

## Administration Motion 1 – Battling Oldham’s Housing Crisis -AMENDMENT

Moved by Cllr Dave Arnott

Seconded by Cllr Lewis Quigg

Too many Oldhamers are struggling to afford to keep a roof over their head. Too many Oldhamers live in substandard or overcrowded housing.

There are currently over seven-and-a-half-thousand families on Oldham’s Social Housing Register, with almost eleven thousand applications still being processed. Many of these families have been fruitlessly bidding on properties to no avail through no fault of their own.

The failure of the housing market is driving some Oldham families to crisis. There are currently 470 households in Temporary Accommodation (TA), the longest being in TA for over 3 years, as they require a 5-bedroom property, and the supply simply does not meet the demand. This number has doubled since the same month in 2021 when it stood at 233 Households.

In addition, the Local Housing Allowance rates have not been properly reviewed since 2011, despite recent Labour analysis showing that private sector rents have risen by £168 a month in the last two years alone. Therefore, the very safety net that is intended to ensure people can afford decent housing is failing them.

This Council notes:

- That Oldham is in a Housing Crisis.
- Oldham Council has an ambitious Housing Strategy, but we are struggling to cope with the sheer volume of demand.
- That poor quality, insecure and expensive housing can often lead to families in Oldham falling into avoidable crises.
- ~~The Conservative Government’s failure on housing over the last 13 years, with homelessness continuing to rise and home ownership falling.~~
- ~~Comparatively, under the last Labour Government, 2 million homes were built, 1 million more households became homeowners and there was the largest social housing investment in a generation.~~ According to Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government statistics, from 1997/98 to 2009/10, so the last Labour government, just over 1.8 million homes were built. For the same period but for 2010/11 to 2022/23 over 1.8 million homes were built under the Coalition and the Conservative government.
- Only 2920 Council homes were built under Labour from 1997 to 2010 and 21,780 Council homes under the Conservatives from 2010 to 2023 (so far), so seven times more than under the last Labour government.
- Only 247,840 housing association homes were built under the last Labour government and over 351,520 housing association homes were built under the Coalition and the Conservatives since 2010 to 2023, that is 103,680 more homes built that under Labour.

This Council further notes

- The cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated this situation, meaning that more Oldhamers are now struggling to afford housing costs (both rental and buying).
- Under this Government, the number of new social rented homes has fallen by over 80%. Consequently, there are now more than 30,000 fewer social rented homes built each year.
- The Council has a moral obligation to ensure Oldhamers do not live in substandard housing. We are committed to working with our partners in the social housing sector and, where possible, private landlords to ensure Oldhamers have decent homes to live in.

This Council resolves:

- To instruct the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) & the Assistant Chief Executive to bring together key partners in Oldham's housing sector – social housing, private rented and owner-occupiers, stakeholders from the Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise sector, and relevant Council Officers and Cabinet Members at Oldham's Housing Summit at the earliest opportunity.
- To recommit to our Housing Strategy and affirm our ambition that every Oldhamer should live in decent and affordable homes.
- To write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities seeking far-reaching action to tackle the housing crisis.
- To write to the Leader of HM Official Opposition, Sir Keir Starmer, condemning his recent comments on Radio 4 on (11.10.23) in which he was asked if he would bulldoze through local opposition to new housing, Sir Keir said: "Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying." And his further comments that he wants to take away powers and decision making away from local people and to centralise decisions saying, "We need to ensure the planning goes up a level so it is not so localised." Making clear that these comments are anti-democratic and ignorant to the genuine concerns of local people in Oldham.
- That this Council will commit to building on brownfield sites first and build the homes the people of Oldham need and deserve.
- Protect our green belt for future generations and do all it can to involve local people in the planning process.
- Support Council and social tenants with the right to buy scheme to increase homeownership.
- Welcome the second phase of the Brownfield Land Release Fund, which saw £3,151,226 of funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to build on brownfield sites in Oldham. Noting that Oldham Council got the third largest sum out of sixty other local authorities.
- To support Neighbourhood Plans in Oldham and respect the decision of local people.
- Write to the Mayor of Greater Manchester to put his 'Places for Everyone Plan' to a Greater Manchester wide referendum.

This Council further resolves to call on the Government to:

- End rough sleeping within a Parliament and tackle the root causes of homelessness, including insufficient Local Housing Allowance Rates.
- Finally implement the promised ban on Section 21 'No Fault' Evictions to give private rented tenants the security they need.
- Back first-time buyers on ordinary incomes with discounted homes and give priority to local people on new homes built in their area.

- Control the borders of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and reduce Immigration levels to reduce the pressures on housing supply and other public services.
- Support the government's decision to remove mandatory housing targets.
- Write to the government asking them to make permanent the Stamp Duty Land Tax (Reduction) (SDLT), especially for first-time buyers.

**SHOULD READ ONCE AMENDED**

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- Control the borders of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and reduce Immigration levels to reduce the pressures on housing supply and other public services.
- Support the government's decision to remove mandatory housing targets.
- Write to the government asking them to make permanent the Stamp Duty Land Tax (Reduction) (SDLT), keeping it at £250,000 for homeowners and for first-time buyers on home purchases up to £425,000.

