

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## HOUSING & NEW HOMES COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 19(b)

**Subject:** Public Questions

**Date of Meeting:** 20 September 2023

**Report of:** Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law

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**Wards Affected:** All

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 To receive any questions submitted to Democratic Services.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.2 That the Committee responds to the questions.

#### Public Questions:

##### 1. Charles Harrison

*Provision of New Build Council Homes*

*Following the Council's response to my question at the previous (June) Committee meeting, I am pleased to see that the Council is undertaking a review of the housing supply pipeline, to inform the anticipated numbers and confirm whether the supply of 1,000 homes inherited from the previous administration plus the 800 homes pledged by the current administration will be achieved (or hopefully exceeded!) in the period 2023 to 2027?*

*Would the Council please state what progress is being made with the pipeline review and when a construction tracker schedule will be made available to the public?*

##### 2. Daniel Harris

*As you discuss HMO licensing, I'm deeply concerned about tenants in lower EPC-rated properties (D to G) facing high energy costs and poor living conditions. I'd be interested to know what consultation tenants have received around the introduction of a minimum standard at, say, EPC Rating of C or above. Do we know how much extra in energy bills tenants stuck in the worst energy-efficient homes pay compared to those in C-rated homes? Can you not take the initiative here to explore introducing a minimum EPC rating*

*requirement to protect our community's well-being and net zero targets. The incentive scheme is hardly an incentive for slum landlords.*

### **3. Hermione Berendt**

*Housing Minister Felicity Buchan is attempting to deregulate multiple occupation (HMO) accommodation for asylum seekers. Specifically, the government is pushing regulations through Parliament to exempt landlords who are renting HMOs to asylum seekers from needing a licence. We know that there is currently limited access to homes in our city for both people seeking asylum and those who have got a positive decision on their asylum claim. Whilst we welcome an influx of new homes for people in the city, we are concerned for the safety and wellbeing of people if HMO licensing is overlooked.*

*What are BHCC's plans around increasing housing for people seeking asylum in the city and ensuring this housing has an HMO license and is safe and fit for purpose?*

### **4. David Gibson**

*The minutes for June Housing committee omit the answers to some of the supplementary questions, for example in response to my supplementary question the chair of housing stated that "bringing seaside homes back in house was a priority for the administration" and yet no words appear in the minutes please can the response to all the supplementary questions from the recording of the meeting be added and the minutes corrected accordingly?*

### **5. Beata Janik**

*What is the standard for suitable housing allocation, does the standard for suitable letting include; hot running water, working electrics, a roof that doesn't leak, heating, and windows that open and close and are not boarded up, and how does the council check that these are the standards are met?*

### **6. Jo Tomkins**

*Where are residents across the city to receive housing support and housing advocacy when living in housing associations, when they don't offer that help and current criteria and charities say you must be "imminently homeless"?*