

# Subject: Motions

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| <b>Report to:</b>     | <b>London Assembly (Plenary)</b>                  |
| <b>Report of:</b>     | <b>Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat</b> |
| <b>Date:</b>          | <b>8 June 2023</b>                                |
| <b>Public Access:</b> | <b>This report will be considered in public</b>   |

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Assembly is asked to consider the motions set out which have been submitted by Assembly Members.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Assembly considers the motions submitted by Assembly Members.**

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Léonie Cooper AM** and will be seconded by Tony Devenish AM:

**“This Assembly notes the positive step that the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC) Council has taken in becoming the first local authority in the country to allow solar PV panels to be installed on Grade II and Grade II\* listed buildings. This has huge potential to generate clean energy to help London reach Net Zero. The borough has 4,000 buildings that are listed, 70% of which are in Conservation Areas.**

**We further note the Council’s consultation on Local Listed Building Consent Order for Solar Panels received a positive response from individual residents, local conservation groups, residents’ associations and the Historic Houses Association. We hope this level of support would be replicated in other boroughs. This policy will also benefit staff, as residents just complete a simple application, thus freeing up Heritage Officers’ time to be spent on more complex cases. An annual monitoring report will ensure progress can be monitored.**

**This Assembly calls on other London boroughs to pass a similar Local Listed Buildings Consent Order, so that listed buildings in their areas can install solar panels without a planning application.**

**We also call on the Mayor to:**

- 1. Join our call to the boroughs and encourage them and London Councils to make this policy change;**
- 2. Create a London Plan Guidance document to assist boroughs in encouraging more uptake of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels;**
- 3. Collate the data from each borough's annual monitoring reports to ensure there is a city-wide picture of how this policy is having an impact.**

**If other boroughs follow the RBKC lead, this Assembly believes London can make significant progress in helping to generate clean electricity to help with London's transition to Net Zero."**

- 3.2 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Elly Baker AM** and will be seconded by Joanne McCartney AM:

**"This Assembly recognises the huge success of the English National Opera's (ENO) efforts to make opera affordable and accessible to its audiences, and the importance of the company's presence in London to the city's cultural offering and economy.**

**This Assembly remains concerned about the impact to London's economy and access to culture, following the Government's instruction to the Arts Council England (ACE) to reduce its overall current investment in the National Portfolio in London.**

**This Assembly objects to Arts Council England's insistence that the ENO must move out of London; recalling the unwarranted impact this will have on the lives and livelihoods of ENO workers, represented by Equity, BECTU and the Musicians' Union; as well as the adverse impact this will have on London's cultural sector and the economy.**

**This Assembly reiterates the need for strong funding for the arts at all levels in all parts of the UK, noting the success of Opera North, previously ENO North; but believes that public funding of opera across the country must not come at the cost of Londoners.**

**This Assembly calls for:**

- 1. The Arts Council England to end its requirement for the ENO to establish a primary base out of London;**
- 2. No job losses at the ENO, and calls on affected parties, including the Arts Council England, to hold talks directly with the affected trade unions and their members, to reach a negotiated settlement;**
- 3. The Arts Council England to ensure that funding changes do not result in any negative impact to Londoners and that a full programme of offers and events at affordable prices remains at the ENO in London;**

4. **The Mayor to write to Arts Council England expressing concern at their plans to remove significant cultural institutions such as the ENO from London and calling on them to change their requirements for the ENO to have a primary base outside of London;**
5. **The Mayor to call on the Secretary of State for Culture to provide the funding necessary to keep ENO's primary base in London to ensure that levelling up does not lead to a loss of cultural offerings or jobs to Londoners."**

3.3 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Sem Moema AM** and will be seconded by Sakina Sheikh AM:

**"The Assembly welcomes provisions within the Renters Reform Bill to abolish section 21 evictions.**

**However, the Government first pledged to ban section 21 evictions in April 2019 so it is disappointing that this is still yet to be implemented more than four years on. Since April 2019, almost 10,000 Londoners have been threatened with eviction under section 21.<sup>1</sup> The Assembly notes that the majority of households owed a homelessness duty by local authorities and living in temporary accommodation are homeless because they were evicted by their landlord serving a no-fault section 21 eviction notice.**

**It's also concerning that the proposed Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector is not on the face of the Bill.**

**The Bill also does little to address affordability, with London's private rents increasing at around 15% in the past year – far higher than wages. Local Housing Allowance rates have not increased since 2020, forcing thousands of low-income Londoners to top up benefits payments to cover their rent and being forced to choose between keeping a roof over their heads, keeping the lights on, or feeding their families.**

**Without action to tackle this issue, London faces an increase in homelessness with rent increases coming within the context of a broader cost of living crisis.**

**The Assembly notes that:**

- **Rents in London are at record levels, with average asking prices reaching £2,500 for the first time.<sup>2</sup>**
- **London's private rented sector is in crisis with demand vastly outstripping supply and too many households living in poor quality accommodation.**
- **Private renting is the fastest growing housing tenure in London<sup>3</sup> and is vital to providing homes for Londoners. So, it's vital that regulation is strengthened so Londoners can access high-quality, secure housing in the private rented sector (PRS).**

