

Review of Coventry City Council's Additional HMO Licensing Scheme

Consultation Exercise and Communications and Engagement Plan

Purpose of this document

This document outlines the approach that would be taken to deliver the statutory review required of Coventry City Council's Additional HMO Licensing Scheme.

Background

Coventry City Council's current Additional HMO Licensing scheme (the scheme) expires on 4th May 2025, and the Council now needs to carry out an in-depth review of the scheme which will include a consultation exercise that will take place for three months from July of this year. This will seek feedback from stakeholders of the current scheme with a view to enabling a full options appraisal for the future of the scheme.

Aims and objectives

Raise awareness of the review of the current licensing arrangements. Engage with key stakeholders of the current scheme to record progress and assess options for the future.

Enable a full analysis of the scheme to date, capturing any improvements to property conditions and overall management and collect broad views from the various stakeholders involved.

Statutory requirement to consult on future direction once the current scheme comes to the end of its term.

Audiences

Primary audiences:

- * Private sector tenants, particularly those living in HMOs.
- * Private sector tenant groups and local support groups.
- * Landlords, particularly those that own smaller HMOs.
- * Managing agents.
- * Landlord associations.
- * Residents, particularly people living near smaller HMOs.
- * Students, particularly those living in smaller HMOs.
- * Councillors.

Secondary audiences:

- * Neighbouring local authorities.
- * Coventry City Council staff, particularly those working in housing and planning.
- * Police, fire & rescue, and probation services.
- * Voluntary, community and social enterprise groups, particularly those providing support services to tenants.

Approach

We will use a range of communication channels to target key stakeholders to be able to evaluate the current scheme and identify any issues. This will then form the basis of a full options appraisal which will be presented to Cabinet at a future meeting.

Activity	Description	Timing
Online questionnaire	A dedicated HMO Licensing Review page will be created on the council's online platform "Let's Talk" which will contain an online survey seeking feedback on the current licensing scheme.	July/August
Ward drop-in sessions	Drop-in sessions in each ward to provide people the opportunity to comment on the AHMO licensing review and ask questions of council officers before submitting responses.	12 weeks commencing in July Sessions 4:30pm - 6:30pm
Letters to tenants	Details of the consultation sent to tenants living in registered HMOs to gauge their level of satisfaction with current AHMO licensing scheme and get feedback on any shortcomings.	July 2023
Letters to landlords	Details of the consultation sent to landlords and managing agents currently operating licensed HMOs.	July 2023
Social media	Posts to council owned channels.	July/August
PR	Press release summarising consultation.	June 2023
Landlord newsletter	Landlord focused article for landlord newsletter.	June 2023
Councillor briefing	Members Briefing: Document outlining the review requesting feedback.	June/July 2023
Coventry & Warwick University	Student focus groups seeking their experience of living in HMO's	June 2023

Consultation design

Please note: This is an indicative design which only considers the main objectives of the scheme, whilst also collecting demographic data. The review will also seek feedback on the scheme's infrastructure, such as the fee structure and the application process.

HMO Licensing Questionnaire 2023

The Council would like to know what you think about the additional licensing scheme that was introduced in 2020 and the future proposals for the scheme.

What do we need to know?

We want your views about the licensing scheme for HMOs throughout the city.

Why are we asking you?

The council has a duty to carry out a review of any discretionary licensing scheme it has implemented to determine if it is achieving the aim of improving management standards. The scheme is now reaching its third year and as such this is an appropriate time to review it. The outcome of this review will help measure the effectiveness so far.

What will happen to the results?

The results will help us to make an informed decision about the future of the scheme and to make sure that your views are taken into account.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

Question 1 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 2 – Only complete if you live outside of Coventry

Question 3 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 4 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 5 – To be completed by anyone who is a landlord or an owner of HMOs in Coventry

Question 6 – To be completed by anyone who is a letting or managing agent of properties in Coventry

Question 7 – To be completed by anyone who is living or has lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past 5 years

Question 8 – To be completed by anyone who lives in Coventry

Question 9 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 10 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Question 11 – To be completed by all respondents as set out

Q1. Which postcode area of Coventry City Council do you live in?

- ☐ CV1 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV2 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV3 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV4 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV5 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV6 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ CV7 *(please proceed to Q3)*
- ☐ Outside the Coventry City Council postcode areas *(please answer Q2 then proceed to Q3)*

Q2. If you have indicated that you live outside the Coventry City Council postcode areas shown in Question 1 then please indicate which Local Authority area you live in?

