

## **Full Council 01/11/2023 – Notice of Opposition Business**

### **Liberal Democrat Group Motion: A fair deal for private renters**

Proposed by: councillor Garth Harkness

Seconded by: councillor Howard Sykes MBE

#### **This Council notes:**

- The number of private renters in Oldham has grown significantly over the last decade
- There are more than 4.4 million UK residents who live in a private rented home
- In England, 1 in 8 private rented homes have at least one severe hazard, and 4% of private rented homes have an energy efficiency rating of F or G, meaning they are also illegal to rent out.
- The end of a private sector tenancy is one of the leading causes of homelessness.
- Black and minority ethnic households are more likely to experience poor housing outcomes including homelessness.
- Oldham Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that no private rented tenant is living in substandard accommodation

#### **This Council believes:**

- Private renters should not have to live in homes that are damp, in a poor state of repair, overcrowded or unaffordable
- That data and communication resources at the Council's disposal can be better used to engage with private renters
- More frequent events, such as the Landlord Forum held in November 2019, would offer an opportunity for all landlords operating in Oldham to meet and discuss the issues that affect them and their tenants
- That too little is known about people who face homelessness, whether they are evicted or are forced to leave their family or friends' home, and this impedes efforts to prevent homelessness
- The Government should bring forward the legislation it pledged in December 2019 immediately so that tenants can no longer be evicted without a reason

#### **This Council resolves to protect private renters by:**

- Serving improvement notices on homes with severe hazards to invalidate Section 21 notices and enable Rent Repayment Orders if the landlord fails to comply
- Serving improvement notices for excess cold in homes that fail Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

- Helping private renters claim back rent through rent repayment orders when they are eligible to do so
- Enforcing the ban on letting agent fees by issuing fines to criminal letting agents
- Taking action on overcrowded homes through licensing, increased inspections and a strategy for increasing the supply of homes for families and single adults
- Committing not to use landlord licensing to enforce immigration law
- Working more closely with the local police force to protect private renters from illegal evictions and appoint one person accountable for enforcing the Protection from Eviction Act
- Publishing the breakdown of homelessness cases arising from the private rented sector by ethnicity
- Recording and publish the tenure breakdown of homelessness cases, in particular those arising from family/friends being unable to house someone
- Joining with Generation Rent, the national voice of private renters, in campaigning for the legislative change private renters need to live in safe, secure and affordable homes.
- Supporting Generation Rent's campaign for a National Register of Landlords
- Making sure the Council website has useful advice and information for private renters that is easy to find; makes it easier for private renters to understand how the council can help enforce their rights, sets reasonable expectations; and allows for checking if a privately rented home has a landlord licence
- Using Landlord Licensing, Council Tax, Energy Performance Certificate & Tenancy Deposit data to identify private rented homes to communicate directly with private renters

### **Amendments – Proposed by Cllr E Taylor, Seconded by Cllr J Charters**

After “The end of a private sector tenancy is one of the leading causes of homelessness.”

Insert “The Conservative Government has once again delayed a long promised ban on Section 21 evictions, despite cross party support up and down the country.”

After: “Oldham Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that no private rented tenant is living in substandard accommodation”

Insert: “Oldham Council are implementing a new IT system which will ensure that data is more readily available to officers for data analysis to inform policy making decisions.”

Delete “Publishing the breakdown of homelessness cases arising from the private rented sector by ethnicity

Recording and publish the tenure breakdown of homelessness cases, in particular those arising from family/friends being unable to house someone”

Insert: “Utilise data available to the council to breakdown homelessness cases arising from the private rented sector, and use this to help inform policy making in the future.”

After “Joining with Generation Rent the national voice of private renters,” insert “and the Labour Party,”

After “Supporting Generation Rent’s campaign for a National Register of Landlords”

Insert “Support the plans of the next Labour Government to introduce a renters’ charter that will abolish ‘no fault’ Section 21 evictions, introduce a legally binding Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector, ban landlords from refusing to rent to those in receipt of benefits or with children, provide for longer notice periods, introduce a national landlord register and introduce a right to have pets.”

Delete: “Using Landlord Licensing, Council Tax, Energy Performance Certificate & Tenancy Deposit data to identify private rented homes to communicate directly with private renters”

Insert “Use all the available tools at the council’s disposal to engage with private renters, including the amazing work being done by the Doorstep Engagement Team”

### **Amended Motion to Read**

#### **This Council notes:**

- The number of private renters in Oldham has grown significantly over the last decade
- There are more than 4.4 million UK residents who live in a private rented home
- In England, 1 in 8 private rented homes have at least one severe hazard, and 4% of private rented homes have an energy efficiency rating of F or G, meaning they are also illegal to rent out.
- The end of a private sector tenancy is one of the leading causes of homelessness.
- The Conservative Government has once again delayed a long promised ban on Section 21 evictions, despite cross party support up and down the country.
- Black and minority ethnic households are more likely to experience poor housing outcomes including homelessness.
- Oldham Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that no private rented tenant is living in substandard accommodation
- Oldham Council are implementing a new IT system which will ensure that data is more readily available to officers for data analysis to inform policy making decisions.

#### **This Council believes:**

- Private renters should not have to live in homes that are damp, in a poor state of repair, overcrowded or unaffordable
- That data and communication resources at the Council’s disposal can be better used to engage with private renters

- More frequent events, such as the Landlord Forum held in November 2019, would offer an opportunity for all landlords operating in Oldham to meet and discuss the issues that affect them and their tenants
- That too little is known about people who face homelessness, whether they are evicted or are forced to leave their family or friends' home, and this impedes efforts to prevent homelessness
- The Government should bring forward the legislation it pledged in December 2019 immediately so that tenants can no longer be evicted without a reason

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- Taking action on overcrowded homes through licensing, increased inspections and a strategy for increasing the supply of homes for families and single adults
- Committing not to use landlord licensing to enforce immigration law
- Working more closely with the local police force to protect private renters from illegal evictions and appoint one person accountable for enforcing the Protection from Eviction Act
- Utilise data available to the council to breakdown homelessness cases arising from the private rented sector, and publishing this alongside other relevant data including ethnicity, reasons for homelessness and areas, to help inform policy making in the future
- Joining with Generation Rent, the national voice of private renters, and the Labour Party, in campaigning for the legislative change private renters need to live in safe, secure and affordable homes.
- Supporting Generation Rent's campaign for a National Register of Landlords
- Support the plans of the next Labour Government to introduce a renters' charter that will abolish 'no fault' Section 21 evictions, introduce a legally binding Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector, ban landlords from refusing to rent to those in receipt of benefits or with children, provide for longer notice periods, introduce a national landlord register and introduce a right to have pets.
- Making sure the Council website has useful advice and information for private renters that is easy to find; makes it easier for private renters to understand how the council can help enforce their rights, sets reasonable expectations; and allows for checking if a privately rented home has a landlord licence

- Use all the available tools at the council's disposal to engage with private renters, including the amazing work being done by the Doorstep Engagement Team