
Private Rented Sector Strategy

Housing Scrutiny: 7 September 2026

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead Director: Sean Atterbury

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report authors: Rachel Hall, Head of Regulatory Services
- Author contact details: 0116 454 3040
- Report version number: v0.1

1. Purpose

1.1. This report presents the proposed Private Rented Sector (PRS) Strategy to Housing Scrutiny.

1.2. Members are invited to comment prior to the strategy being confirmed.

2. Background

2.1. The Private Rented Sector (PRS) Strategy 2026-2031 sets out Leicester City Council's strategic approach to improving standards, outcomes and access within the city's private rented housing sector. The strategy responds to the significant role of the PRS in Leicester, where approximately 40,000 properties are privately rented and the sector provides housing for many residents who are unable to access social housing or home ownership.

2.2. The strategy has been developed in the context of the Council's declared Housing Crisis, rising homelessness demand, increasing private rents and significant forthcoming changes arising from the Renters' Rights Act 2025. The Act introduces the most substantial reform of the sector in a generation, including the abolition of Section 21 "no fault" evictions, new duties on local authorities, strengthened tenant protections and enhanced enforcement powers.

2.3. The strategy aligns with key corporate priorities and related Council strategies, including the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, Climate Emergency Strategy, Local Plan and Community Safety Strategy. It recognises that the private rented sector has a direct impact on housing quality, homelessness prevention, public health, community safety, climate objectives and economic wellbeing.

2.4. Delivery is proposed through a coordinated programme of work led jointly across Housing, Regulatory Services, Planning and other Council services, supported by monitoring arrangements and annual reporting.

3. PRS Strategy document

3.1. The proposed PRS Strategy is attached at **Appendix A**.

3.2. The strategy's central objective is:
To improve housing standards in Leicester's private rented sector for the benefit of tenants, landlords and the wider community.

3.3. To achieve this, the strategy is structured around six strategic objectives as follows:

WS No.	Workstream Title
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1	Improving housing standards across the sector
1.1	Renters' Rights Act 2025: Preparation and implementation
1.2	Energy performance and Operation EPC
1.3	Supported Housing Regulations
2	Improving support available for private sector landlords
2.1	Financial support and Household Support Fund / Crisis Resilience Fund
2.2	Improving online resources for private sector landlords
2.3	Landlord Forum and engagement programme
2.4	Call Before You Serve
3	Improving support available for private sector tenants
3.1	Disabled Facilities Grants in the PRS
3.2	Sustainable leases and tenancy security
3.3	Public reporting portal for unlicensed properties
3.4	Better access to information and resources for tenants
4	Improving sector enforcement and protection of tenants' rights
4.1	Selective licensing and enforcement
4.2	Criminal Landlord Taskforce
4.3	HMO Licensing and Taskforce
4.4	Additional licensing scheme
5	Improving access to market to resolve housing need
5.1	Expanding leasing and incentive schemes
5.2	Impact of local government reorganisation
6	Improving joined-up services, intelligence and monitoring
6.1	PRS programme management (PReSS Programme)
6.2	Updating data sources and PRS intelligence

- 3.4. The strategy seeks to balance support for compliant landlords with robust action against poor-quality and non-compliant accommodation.
- 3.5. The strategy is intended to deliver benefits for both landlords and tenants through a balanced approach of support, engagement and proportionate enforcement. Landlords will benefit from improved access to advice, training, forums and online resources, helping them understand and meet their legal obligations, navigate changes arising from the Renters' Rights Act and sustain successful tenancies. Tenants will benefit from improved housing standards, stronger protection of their rights, greater access to information and support services, enhanced tenancy security and improved homelessness prevention measures. Collectively, these actions are expected to contribute to safer, better quality homes and a more sustainable and effective private rented sector across Leicester.

4. Governance

- 4.1. Section 15 of the strategy document refers to governance and programme management.
- 4.2. Delivery of the strategy will be overseen through the Private Rented Sector Strategy (PReSS) Programme Board, providing strategic oversight of all PRS-related activity across the Council. The Board will meet quarterly and bring together key services including Housing, Regulatory

Services, Planning, Community Safety and other relevant functions to monitor performance, manage risks, coordinate delivery of workstreams and oversee annual reporting to Members and Scrutiny.

- 4.3. Progress will be tracked through a programme dashboard and a suite of performance indicators to ensure accountability and effective delivery of the strategy's objectives.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial Implications

Implementation of the strategy is intended to be delivered through a combination of existing budgets, fee-funded activity and external grant funding where available. Any developments throughout the roll-out process which result in the need for additional expenditure, staffing requirements or financial commitments will require separate consideration.

The Council will need to monitor whether Government new burdens funding is sufficient to meet ongoing statutory responsibilities arising from the Renters' Rights Act. Similarly, whilst the intention is for the additional licensing scheme to be self-financing (through the license fee income it would generate) this will need to be monitored.

If successful, the strategy will assist in the avoidance of temporary accommodation costs for the authority.

Signed: Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

Dated: 19th August 2025

5.2 Legal Implications

Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 places a duty on a local Housing Authority to keep housing conditions under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them under the provisions set out in section 3(2) of the Housing Act 2004. These powers apply across all housing including the private rented sector. The PRS strategy complies with the requirements of this and other linked legislation. Officers should ensure that the strategy compliments other housing strategies and needs assessment and particular attention should be given to any Directions issued by the Secretary of State.

Signed: John Moss, Senior Solicitor

Dated: 20 August 2026

5.3 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have statutory duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, decision makers must pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Since the passing of the Equality Act 2010 landlords and letting agents in the UK have been legally prohibited from discriminating against potential tenants based on the protected characteristics under the Act, this includes refusing to rent or treating someone unfairly. Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment,

marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report presents the Private Rented Sector Strategy 2026-2031 and sets out Leicester City Council's strategic approach to improving standards, outcomes and access within the city's private rented housing sector.

The Private Rented Sector Strategy is expected to have an overall positive equality impact. Improving housing standards, tenancy security, access to advice, energy efficiency, Disabled Facilities Grants, licensing and enforcement should particularly benefit residents who are more likely to experience poor housing, homelessness, overcrowding, discrimination or difficulty accessing suitable accommodation. This will include people from across many protected characteristics. The PRS strategy has six identified priorities with workstreams for each priority which take into consideration upcoming legislative changes. The Renters Right Act will make significant changes in the private rental sector and gives private rented tenants greater protections. It is recommended that Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out as appropriate.

Signed: Surinder Singh, Equalities Officer

Dated: 20 August 2026

5.4 Climate Change Implications

As set out in section 17.4, page 45 of Appendix A: Private Rental Sector Strategy Document:

Housing is responsible for a third of Leicester's overall carbon emissions, with PRS housing frequently the worst-performing tenure in terms of energy efficiency and carbon output. This strategy includes dedicated workstreams (particularly Workstream 1.2 — Operation EPC) that directly address the Council's Climate Emergency objectives through improving the energy performance of PRS properties.

Other workstreams also contribute indirectly to the Council's net zero ambitions: improved housing conditions reduce the need for energy-intensive temporary accommodation; better engagement with landlords on retrofit opportunities signposts available funding; and the forthcoming mandatory EPC C standard for the PRS (anticipated by 2030) will drive significant investment in insulation and low-carbon heating.

Signed: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency)

Dated: 20 August 2026

5.5 Other implications

N/A

6. Background information and other papers:

Housing Scrutiny 10 July 2025

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A – PRS Strategy

8. **Is this a private report** (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

N/A

9. **Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No