- ☐ Warwick District Council
- ☐ Warwickshire County Council
- ☐ Birmingham City Council
- ☐ Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- ☐ Other outside Coventry – please indicate below

Q3. Are you aware that Coventry City Council introduced a licensing scheme for all HMOs in May 2020?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No comment

Q4. Please indicate below which category best describes you?

(Please tick only one)

- a. ☐ Homeowner living in Coventry
- b. ☐ Living with parents/ family in Coventry
- c. ☐ Living outside of Coventry
- d. ☐ A landlord or owner of HMOs / family rented property in Coventry
- e. ☐ A tenant who is currently living or has lived in a HMO in the past 5 years in Coventry
- f. ☐ A student who is currently living or has lived in a HMO in the past 5 years in Coventry
- g. ☐ A tenant in a rented property in Coventry that is not a HMO
- h. ☐ Letting or Managing agent responsible for properties in Coventry

- i. ☐ Other (*Please state below*)

Q5. If you have indicated that you are a landlord or an owner of HMOs in Coventry then please also answer Questions 5a.

NOTE: If you are not a landlord or an owner of a HMO in Coventry then please proceed to answer Question 6.

Q5a. How many HMOs do you own?

- ☐ 1-10
☐ 11-20
☐ 21-50
☐ 50+

Q6. If you have indicated that you are a letting or managing agent responsible for properties in Coventry then please also answer Questions 6a.

NOTE: If you are not a letting or managing agent responsible for HMOs in Coventry then please proceed to Question 7.

Q6a. How many HMOs do you let/manage?

- 1-10
11-20
20-50
50+

Q7. If you have indicated that you are living or have lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past five years then please indicate whether you have had personal experience of any of the following?

NOTE: If you are not living or have not lived in a HMO in Coventry in the past five years then please proceed to Question 8.

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Fear of reporting repairs for being evicted
- ☐ Notice to quit for no apparent reason
- ☐ Unreasonable rent increases
- ☐ Deposit issues
- ☐ Lack of contact with landlord/ agent
- ☐ Difficulties in getting repairs done
- ☐ Intimidation
- ☐ Harassment
- ☐ Problems associated with certificates
 - ☐ Gas
 - ☐ Electric
 - ☐ Fire
 - ☐ No HMO licence
 - ☐ All of the above
- ☐ Uncertainty about who to contact to report repairs

- ☐ Uncertainty about who to contact in an emergency

Q8. If you have indicated that you live in Coventry then please answer this question and then proceed to Question 9.

NOTE: If you do not live in Coventry then please proceed to Question 9.

Have you ever experienced any of the following problems with HMOs in the area of Coventry where you live?

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Poorly managed refuse/ untidy or overflowing bins/ excessive black sacks
- ☐ Empty unattended HMOs during term time/ height of summer
- ☐ Poor property condition
- ☐ Poor external appearance of properties
- ☐ Overgrown gardens
- ☐ Nuisance
- ☐ Anti-social behaviour
- ☐ Parking associated issues
- ☐ Other (please indicate)

**Q9. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(Please answer all parts)**

Additional licensing in Coventry has.....

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

9a) Ensured that privately rented HMO properties are better maintained and managed?

9b) Helped reduce anti-social behaviour?

9c) Helped to improve living conditions in HMOs across the city?

9d) Helped to improve the management of HMOs?

9e) Reduced the number of HMOs available to live in?

9f) Dealt with the problems associated with HMOs?

9g) Increased the number of HMOs in the surrounding areas of Coventry?

Q10. The Council is seeking views as to whether it should renew the Additional Licensing scheme in 2025, which again would include all HMOs within the city.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

(Please answer Q11)

(Please answer Q11)

Q11. If you have indicated that you strongly disagree or disagree with the proposal to renew the additional licensing of all HMOs in Question 10 above, then please indicate which of the following applies.

Please tick all that apply.

11a. The Scheme has been a success and is no longer needed

11b. HMOs in Coventry are managed better now than 5 years ago

11c. Longer licences are needed

11d. The fee for a licence should be reduced for compliant landlords

11d. The process is too bureaucratic and should be simplified

11e. The Council doesn't punish rogue landlords enough

Any other reasons? *(Please indicate below)*

