

DRAFT NOTICE OF MOTION

THE THREAT OF MASS HOMELESSNESS

Council notes that thousands of families are facing evictions and repossessions as measures to protect families put in place during Covid, end; Universal Credit is reduced; the furlough scheme ends; and electricity and gas prices rise. Now is not the time to unravel the great interventions that Government has brought in to protect people during this unprecedented period. Unless urgent action is taken, the UK will face a homelessness crisis this autumn, on a scale never seen before. This Council resolves to:

1. Support the Big Issue's plan to Stop Mass Homelessness by writing to the relevant Secretaries of State asking them to keep people in their homes and in sustainable jobs. They could do this by committing to pay off £360m in rent arrears; suspend no fault evictions until a Renters' Reform Act is passed; make permanent the £20 Universal Credit uplift; improve access to Discretionary Housing Payment; unfreeze Local Housing Allowance; improve support for financial literacy education; and invest to create new green jobs.
2. Express its support for a Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requiring public bodies to consider how decisions made now affect future needs, and tackle persistent problems such as poverty, homelessness, health inequalities and climate change.
3. Commission a report outlining options that will ensure the impact of Council decisions on future generations are properly considered.
4. Commission a report outlining how the Council can expand social housing; encourage innovative ways to increase housing stock; and increase support for ethical property and letting firms.

Supporting information

- Despite a lot of government support and intervention, a household was made homeless every 3½ hours in UK during the first three months of 2021.
(Source: [The Big Issue](#) based on analysis of Q1 2021 data from UK Finance / Ministry of Justice / Scottish Government).
- 11 million adults in Britain have not seen their income recover to pre-pandemic levels, with 10.1 million showing signs of financial difficulty.
- 2.4m adults in Britain are unable to pay their debts or other household bills
- 4.3 million people are behind on household bills including council tax, rent and utilities.
(Source: [StepChange](#)).
- Over 564,000 people are in rent arrears.
- 190,000 owner-occupied homes are in financial difficulty.
(Source: [Resolution Foundation](#)).
- At least 1.9 million jobs are at risk of permanent loss from long-term impacts of the pandemic.
(Source: [GND UK](#))
- On 1st October, furlough will have ended, evictions and repossessions will be returning to pre-pandemic levels and an increase in energy bills could force 392,000 households into fuel poverty.
(Source: [End Fuel Poverty Coalition](#))