

COUNCIL MEETING – 17 JANUARY 2011

Amendment to Motion O (2010/11)

(Amendments are shown in bold, deletions have been struck through)

This Council notes:

- ***Commitments in Haringey Labour's One Borough manifesto to "use all of our powers to tackle rogue landlords who flout the law through illegal conversions, and push for the stiffest penalties" and "use the new powers from the Labour government to regulate houses in multiple occupation and tackle slum landlords through licensing, so all private tenants have decent homes"***
- ***This Council's support of the amendment to the Housing Act 2004 and commitment to fully utilise discretionary powers in Haringay and St Anns pilot area.***
- A recent survey by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) showing that of those officers working on housing enforcement in the private rented sector, nine out of ten had encountered landlords engaging in harassment or illegal eviction, and 78% had dealt with landlords who persistently refuse to maintain their property to a safe condition
- It is only a minority of private landlords that are threatening and abusive to their tenants
  
- The damage rogue landlords can have on vulnerable tenants and the wider community
- The lack of protection for tenants if they make a complaint against a landlord
- Local authorities can serve an improvement notice or prohibition order where housing conditions fall below an acceptable standard. If the landlord fails to comply they can be prosecuted.
- Harassment and illegal eviction are criminal offences. Local authorities can prosecute landlords who commit these crimes.
- Shelter's recent survey with the CIEH, shows 66% of Environmental Health Officers working in the private rented sector said that in their area no landlords had been prosecuted in the last 12 months for failure to comply with an order under the 2004 Housing Act, although over 40% said that under a quarter of such orders issued by their local authority had been complied with.

The Council resolves

- To take a zero tolerance approach to rogue landlords
  
- To use the full range of tools and powers at our disposal to tackle rogue landlords

- ~~· To carry out regular housing conditions surveys, focusing on areas in which the stock is poorly maintained and the level of private renting is highest.~~
- ~~· To use in instances where the Councils becomes aware of rogue landlords operating in low demand areas, to consider using power to introduce a selective licensing scheme.~~
- ***Upon the successful completion of Harringay and St Anns pilot, to commit to roll out utilising discretionary powers to other areas in Haringey.***
- ***In areas where we commit ourselves to roll out discretionary powers we will carry out an evidence gathering audit of conditions of properties.***
- ***Continue to utilise available resources effectively to make the biggest impact*** ~~To back up their enforcement policies with adequate resources to make them enforceable as the cost of rogue landlords' activities will be picked up in other ways, such as a higher number of tenants requiring homelessness assistance.~~
- To ***continue to*** take advantage of the provisions of the 2004 Housing Act, which allows a recoup of costs by charging the landlord.

Propose Amends: Cllr Nilgun Canver

Second Amends: Cllr Zena Brabazon