

TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECONVENED MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURNED ON 17 JULY 2019

23 JULY 2019

PRESENT

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Rob Chilton), in the Chair.

L. Walsh (Deputy Mayor	Mrs. D.L. Haddad	T. Ross
D. Acton	J. Holden	B. Shaw
S. Adshead	C. Hynes	J. Slater
A. Akinola	D. Jerrome	E.W. Stennett
Dr. K. Barclay	J. Lloyd	R. Thompson
J. Baugh	M. Minnis	M.J. Welton
Miss L. Blackburn	A. Mitchell	A. Western
R. Bowker	D. Morgan	D. Western
D. Bunting	P. Myers	G. Whitham
K.G. Carter	A. New	A.M. Whyte
C.H. Churchill	J.D. Newgrosh	A.J. Williams
G. Coggins	E. Patel	B.G. Winstanley
M. Cordingley	K. Procter	J.A. Wright
J. Dillon	S.B. Procter	Mrs. P. Young
N. Evans	B. Rigby	

In attendance

Chief Executive	S. Todd
Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy	J. Le Fevre
Corporate Director, Place	R. Roe
Head of Financial Management	G. Bentley
Democratic and Scrutiny Officer	F. Fuschi
Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer	I. Cockill

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.B. Anstee, J. Bennett, C. Boyes, J. E. Brophy, B. Brotherton, D. Butt, T. Carey, Dr. S. Carr, A. Duffield, M. Freeman, J. Harding, B. Hartley, D. Jarman, P. Lally, J. Lamb, S. Longden, S. Taylor and S. Thomas.

37. MOTION SUBMITTED BY THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS GROUP - EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM SCHEME

(Note: In respect of the business on the agenda, the Mayor announced that speeches made by Members moving and seconding a Motion or any amendment would be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes per speaker and that all other all speeches would be limited to a maximum of 2 minutes per speaker.)

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It was moved and seconded that:

“This Council notes that:

- Britain faces a shortage of affordable and sustainable housing
- Current Greater Manchester Spatial Framework proposals to meet demand by building on ‘greenbelt’ land are highly unpopular with residents in Trafford
- There are currently more than 2,000 unoccupied and substantially unfurnished empty homes in Trafford, many of which have been empty for over two years, some considerably longer. A rise of 16% since 2017.
- There are currently more than 19,000 unoccupied and substantially unfurnished empty homes across greater Manchester
- A significant number of these properties – both in Trafford and across the city region – are considered ‘unfit for human habitation’

This Council acknowledges the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 enabling the use of the ‘Empty Homes Premium’ model - as seen in Cheshire East - as an additional means for local authorities to encourage empty homes to be brought back in to use and welcomes the inclusion of a 50% ‘Empty Homes Premium’ in the February 2019 budget.

This Council Requires the Executive to raise the ‘Empty Homes Premium’ from 50% to 100% as part of its budget (February 2020) in line with the following timescale:

- As of April 1st 2020 the ‘relevant maximum’ for properties empty over 2 years will be 100%

This Council also Requires the Executive to give notice of the following incremental time scale:

1. As of 1st April 2021 the ‘relevant maximum’ for properties empty over 5 years will be 200%
2. As of April 1st 2022 the ‘relevant maximum’ for properties over ten years empty will be 300%

This Council requires the Executive to investigate the feasibility of ‘Capped Public Works Loans’ as seen in Cheshire East, to assist with major works and help bring more properties back into use without punishing property owners.

This Council Notes the following exemptions:

- Properties requiring major works should receive an extension of up to 12 months before the ‘relevant maximum’ is raised
- Properties currently in ‘Trust’ or ‘Probate’ should receive an extension of up to 12 months before the ‘relevant maximum’ is raised

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- Properties left empty by a person who lives in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence (for example: service personnel posted away from home)
- Properties which are part of another property (for example: an annexe)

This Council Recognises that simply seeking to bring empty housing back into use is not enough to solve Britain's housing crisis, but is determined to pursue every available option, especially when it is possible to avoid development on 'Green Belt' land.

