



## INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING	5 <sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019	10
<b>EMPTY RESIDENTIAL HOMES POSITION STATEMENT</b>			

### PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

Previous reports have been presented to members about the numbers of, particularly, long term empty residential properties. The most recent report was in November 2018 to the Environment, Health and Housing Committee. In recent years a number of changes have been made to the council tax scheme in relation to empty residential property and members have asked for regular updates to monitor the effect of those changes. This is the latest report to advise members of the effects of the changes.

### SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Council Tax updates

### LINK TO INFORMATION

Included in this report

### WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

The information is being given to members due to a request to do so from previous Policy Development Scrutiny Committees, and Environment Health and Housing Committee in November 2018.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Kirstine Riding, 01253 658569

## EMPTY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES POSITION STATEMENT

5<sup>TH</sup> November 2018

This is the background information to accompany the information item presented to members of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee at this meeting on the 5th November 2019.

Members have received previous reports to the former policy development scrutiny committees and Environment, Health and Housing Committees to update the position on the numbers of long term (greater than 6 months) empty residential properties in the borough. The term 'long term empty' has referred to properties that have been empty for 6 months or more. It now includes, for council tax purposes, a second type of empty property that has been empty for 2 years or more. This information has taken account of policy changes that have been introduced for long term empty properties.

The most recent change to council tax for long term empty property was introduced in April 2014. This change introduced a council tax premium to be levied on properties that had remained empty for 2 years or more. The premium is an additional 50% of the council tax charge such that 150% of the council tax for the property becomes payable. The additional premium complements other council tax measures that require 100% of the council tax to be paid for months 6-24 of being empty.

At the meeting of the former policy development scrutiny committee of November 2013 members resolved that additional actions to deal with empty properties could only be taken within existing resources and actions the housing service can take are limited to complaints received from members of the public. In the financial year 2018-19 there were no such complaints reported to Housing Services in relation to empty properties.

Date	Long term empty	2 years+ empty
Oct 13	688	N/A
Oct 14	611	126
Oct 15	612	122
Oct 16	604	93
Oct 17	584	125
Oct 18	634	123
Oct 19	650	110

Long term empties since October 2018 have increased by 16, however there has been a decline in the number of longer term empties from 123 in October 2018 to 110 in 2019.

The Private Sector Enforcement Policy adopted in January 2019, makes a commitment, subject to available resources, to work with owners of empty homes to bring them back into use. Over the past 12 months the Housing Service have not received any complaints in relation to empty homes in the borough. Environmental Health Department report receiving 4 enquiries, mainly around over grown gardens.

The Adopted Local Plan for Fylde to 2032 note in paragraph 9.59:

“the Council will identify and bring back into use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies and, where appropriate, acquire properties under compulsory purchase powers”

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager