

## **Council 24 September 2015**

### **Notice of Motion - Tackling Housing Need and Poor Quality Housing in Torbay (Mayoral Decision)**

This Council notes that Torbay faces the following housing challenges:

- One of the lowest levels of social housing stock in the Country for an urban authority at 7% of the local housing stock.
- A low wage economy with high property prices excluding many local people from the housing market.
- A higher than average private rented market resulting in a minority of poor quality rented accommodation which results in anti social behaviour and some criminal activity.
- 1921 households on Torbay Council's housing register.

This Council notes that part of the solution could be establishing a Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

It is common practice amongst local authorities for them to develop Private Sector Leasing Schemes. However, the scale and range of each scheme varies widely.

Such schemes can consider either self contained accommodation or a combination of self contained properties and shared accommodation.

A private sector leasing scheme means that the Council would lease accommodation from landlords on a long term basis (circa 5 years), the Council would issue non-secure tenancies and then manage the property for the duration of the term. (A different arrangement through licences would need to operate in shared accommodation).

The Council's objectives for developing such a scheme would include:

- To contribute to dealing with the housing supply issue in Torbay;
- Tackling waiting lists for social housing and homelessness;
- Deal with the impacts of welfare reforms;
- Improve property conditions and management standards;
- Shift the reliance on social sector to meet the needs for affordable housing;
- To generate a financial return to the Council; and
- To ensure a mix of housing, in terms of type, size and tenure, best matched to the needs of Torbay;

There is a real opportunity for Torbay to deliver quality, well located and managed Private Rented sector stock to those in need, who will have the reassurance that their landlord is reputable and providing a good quality service.

By developing a private sector leasing scheme the Council will secure a place in the local housing market.

This Council agrees in principle for the Assistant Director – Community and Customer Services to compile a business plan for a private sector leasing scheme

based upon the ability to use up to £10m of prudential borrowing or appropriate capital funding. That the Assistant Director – Community and Customer Services demonstrates what could be achieved by the investment of either £2m, £5m or up to 10m to be presented to a future Council meeting.

Proposer Councillor Stocks  
Seconded Councillor Darling (M)