This Council requires the Leader of the Council to:

- Write to the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the leaders of all Greater Manchester local authorities urging them to work with Trafford Council to address the housing shortage in our region by supporting the resolutions of this motion
- Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government urging the Government highlighting the need for local authorities to be able to protect 'Greenbelt' land whilst addressing the housing shortage"

It was moved and seconded as an amendment that:

"This Council notes that:

- Britain faces a shortage of affordable and sustainable housing
- Current Greater Manchester Spatial Framework proposals to meet demand by building on 'greenbelt' land are necessary to meet the housing crisis in Trafford.
- There are currently more than 2,000 unoccupied and substantially unfurnished empty homes in Trafford, many of which have been empty for over two years, some considerably longer. A rise of 16% since 2017.
- There are currently more than 19,000 unoccupied and substantially unfurnished empty homes across greater Manchester
- A significant number of these properties – both in Trafford and across the city region – are considered 'unfit for human habitation'

This Council acknowledges the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 enabling the use of the 'Empty Homes Premium' model - as seen in Cheshire East - as an additional means for local authorities to encourage empty homes to be brought back in to use and welcomes the inclusion of a 50% 'Empty Homes Premium' in the February 2019 budget.

This Council acknowledges that the Executive is currently developing a new Empty Homes Strategy (2019-2024). We are already planning to raise the 'Empty Homes Premium' from 50% to 100% as part of this process and as of April 1st 2020 subject to consultation, increasing the 'relevant maximum' premium for all empty properties in the shortest time practicable.

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In consulting on raising the Empty Homes Premium the Council will consider the use of appropriate exemptions, for example annex homes, MOD properties, where properties are in probate or under-going major works.

Council acknowledges that this authority already offers a loan up to a maximum of £10,000 to assist with major works, with the condition that the property is made available to HOST for the period that the loan is paid back for the provision of temporary accommodation.

This Council Recognises that simply seeking to bring empty housing back into use is not enough to solve Britain's housing crisis, but is determined to pursue every available option, especially when it is possible to avoid development on 'Green Belt' land.

This Council requires the Leader of the Council to:

- Write to the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the leaders of all Greater Manchester local authorities to further emphasise to them to work with Trafford Council to address the housing shortage in our region by supporting the resolutions of this motion
- Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government urging the Government to reform planning legislation and housing policy in order for local authorities to be able to protect 'Greenbelt' land whilst addressing the housing shortage."

Following a debate on the matter, the amendment was put to the vote and declared carried. Speeches on the substantive Motion were made before it was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED: That this Council notes that:

- Britain faces a shortage of affordable and sustainable housing
- Current Greater Manchester Spatial Framework proposals to meet demand by building on 'greenbelt' land are necessary to meet the housing crisis in Trafford.
- There are currently more than 2,000 unoccupied and substantially unfurnished empty homes in Trafford, many of which have been empty for over two years, some considerably longer. A rise of 16% since 2017.
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In consulting on raising the Empty Homes Premium the Council will consider the use of appropriate exemptions, for example annex homes, MOD properties, where properties are in probate or under-going major works.

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This Council requires the Leader of the Council to:

- Write to the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the leaders of all Greater Manchester local authorities to further emphasise to them to work with Trafford Council to address the housing shortage in our region by supporting the resolutions of this motion
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38. MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

In accordance with Procedure Rule 12 (d) it was moved and seconded that:

"the next item of business listed on the Summons 'Motion Submitted by the Conservative Group - Members' Allowances Increases for Labour Councillors' be referred to the Standards Committee for consideration."

In accordance with Procedure Rule 13.8 (d) 'Motions which may be moved during debate' it was moved and seconded that the question be now put.

With the consent of the Council, the Motion to refer the matter of Members' Allowances Increases to Standards Committee was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED: That the matter of the Motion Submitted by the Conservative Group - Members' Allowances Increases for Labour Councillors, be referred to the Standards Committee for consideration.

The meeting commenced at 7.15 p.m. and finished at 7.38 p.m.