

Rt Hon. James Brokenshire MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government.

15 March 2019

Dear Rt Hon. James Brokenshire MP,

Middlesbrough Council's Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel recently carried out an examination into Selective Landlord Licensing and assessing if the work undertaken was beneficial to the community.

The Panel's report demonstrates that the initiative is proving extremely beneficial to residents and businesses, with demonstrable improvements to quality of life and economic vibrancy. It is with this in mind that the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board are seeking further assistance.

Middlesbrough has been actively involved with Selective Landlord Licensing since its inception, seeking to engage local and regional partners. It is noted as a best practice partner and has contributed to important in research projects such as *A Licence to Rent*, with the Chartered Institute of Housing and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

Since 2016, Middlesbrough has operated Selective Landlord Licensing in North Ormesby, an area suffering deprivation across multiple indices. Given the rate of its decline, its vulnerability in terms of crime, social isolation, and the impact of welfare reform North Ormesby provided a particularly compelling picture of chronic need for a scheme like Selective Landlord Licensing. Given the apparent housing market failure, without continued intervention the decline could threaten the long-term stability of the area.

After implementing the scheme, successes have been seen in the reduction of anti-social Behaviour by 17%, an increase in house prices by 16% and an 18% reduction in empty properties. There have also been significant improvements in resident satisfaction with their area and the properties they rent. Such successes are only possible when Selective Landlord Licensing operates in conjunction with other partners, which can be resource intensive.

The success of the North Ormesby scheme has prompted the Council to roll the scheme out into another area, Newport, which is a comparably deprived area that is likely to see similar improvements.

Financially, the Council supports Selective Landlord Licensing using Licensing fees and absorbs any additional costs from existing budgets. While functional, this is also restrictive when seeking to widen the scheme's coverage to other areas.

In the hope that North Ormesby's success can be replicated across the town, the Council feels additional support and investment could act as "start-up" capital, allowing expansion to be self-sufficient in the long-term.

We hope you consider this matter closely and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Jean Sharrocks