

Agenda Item No 8(a)

Housing and Planning Bill

This council notes:

- That the Housing and Planning Bill is currently being debated in Parliament, and if passed would threaten the provision of affordable homes for rent and buy through:
 - forcing 'high-value' council homes to be sold on the open market;
 - extending the right-to-buy to housing association tenants; and
 - undermining section 106 requirements on private developers to provide affordable homes
- That there is no commitment in the Bill that affordable homes will be replaced like-for-like in the local area
- That whilst measures to help first-time buyers are welcome, the 'starter homes' proposals in the Bill will be unaffordable to families and young people on ordinary incomes in most parts of the country, will not preserve the taxpayer investment, and will be built at the expense of genuinely affordable homes to rent and buy
- That the Bill undermines localism by taking 32 new wide and open-ended powers for the Secretary over councils and local communities, including the ability to override local plans, to mandate rents for social tenants, and to impose a levy on stock-holding councils, violating the terms of the housing revenue account self-financing deal
- That the Bill, whilst introducing some welcome measures to get to grips with rogue landlords, does not help with the high rents, poor conditions and insecurity affecting many of England's 11m private renters - including one in four families with children and does nothing to help arrest the recent rise in homelessness

This council resolves:

- 1 To analyse and report on the likely impact of the forced sale of council homes, the extension of right-to-buy and the 'starter homes' requirement on the local availability of affordable homes
- 2 To analyse and report on any further likely impacts of the Bill on the local area
- 3 To use this information to:
 - support the Leader of the Council in writing to the Secretary of State with our concerns about the Bill
 - set up an urgent meeting between the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive with the local Members of Parliament to raise our concerns
 - make public our concerns, including by publishing the above information on the council's website and promoting through the local press

N. Barker.