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<sup>1</sup> DLUHC, Homelessness Statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

<sup>2</sup> Rightmove Rental Price Tracker: <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/news/rental-price-tracker/>

<sup>3</sup> ONS, [Housing, England and Wales: Census 2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/housing)

- **That the Mayor is building a record number of affordable homes, having met the targets of the 2015–2023 Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) of 116,000 starts, contributing towards addressing London’s housing need.**

**This Assembly notes the need for London-specific solutions to the crisis affecting the capital’s private rented sector; Government has missed an opportunity to do this through the Renters Reform Bill. To this end, the Assembly supports the Mayor’s call to be granted the power to freeze and control rents in London.**

**The Assembly calls for:**

- **Government to amend the Renters Reform Bill to grant powers to the Mayor of London to further regulate London’s private rented sector, including the power to freeze and control rents.**
- **Government to urgently bring forward legislation to bring the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector as proposed in the Renters Reform white paper.**
- **The Mayor to continue work with tenants and landlords to urgently establish the planned London Rent Commission and to develop evidence for and models of regulation for our city’s private rented sector.**
- **The Mayor to continue to lobby Government to increase funding to London for the delivery of affordable homes.”**

3.4 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM** and will be seconded by Unmesh Desai AM:

**“This Assembly notes the incredible growth of east London, which has seen 210,000 new homes and 350,000 jobs created since 2001, making it the fastest growing part of the UK.**

**This Assembly notes that this growth will continue, with a further 40,000 jobs and 33,000 homes being delivered across the London Legacy Development Corporation’s wider area by 2036, in addition to East Bank, a world-class cultural and education district.**

**This Assembly notes that Stratford station is the fastest-growing station in the UK, with 128 million total passenger movements in 2019 (the most recent aggregate figure for all passengers using the station), up from 40 million in 2006, and that TfL predicts that passenger numbers will increase by a further 60% by 2041.**

**This Assembly believes that Stratford station is overcrowded and that short-term measures such as temporary closures or one-way passenger systems are undesirable and inconvenient for passengers.**

**This Assembly believes that a transformative redevelopment of Stratford station and the surrounding area is necessary, and that this will support the full benefits of future economic growth while improving customer experiences.**

**This Assembly therefore supports the recently-submitted Strategic Outline Business Case for the long-term redevelopment of Stratford station and the surrounding area, and calls on the Mayor do all in his power to support this vital project.”**

3.5 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Sem Moema AM** and will be seconded by Hina Bokhari AM:

**“London has a proud history of welcoming refugees from across the world and refugees have made vital contributions to life in our city.**

**The Assembly notes, with concern, that the plans announced by the Government which would exempt landlords providing houses in multiple accommodation (HMO) accommodation to asylum seekers from obtaining a licence from the local authority for two years.**

**This will result in asylum seekers no longer being entitled to various protections including electrical and gas safety certificates, minimum bedroom sizes, and working smoke alarms on every inhabited storey.**

**HMO licensing plays a vital role in ensuring that tenants can access safe accommodation and provide landlords with clarity over their responsibilities. We note that properties will continue to be independently inspected by civil servants. However, experts such as Polly Neate, the Chief Executive of Shelter, said: “Licensing for HMOs was brought in to keep people safe. By doing away with these protections in order to flex minimum space standards, the government is putting thousands of people, including children and older people, at serious risk.”**

**The Assembly notes that that under the asylum dispersal model, which was announced in March 2023, London’s boroughs will provide much needed housing and support for 6,344 asylum seekers. But this accommodation should not come at the expense of important housing protections.**

**Instead of removing rights from asylum seekers, the Government should focus on addressing the backlog in asylum claims and working to increase the speed at which claims are assessed so that those granted asylum can properly restart their lives.**

**Therefore, the Assembly calls on Government:**

- **to reverse plans to exempt landlords from HMO licencing requirements when housing asylum seekers;**
- **to urgently set out how it intends to address the backlog in asylum claims so that asylum seekers can have their status regularised more quickly and restart their lives in the UK.**

**The Assembly calls the Mayor of London to:**

- **write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, expressing his concern at these plans and requesting that the Government look again at how we can ensure asylum seekers are housed in safe and secure accommodation while their claims are assessed.”**

3.6 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Zack Polanski AM** and will be seconded by Caroline Russell AM:

**“This Assembly believes that:**

- **Nuclear weapons pose a grave threat to London and communities throughout the world; and**

- **Our residents have the right to live in a world free from this threat; and**
- **Any use of nuclear weapons, whether deliberate or accidental, would have catastrophic, far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for people and the environment.**

**This Assembly welcomes the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and calls on the Mayor to:**

- **Sign the ICAN Cities Appeal**
- **Call on the Government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.”**

#### **4. Legal Implications**

4.1 The Assembly has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

#### **List of appendices to this report:**

None.

#### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

List of Background Papers:

None.

#### **Contact Information**

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