Motion A.1: Response to the Regulator for Social Housing's C4 Judgement

Proposer: ~~Cllr Luke Cawley-Harrison~~ Cllr Ali
Seconder: ~~Cllr Scott Bentham~~ ~~, Emery~~ ~~Cllr Chandwani~~

Council notes:

- The C4 consumer grade, signifying "very serious failings" in how the Council is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards, handed to the council by the Regulator of Social Housing;
- The "very serious failings" identified in:
    - Delivery of health and safety requirements
    - The provision of an effective, efficient, and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which the council are responsible
    - Delivery of adaptations
    - Working in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where social housing is provided
    - Treating tenants with fairness and respect
    - Handling of complaints
    - Communication with the regulator regarding compliance with consumer standards, including not providing full information to the regulator regarding overdue remedial actions;
- That the Regulator for Social Housing "has not yet seen sufficient evidence that [the council] understands the potential risk to tenants and is able to put matters right";
- The 2023 Housing Ombudsman investigation due to "persistent poor performance over damp and mould complaints", which resulted in a judgement that the council had a "culture of apathy and acceptance of poor practice" in its dealings with council tenants and leaseholders, and criticised "extremely poor" handling of leaseholder complaints; "unreasonable delays in the landlord's response to reports of disrepair"; and "clear evidence of service failure";
- The 2023 finding from the Regulator of Social Housing that Haringey had caused "serious detriment" to tenants after failing to complete several remedial fire safety actions, including 4,000 which were high risk, and not having up to date electrical safety reports for thousands of homes;
- ~~The year-long 2024 investigation by Liberal Democrat councillors, which resulted in the uncovering of at least seven cases where Haringey's had failed to follow legislation for charging leaseholders for major works, leading to the council being forced to refund over £130,000 to leaseholders;~~
- The most recent (2024/25) comparative statistics on Tenant Satisfaction Measures, showing Haringey is the worst council in the country for satisfaction with repairs;

- That Haringey's most recent (2025/26) Tenant Satisfaction Measures show overall satisfaction at just 46%; satisfaction with repairs at 50%, and satisfaction that the home is safe at only 59%;
- The data from USwitch Energy showing Haringey was the most complained about Local Authority for damp and mould in both 2025 and 2026, the only council with over 30 complaints per 10,000 social housing units in each year;
- Haringey's housing department's rolling strike from October 2024 based on issues including the repairs service "failing badly on its key performance measures due to a failure of management" and management "not taking staff and resident safety seriously". And subsequent negotiations to reach agreement on how to restructure services including staff being trained in multiple skills to reduce the number of appointments

Council believes:

That there has been ongoing work to improve housing services but this has yet to deliver the improvements needed,

- ~~That opportunities to begin taking action on failures in the housing service were consistently missed by the council in previous years;~~
- That Haringey Council's defensive and adversarial culture has been a key barrier to improving the service;
- ~~That the council misled the Regulator for Social Housing in failing to provide full information about the backlog of fire safety remedial actions;~~
- That the council has failed to take adequate learnings and accountability from the previous self-referral to the Regulator;
- The council's structural reorganisation, combining the adult social care and housing services into a single directorate, was not a sensible course of action;
- The cross party Housing Improvement Board, set up after previous failings, has been shown to provide insufficient protection in its current format to prevent further failures in governance;
- That the Regulator's report detailing that the council supplied only partial information over remedial actions, failing to provide full information of a new and growing backlog, raises serious concern over what further information may not have been shared with the Regulator, Housing Improvement Board and other governance processes;
- That fundamental reform of performance-based incentives and consequences for council staff is needed if the service is to be turned around.

Council resolves that the following executive action be strongly considered and taken forward by the appropriate Senior Officers and Cabinet:

That the CEO formally apologies to tenants and leaseholders in writing for its faliures

- ~~To formally apologise to tenants and leaseholders in writing for its failings;~~

- To refer to an external expert auditor to carry out an immediate a root and branch investigation into the council's housing department and the serious failures in the service, including all processes, structures, record-keeping and delivery;
- That the auditor should be commissioned in a cross party process involving equal representations from all thre political groups and report back to the Housing scrutiny Panel, Cabinet , and Regulator for Social Housing
- That the terms of reference for the audit should consider the following matters:
- A review and reform of the current structures for Resident Voice and Empowerment ensuring that resident are being listened to anand actions taken
- Independent verification of safety assurance data, including fire safety compliance , electrical testing and asbestos management
- The failure to provide full information to the Regulator and the actions of individual or processes that to this
- A givernance review that will lead to a new Governance and Accounatbility Policy for Housing that will include ongoing governance , including executive oversight and governance around submissions to external bodies such as the regulator
- Recommendations for new strict KPI's and oversight mechanisms for all staff within the housing service , including third party contractors , with monitoring carried out external to the service.
- To formally request a temporary, targeted uplift in funding from central government to undertake emergency remedial works, with appropriate oversight measures in place;
- To commission an independent expert organisation to run an emergency improvement programme which should report to the Regulator for Social Housing~~;~~
- To wind up ~~reform~~ the Housing Improvement Board which meets in private and ask cabinet to establish a cross party Cabinet Advisory committee responsible for Housing Improvement , co- chaired by an opposition Member and an independent expert and to include tenant and leaseholder representatives as well as an~~and~~ external specialist~~s~~, ~~to be chaired by an external and independent expert, and~~ This Advisory Committee would have ~~to give it~~ formal powers to recommend policy to cabinet;
- To review ~~and reform~~ the current structures for Resident Voice and Empowerment ensuring that residents are being listened to and actions taken;
- To independently verify safety assurance data, including fire safety compliance, electrical testing and asbestos management;
- To produce open-book monthly reporting on all areas of compliance and fire safety using live data, published on the council website;this should include regular updates on compliance with Awaab's Law phase 1 and Phase 2.
- To formally investigate the failure to provide full information to the Regulator, and the actions of individuals or processes that led to this;
- To undertake an immediate independent governance review that will lead to a new Governance and Accountability Policy for Housing that will include ongoing governance, including executive oversight, and governance around submissions to external bodies such as the Regulator;

- To introduce strict KPIs and oversight mechanisms for all staff within the housing service, including third-party contractors, with monitoring carried out external to the service;
- To undertake an expedited complete stock survey;
- To commence immediate action to clear all compliance backlogs across the main six statutory compliance areas, and provide live public reporting on this;
- To commence an immediate repairs backlog review, writing to all tenants and leaseholders confirming any recorded outstanding repairs relating to their property (or none), and inviting them to respond with confirmation of items, or the addition of unrecorded works;
- To introduce an automatic compensation scheme for tenants and leaseholders for poorly done or late repairs;
- To introduce independent post completion spot-checks/auditing of repair works, and of complaints handling;
- To introduce a new complaints learning and action delivery process for housing complaints that leads to documented improved outcomes;
- To reform the complaints handling process and customer services to reduce fragmentation and bring all complaints regarding social housing , including anti social behaviour and adptataions , under the central team.
- To engage in a department-wide culture change process that places the interests of tenants and leaseholders at the heart of the operating culture;
- To alter the Council's formal repairs sign-off process from operative sign-off to resident-determined sign-off so repairs are only marked as satisfactorily complete when residents say so;
- To introduce pro-leaseholder reforms, including:
    - Tripling the notice period for major works
    - Creating an optional sinking fund
    - Granting leaseholders the right to find their own tradespeople to carry out works when issued a S20 notice.