

Update to Towns and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee concerning adoption of Article 4 Direction on HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation)

On 13 May 2015 Cabinet noted a report following a 25 March Council Motion about the introduction of an Article 4 Direction on HMOs (Housings in Multiple Occupation). Introducing an Article 4 Direction would mean that those new HMOs falling within a category of change of use which currently do not need planning permission would need approval through a planning application once an Article 4 is in force.

The report explained that two Article 4s were anticipated, one geographically specific and the other to address possible displacement of HMOs into other parts of the Borough. The aim was to strike an appropriate balance recognising the continuing contribution that HMOs make as part of the housing mix but sufficient controlled so that their day to day operation would have no materially harmful impact on the community including the living conditions of neighbouring properties.

Delegated powers existed for the Head of Regulatory Services to make Article 4 Directions and it was agreed he would consult with the Leader and Lead Member for Regulatory Services & Community Safety when deciding to which wards the two respective Article 4 Directions should apply on the basis of evidence produced from a data profiling exercise.

Update

The Article 4 Directions as described above were made on a geographically specific basis, one for Brooklands, Gooshays, Heaton and Romford Town ward where change of use of all types of dwellings to a HMO would require planning permission and the other direction for the remainder of the Borough where change of use of all dwellings except detached houses to HMO would need planning permission. The Directions were made on 13th July 2015 and came into force 12 months after that Notice of Direction. Publicity and consultation was carried out as part of the exercise.

The Article 4 Directions came into force on 13 July 2016. The effect of the Directions will be monitored in terms of enforcement activity and housing supply in the Borough. Planning applications submitted as the result of the Article 4 Direction will be assessed against current planning policies in the London Plan and Havering Local Development Framework. The results of any planning appeals will also be monitored. As part of the local plan preparation, a revised policy for HMO's will be formulated and consulted upon.