

## **NOTICE OF MOTION FOR COUNCIL: WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**

**In the names of**

**Councillors; A Arif, Bayley, Boles, Cummins, Farooq, Fitzgerald, Frith, Gold, Green, Grimshaw, Haroon, Hayes, Hook, Ibrahim, McGill, Morris, Moss, O'Brien, Pilkington, A Quinn, D Quinn, Rafiq, Rahimov, Rizvi, Rubinstein, Ryder, L Smith, Southworth, Staples-Jones, Tariq, Thorpe, Walmsley**

**Councillors S Arif, Brown, Gartside, Harris, Hussain and Rydeheard**

### ***This Council notes that:***

There has recently been a drastic rise in the number of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) coming into operation within the Borough, especially in areas of high housing demand or socio-economic pressure, about which residents are understandably concerned.

HMOs are a symptom of the need for affordable housing and not a solution and in some cases, the presence of HMOs undercuts the housing market and exploits some of the most vulnerable people within our community through substandard and unsafe accommodation.

Poorly regulated growth can undermine community cohesion, housing quality, and neighbourhood character.

Despite almost one million homes being built under the last Government, more homes need to be built in the right places, with brownfield land being prioritised for the building of these homes and with as much greenbelt land as possible being retained as greenbelt land.

### ***This Council further notes that:***

Whilst it is not possible to prevent full planning applications from being submitted, we can act to close the loophole and disallow permitted development rights for so-called 'small' HMOs where up to six unrelated people share basic amenities, such as a kitchen or bathroom.

Other Councils, such as Hyndburn Borough Council, have introduced beneficial HMO policies which include an Article 4 Direction covering parts of their jurisdiction, requiring planning permission for conversions to small HMOs, detailed local thresholds and spatial restrictions on HMO clustering and concentration, the targeted use of selective and additional licensing to improve standards and hold landlords accountable and stronger integration with planning, housing enforcement and community engagement teams.

This permitted development loophole arises from there currently being a lack of a Borough-wide HMO framework in Bury which leaves Councillors, residents and responsible landlords without the necessary tools to shape local outcomes and maintain high standards.

Now is the time to act, given rising housing pressures and increasing use of private rented and supported accommodation, so that we can drive up housing standards, prevent the overconcentration of HMOs, protect vulnerable tenants and maintain community integrity.

***This Council resolves to:***

Instruct Cabinet to bring forward a proposal for a borough wide HMO policy, as other councils have done, to include:

- A full, proactive, comprehensive review of areas where an Article 4 Direction could be introduced to manage the conversion of family homes into HMOs, with a view to implementing the Direction across the entire Borough but especially in high-density or high impact wards;
- An endorsement of the policy of tightening up HMO density caps which are currently within the Draft Local Plan, with a convention of Group Leaders to agree a binding resolution on Borough-wide density caps;
- Preparation of a new supplementary planning document to set out expected standards and facilities for HMOs;
- Proposals for selective or additional licensing schemes where poor housing standards, anti-social behaviour or overcrowding are of concern;
- Integration with existing housing, public health and neighbourhood strategies, particularly where residents are placed into HMOs through social care or homelessness pathways; and
- A clear role for ward councillors and communities in identifying particular problem areas and shaping local implementation.

Should the review indicate that the threshold for introducing an Article 4 Direction be met, instruct Cabinet to consider and make a direction pursuant to Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 on a borough wide basis, withdrawing the permitted development rights to convert a dwellinghouse (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4), to prevent harm to local amenity and promote the wellbeing of the aforementioned areas.

Delegate authority to Bury Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning and Building Control department to carry out all necessary consultation and evidence-gathering, to be launched within three months and with a draft policy framework and options brought to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet within six months.

Affirm its commitment to fair housing, strong communities, and high standards, ensuring Bury leads the way in tackling poor housing conditions, empowering tenants, and building cohesive neighbourhoods for all.