLCE
Andy Mackenzie	NLCE
Wendy White	NLCE
Neil Turner	NLCE
Richard Jones	Landlord
Carol Jones	Landlord
Leslie Green	NLCE
Ami Patel	NLCE
Drew Elkins	NLCE
Alison Garland	NLCE
Joe Heslop	YMCA
Matthew Thorne	NLCE
Sharon Laws	NLCE
A Dishkin	Landlord
C Woodbury	NLCE
S Yorkas	Landlord
Howard Evans	NSC
Chacquie Goldberg Elliot	Landlord
Margarita Tamosaityte	YMCA

CHAIR

Gerry Laws
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1. Apologies – Hannah Jones, Stuart Adams & Lisa Osborn apologised on behalf of Clair Weber following her move to Bristol City Council. Michaela Holloway to take over as secretary.
2. Minutes from previous meeting – deemed to be correct
3. Matters arising - none
4. **Presentation – Dave Edwards City Energy National Division Manager.**

City Energy may be able to assist landlord and tenants to access fully funded energy saving measures to help to improve EPC ratings and reduce energy bills. Dependent on the property and your eligibility you could qualify to get energy saving measures subject to eligibility through the Government backed incentives and grants. Not all properties will qualify for fully funded measures.

Q – Will you install exterior cladding?

A – Yes. However the works required are more extensive therefore we mainly install internal measure.

Q – Will solar panels increase the EPC band?

A - Yes it would increase the EPC by one band straight away, however it is recommended to apply the cheapest measure first to increase the EPC.

Q – Will you replace electric heaters with gas heating?

A – The energy saving measures will be like for like. Upgraded electric heating and electric boilers which are more efficient and can reduce energy bills by 30%.

5 **Howard Evans – EPC's and Legionella Risk Assessment.**

The new regulations for EPC's was released on 9 October 2017. As from the 1st April 2018 there will be a requirement for any properties rented out in the private rented sector to normally have a minimum energy performance rating of E on an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The regulations will come into force for new lets and renewals of tenancies with effect from 1st April 2018 and for all existing tenancies on 1st April 2020. It will be unlawful to rent a property which breaches the requirement for a minimum E rating, unless there is an applicable exemption.

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For most landlords this will mean that they will no longer be able to rent out a property with a rating of F or G after April 1st 2018. As such landlords with properties in this EPC bracket should begin preparing now for April 1st.

The enforcement of the minimum standards lies with the Local Authority who are currently working on Civil Penalties. Failure to comply with the new EPC regulations will result in a find imposed by the Local Authority.

Q – What is an example of an F and G rated property?

A – Properties which are single glazed, solid wall, no insulation and electric heating.

Q – What about properties in conservation areas? Will the council allow changes to planning to allow double glazed windows to be installed without consent?

A – Private Rented Housing Team to discuss with the Planning Department.

Legionella

Howard provided an extract from the Health and Safety Executive Website. It is the legal duty for landlords who provide residential accommodation to consider, assess and control the risks of exposure to Legionella. All water systems require an assessment of the risk which they can carry out themselves if they are competent, or employ somebody who is. Potential sources of Legionella could be mains fed sealed water storage, empty properties, water storage.

Q – When should a risk assessment review be carried out?

A – It should be completed at least annually by a competent person. Could be a landlord if they consider themselves completing in a risk assessment.

6 Lisa Osborn – Housing Conditions in the Private Rented Sector

Lisa has been involved in a project which has conducted a review of housing conditions in North Somerset. The project has been completed using sources such as the Census, housing complaints and licensing. The EPC register was also used for research which demonstrated half of the properties in disrepair did not have a valid EPC.

The comparison from 5 years previous shows an increase in the private rented sector. The review provides options on how to improve the housing stock, asks what are other Local Authorities are doing, what would work and what would be recommended.

We will be reviewing enforcement policies, poor management, breaches, noncompliance with notices and failure to licence. The consultation is currently taking place.

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**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 17 January 2018 at 18:30
in the Old Council Chamber.**

**Please go to ceremonial entrance (Walliscote Road) on arrival and a
member of staff will come and collect you.**

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