

Motion 2: Strengthening Standards and Transparency for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)- REFORM UK AMENDMENT

To be Moved by Councillor Lewis Quigg

To be Seconded by Councillor Mark Wilkinson

At its meeting of 16th July 2025, this Council resolved to implement an Article 4 Direction in relation to small HMOs, this Direction will come into effect on 1st January 2026, meaning planning applications must be made to convert a dwelling-house (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4).

The Housing Act 2004 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2018 define an HMO and set out the framework of Licensing responsibilities that sit with local authorities.

This motion is the next step in raising standards for HMOs in the Borough of Oldham, sending a clear message to residents and landlords that we take our duties and responsibilities seriously, and that we want the highest standards permitted by legislation.

This Council notes:

The persistent concerns raised by residents regarding substandard living conditions, overcrowding, fire safety risks, and poor management practices in some HMOs. That while statutory standards exist under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), enforcement and transparency vary significantly across local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

1. To review and strengthen local HMO Standards by:
 - a. Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.
 - b. Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.
 - c. Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.
2. To Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints by:
 - a. Developing a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
 - b. Publishing quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
3. To Enhance Resident Engagement and Support, by launching a public awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.
4. That this Council and all relevant departments will take all necessary legal measures necessary against 'rogue' landlords who make residents lives a misery and aim to name and shame those who fail to comply with the highest possible standards.
5. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's legal department, will seek all necessary legal instruments and/or injunction/s and or any legal measures

as necessary to prevent the use of HMO's for migrant accommodation in the Borough of Oldham.