



## **HullSTARS Advisory Committee Meeting**

Meeting Agenda – 9<sup>TH</sup> May 2018, 10.30am

Meeting Room 3, University House, Student Central

### **Attending:**

*Toni Proctor HullSTARS (TP); Shelly Bennett - HullSTARS Administrator (SB); Ian Sanders - Hull City Council (IS); Kate Herring – Advice Centre (KH); Michael Rainsford – StuRents (via Skype) (MR); Jill Cooper – (University Accommodation Manager).*

### **Apologies:**

*Jennie Watts – (Vice President for Welfare & Community); Gina Rayment – (Advice Centre Manager); Mark Badham – (Humber Landlord Association); Christine Kirk (Hull Student Landlord Association).*

### **1. Ratification of minutes & Update on Actions**

Minutes from last meeting discussed and no issues outstanding.

### **2. HullSTARS consultation:**

TP explained that HullSTARS are in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of operating and are conducting a consultation process to establish what worked, what can be improved and ways of moving forward. The market has changed quite considerably within this time period. TP noted that she had asked for feedback from landlords in relation to the following questions:

- What works well at HullSTARS?
- What doesn't work so well at HullSTARS?
- What benefits would most entice you to join-re-join HullSTARS?
- Why do you think landlords wouldn't want to sign up to HullSTARS?
- Would you agree to signing up to a code of a conduct when registering your properties?

For this consultation to be successful, landlord feedback is essential. TP discussed that thus far there has only been one response and noted that given the lack of landlord presence at the meeting that she would chase it up following the meeting.

***ACTION*** – TP to collect further responses to inform decision making prior to the open meeting in July.

### **3. Pink Bag Scheme:**

Seven streets in Hull have been identified by Hull City Council and HullSTARS as having a high density of student properties and a problem with street waste, these were identified as:

- Haworth Street
- Beresford Avenue
- Wellesley Avenue
- Heathcote Street
- Grafton Street
- Lambert Street
- De Grey Street

The scheme has been set up to assist with the clear up at the end of the year, encouraging students to recycle, reuse or donate. The pink bags can be filled with whatever is left over if the black bin is full to capacity. The council, volunteers and HullSTARS staff have knocked on doors and distributed pink bags and leaflets about the scheme and additional bags can be collected from HUU.

Hull City Council will collect the pink bags from Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> May until Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 between 10am-2pm.

On Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018 we shall be knocking on doors with a team of volunteers to distribute pink bags.

HullSTARS shall be in the library on Tuesday, 22 May 2018 between 11am-2pm promoting the scheme. The previous library visit created a positive response from students.

TP explained that the campaign is extended to collecting non-perishable foods, clothing and shoes for Project Hotdog Hull Homeless Support, and donation boxes for the British Heart Foundation. There is also a washing line of bear clothes which will be auctioned off to raise money for Hotdog

#### **4. Letting Season Overview.**

**MR** discussed the Jan – March 2018 StuRents report of the Hull market and agreed to circulate the report following the meeting.

A trend which is seen nationally between the period of Jan – March increase in individual number of students looking for 1-bedroom properties as opposed to clusters of students looking. 1 in 10 students in November looked for single rooms compared with March where it saw 45.3% looking.

The most popular group size is currently 3 and the number of students looking for larger house sizes declined with each increasing bed space. The average price is currently £71 pppw, still significantly lower than the national average.





The application for St Andrews development was formally declined which has an impact on the data.

Group sizes are very important and focusing on the correct data from landlords is crucial. Availability should be updated and advertised correctly, for example a 5-bedroom property is advertised as 5 individual rooms to let which could be missed by students searching for 1 room if the property is incorrectly advertised as 5-bedroom house.

TP mentioned the success of the Housing Social which saw a large number of students looking for an additional person to fill a room having had someone drop out of their contract. TP gave MR feedback that not a lot of landlords had used the platform to update criteria and were unsure of how to do this.

MR asked that landlords advertise correctly to achieve the best results from the platform.

## **5. Legislation Change & Update**

IS explained that the council have received no further information regarding the legislation change in October 2018, no additional information regarding submitting application forms and fees. All applications for licenses will be made online going forward and the online system is nearly ready. IS explained that logging on to the system will save time once up and running and should retain data to save time on inputting multiple applications.

TP queries whether there would be an upload option for landlords to upload multiple properties at the same time via an excel document, this would allow them to start to prepare now. IS noted that he would check.

MR discussed linking the new system to StuRents to reduce work load and that it would be a helpful resource API (Application Programming Interface) however a technical conversation would need to happen to see if this would be possible. IS: Agreed this would be helpful.

IS confirmed that the council's fee structure will be on bedroom numbers not on the number of people.

JC expressed concern that the letting season is creeping closer and a lack of information is not helpful.

**ACTION:** IS to hold a landlords meeting to discuss the new legislation IS.

**ACTION:** TP to action and book a room before October 2018.

## **6. A.O.B**

ENFORCEMENT POLICY CHANGES

IS discussed how the cabinet report went in late April and that the council are changing their Enforcement Policy. House inspections will no longer be inspected informally, in the future an improvement notices will be issued and fee payable. One exception to this will be if the landlord is a member of the Councils accreditation scheme, this will then result in an informal inspection, however if work is not completed an improvement notice will be served and removal from the accreditation scheme.

Removal from accreditation scheme is under review as to permanent or time served, cooling off period etc.

The council will dictate the timescale for works to be carried out.

## HMO LICENSING

IS also noted that the council are actively searching for new HMOs and are using all necessary methods of gaining the information needed. IS wanted to make it clear that the council are calling up landlords to gather information in order to find those who are not declaring their properties subject to licensing and thus far it has proved very successful

**Action:** TP to include enforcement information in the next Landlords Newsletter.

## ARTICLE 4

The council are looking at the possibility of gaining an extension to Article 4 area to the south, covering the Spring Bank area, Hessle Road, The Boulevard etc. The Planning Department are driving this forward, working closely alongside IS and his team.

## RECRUITMENT

IS is currently interviewing for new positions within the department, an Enforcement Officer and for a 2-year project which is taking place. Five people will be working within the city to discuss waste issues within the BME populations. IS will also be targeting BME standards and working closely with the Police and Fire Brigade, as well as working together to combat illegal immigration and modern-day slavery.

### TABLE OF ACTIONS

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
Toni Proctor	Contact landlords to gain feedback as part of the consultation	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
Ian Sanders	To present changes in legislation to landlords.	ASAP
Toni Proctor	To book meeting room at HUU to facilitate meeting for landlords RE legislation changes.	ASAP
Toni Proctor	Include Enforcement Policy changes in Landlords Newsletter.	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2018

