Council	Agenda Item 25(b)
20th July 2017	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION
LABOUR AND CO-OPERATIVE GROUP

OFF-PLAN SALES

This Council requests that:

The Chief Executive writes to Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to seek the immediate introduction of powers for all local councils to ring-fence for a prescribed period of time – as determined locally - the sale of properties 'off-plan' at a discount to:

- Registered Providers,
- Local Councils
- and local residents who have expressed an interest following a call for such expression of interest.

After which prescribed period of time such properties would then be offered or available to UK commercial and overseas investors.

Proposed by: Cllr Julie Cattell   Seconded by: Cllr Anne Meadows

Supported by: Labour and Cooperative Group of Councillors

Supporting information

It has been recognised for some time that properties in new residential developments are often offered for sale to commercial overseas investors at a discounted 'off-plan' price prior to commencement of construction. This is an alternative way of raising finance for the project. Particularly in London and increasingly in Brighton &Hove, properties that could be used to house local people are left empty or used only on occasion for corporate hospitality. As the South East region teeters on the brink of a housing catastrophe, local councils must be given robust powers to make proportionate intervention in their local housing market so that local economic interests and housing needs are served first.

The prescribed period of time would need to reflect local circumstances and would be determined locally.

The administration has requested that the Executive Director of Economy Environment and Culture, in conjunction with the Council's Planning Solicitors, looks into the feasibility of allowing the Head of Planning to negotiate with applicants to enter into such an arrangement voluntarily and secured by way of a S106 Agreement, with a report to come to committee as appropriate, including to agree the prescribed period of time.