

REPORT TO: Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9th March 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health

PORTFOLIO: Housing and Environmental Sustainability

SUBJECT: The Renters Rights Act 2025 – Update on implementation.

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025

2.0 **RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On the 16th September 2025 the board received a report providing an update on Housing Standards matters. This report included a summary of new measures proposed by the Government in the Renters Rights Bill.

3.2 The Bill contained a number of measures to improve the rights of tenants and the condition of properties within the private rented sector.

3.3 On the 27th October 2025 the bill received Royal Assent and became the Renters Rights Act 2025

3.5 The government have now published a timetable for implementation of the substantive measures within the Act. These measures will be implemented in 3 Phases commencing in May 2026 and are set out in section 4 below.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 **Phase 1** The following provisions relating to improved rights and security for tenants will come into force from 1st May 2026

4.2 **Abolish Section 21 “no fault” evictions.**

Landlords will no longer be able to evict tenants without a reason. Landlords will only be able to seek possession of property for a valid reason. E.g. significant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour. Landlords must follow a set legal process to secure possession.

- 4.3 **Introduce assured periodic tenancies.**
Tenancies in the private rental sector will no longer be subject to minimum terms. This means a tenant will be able to stay in the property as long they want or until a landlord follows the legal possession process for a valid reason.
- 4.4 **Limit rent increases to once per year.**
Landlords will only be able to increase rent once per year and must follow a set legal process providing at least 2 months notice. Rent increases must be in line with market rates. A tenant will be able to challenge any increase that is above market rate.
- 4.5 **Ban rental bidding and rent in advance.**
Landlords and agents will not be able to request more than one month rent in advance and will not be able to encourage rental bidding by requesting or accepting offers in excess of the advertised market rent.
- 4.6 **Ban discriminatory letting practices.**
Landlord and letting agents will not be able to do anything that might discriminate against potential tenants for example because they have children or receive benefits.
- 4.7 **New Enforcement Powers.**
Councils have been provided with new and enhanced powers to investigate offences and enforce the provisions. These new powers came into force on 27th December 2025 and will complement existing powers to prevent harassment and illegal eviction. Enforcement of the provisions will be carried by the councils Environmental Health department who will continue to work closely with the councils Housing Solutions Team who work with landlords and tenants to provide tenancy support and prevent homelessness.
- 4.8 **Phase 2 from late 2026**
Phase 2 will be introduced in 2 stages beginning in late 2026.
- 4.9 **Phase 2 Stage 1 –Database of Private Sector Landlords**
In late 2026 the government will begin the roll out of a database to Private sector landlords and local Councils. It will be mandatory for all landlords to register on the database, and a fee will be charged. It will be illegal for a landlord to rent a property if both the property and landlord are not registered on the database. Councils will have access to the database which will provide greater insight and transparency into the private rental property market in the area. Information on the database will include:
- Landlord contact details.
 - Full details of property including property type, number of rooms, number of tenants
 - Safety Information such as Gas, Electrical and Energy certification.

4.10 **Phase 2 Stage 2 – Late 2026 to 2028 - Private Sector Landlord Ombudsman**

The government will create a Private Sector Landlord Ombudsman to consider and resolve disputes between landlords and tenants. The secretary of state will first choose a scheme administrator. Once the scheme is established all landlords will be required to become members. The Government have stated they expect the scheme to be open in 2028.

4.11 **Phase 3 – Implementing a Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector.**

These proposals are anticipated much further into the future and in some cases, implementation remains subject to consultation. New minimum Energy Efficiency standards for Private rental property are not anticipated until 2030 and a new decent home standards for the Private Rental Sector is not anticipated until 2035 or 2037.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The council has received a small new burdens payment of £30k for 25/26 to support enforcement of the renters rights bill. A further payment is expected for 26/27. It is difficult to predict the current demand for enforcement activity. The one-off in year funds received so far are insufficient to fund a further post and so enforcement activity and work with landlords and tenants will need to be undertaken within existing resources. It is currently unclear if councils will receive any fees associated with landlords registering on the new landlord database.

5.2 The new and existing enforcement powers provide for the service of Civil Penalty notices. There is no minimum penalty but a maximum of £40,000 is set for more serious and persistent offending. Civil penalty notices are an alternative to prosecution. Local council's will be able to retain civil penalty notice fees which can be used to fund housing services including enforcement. However, at this stage it is not possible to predict compliance rates and therefore the potential income from penalty notices. Any income will also be dependent on payment or civil recovery. Therefore, the income from civil penalties is uncertain and at this stage does not form a reliable basis to fund additional staffing resources.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The new renters' rights bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, are intended to provide safe healthy and sustainable homes to ensure residents can live independently for longer in their own home.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The provisions of the renters' right bill aim at addressing problems with

the current private sector letting market. Addressing these issues through tenancy and rental reforms will ensure tenants and responsible landlords are protected from the activities of irresponsible and unfair letting practices.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The new renters' rights bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, are intended to provide safe healthy and sustainable family homes.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The renters rights' bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, will ensure those who are unable to buy their own property, or secure a housing association home, will be provided with the same protections as social landlord tenants. Tenants in the private sector will benefit from more secure tenure and will be protected from unfair and discriminatory rental practices.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

Provisions within the renters rights bill and the housing strategy are aimed at improving the environmental sustainability of homes through improved energy efficiency. The government is currently consulting on increasing the minimum energy efficiency standard for private rental properties to Band C by 2030.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

Providing more secure tenancies, and improved property standards, will enable tenants to remain within their established communities near family, schools and their place of work, and avoid the upheaval caused by short term tenancy agreements and no-fault evictions.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 It is not possible to fully assess the risk from these measures. The likely demand for interventions is unknown, and the current funding provided by Government is insufficient to fund further posts. Therefore, the Council's response to the new provisions will need to be funded through existing resources.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The provisions in the renters' rights bill are intended to address discriminatory rental practices and ensure that tenants in the private rental sector are provided with the same rights and protections as tenants in the social rented sector.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The future Improvements to energy efficiency of homes to reduce fossil fuel consumption will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.