

Draft Motions and Question for 13 December Council

Motions

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This Council notes:

- According to Shelter, over 1 million households are waiting for social homes. Last year, 29,000 social homes were sold or demolished, and less than 7,000 were built.
- More people than ever are struggling to afford a secure place to live. Yet, not enough social homes are being built. However in the 2021-22 financial year, only 149 new units were provided within the Bradford District.
- There are approximately 31,500 socially rented housing in Bradford - the vast majority of it is run by private housing associations like Incommunities, Yorkshire Housing and Clarion.
- Through Housing Options, housing is allocated to many people based on need:
 - Band 1 - Urgent Need these include households who are owed homeless duty and those whose housing needs arise from other council service priorities / duties.
 - Band 2 – High Need - households in unsuitable housing requiring urgent re-housing
 - Band 3 – Medium Need - households in unsuitable housing but with less serious need than those in Band 2 and households with a band 1 or 2 need but with no local connection to the District.
- The average waiting time for these bands is significant - especially when considering their need. As of November there are:
 - 1191 households on the Band 1 waiting list with an average wait time of 256 days.
 - 2723 households on the Band 2 waiting list with an average wait time of 334 days.
 - 6013 households on the Band 3 waiting list with an average wait time of 223 days.

- The financial pressures on local authorities like Bradford, driven largely by twelve years of ideologically driven austerity policies has meant that we are less able to tackle these problems on our own.

This Council also notes that:

- Taking into account the 'Climate Crisis' and the 'Cost Of Living Crisis' there is a need to ensure that new social housing is built with the highest possible energy efficiency standards.
- A sizeable percentage of social housing tenants rely on public transport and as such social housing should be prioritised in areas where public transport connections are good.

This Council resolves to:

- Accept that the situation with the provision of affordable social housing is at crisis point and that urgent action is required.
- Explore options for Bradford Council to increase the construction of its own housing stock - despite the challenging budgetary situation and commit to providing half yearly reports to Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and annual area based reports to the five area committees.
- Set up a "Social Housing Provision Board" made up of councillors, representatives from Bradford Council and the social housing providers operating within our district to prioritise the construction of social housing - reflecting the needs of our residents. This board would prioritise redevelopment of brownfield sites.
- Ensure the Neighborhood Teams are feeding into this by highlighting smaller sites that may be missed of consideration in the Local Plan that would be suitable for affordable housing.
- Instruct the Local Plan team to report to cross party working group that has been set up on what measures are being taken to ensure the new design code will ensure new houses in our district are being built to the highest possible energy efficiency standards.