

AMENDMENT TO MOTION

a) Social and Affordable Housing

This Council believes that all residents living in social and affordable housing deserve safe, responsive and high-quality housing services, regardless of their landlord.

Council recognises the important role played by housing associations and community land trusts in meeting local housing need across East Cambridgeshire, values strong partnership working with these organisations, and acknowledges the positive contribution made by community-led housing groups across the district.

32 registered providers own housing in East Cambridgeshire, representing 6,524 homes, both general needs and supported living. Sanctuary Housing is by far the biggest provider, owning 4,260 (65%) of these homes, representing around 10% of the entire housing stock in the district. The next largest provider is CHS (Cambridge Housing Society) Group with 554 homes. Flagship Housing owns 231 homes, Clarion 208, and Accent Group 137, with the remaining smaller providers owning around 100 homes or less.

Council welcomes the strengthened consumer regulation of social housing but recognises that national landlord-level assessment cannot by itself provide a detailed picture of tenant experience within individual districts and communities.

Council is concerned that inconsistent service levels experienced by some housing association tenants may disproportionately affect older and vulnerable residents and recognises the importance of ensuring that all tenants are able to access responsive services and have their voices heard. Whilst the larger providers are subject to regulatory judgement, this does not provide sufficient transparency or granularity about performance at a local level.

Council resolves, with the aim of improving transparency, accountability and outcomes for tenants across the district, to:

1. Request Officers to work with ~~housing associations above an agreed stock threshold within the district~~ **social and affordable housing providers owning significant housing stock within East Cambridgeshire** to establish a ~~simple~~ **proportionate** six-monthly performance reporting

framework, covering key housing management and maintenance measures ~~drawing wherever possible on existing regulatory and management information so as to minimise additional reporting burdens.~~

2. Request that the framework should, where reasonably available, provide information disaggregated to East Cambridgeshire level and include a consistent core set of measures covering matters such as repairs performance, outstanding repairs, damp and mould, complaints and complaint response times, anti-social behaviour, relevant property safety measures and tenant satisfaction.
3. Request that structured six-monthly reporting should normally apply to social and affordable housing providers owning 100 or more homes within the district, with proportionate annual or exception-based engagement with smaller providers, particularly where concerns arise in relation to vulnerable tenants, supported housing, service quality or safeguarding.
4. Refer ~~this reporting~~ **the resulting performance information** to the Operational Services Committee for regular review, enabling Councillors to monitor trends, identify good practice and understand where improvement may be required.
5. Invite **senior** representatives of **social and affordable** housing associations **providers** to attend meetings ~~with~~ **of** the Council's **Operational Services Committee where appropriate** to discuss performance, **tenant experience**, challenges and improvement activity ~~where appropriate.~~
6. Request Officers to **work with social and affordable housing providers** ~~to explore options to strengthen tenant engagement and improve understanding of tenant experience, particularly amongst vulnerable residents and those less likely to raise concerns directly~~ **the establishment of an East Cambridgeshire Social and Affordable Housing Provider Partnership Framework or Charter, setting out shared expectations for partnership working, local accountability, information sharing, tenant communication, support for vulnerable residents and the escalation of significant service concerns.**
7. Request Officers to establish practical arrangements to strengthen the voice of social housing tenants across the district, including consideration of periodic tenant surveys, tenant forums or reference panels and targeted engagement with older and vulnerable

residents, disabled residents, rural communities and those less likely to use digital channels or formal complaints processes.

- 8. Request Officers to develop a proportionate escalation process for significant or persistent concerns about tenant outcomes, including senior engagement with the relevant provider, monitoring of agreed improvement actions and, where appropriate, referral or signposting in accordance with the respective roles of the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman.**
- 9. Request that an initial report on the proposed performance framework, provider engagement arrangements and tenant voice mechanisms be brought to the Operational Services Committee within six months.**
10. Commit to continued collaboration with housing providers, with the aim to increase East Cambridgeshire's social housing capacity.

PROPOSER: Cllr Lorna Dupré

SECONDER: Cllr Christine Whelan