

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE COUNCIL ON 7 DECEMBER 2022

1. Mr Andrew Graham, member of the public (to be put in person)

I sent the attached document to every serving City Councillor on 28/11/22.

In the attached document I have listed details of simply unacceptable living conditions of Housing Association tenants in Chelmsford.

This document shows extensive mould, damp, fire and electrical risks and is just a sample of the hundreds of photos I have been sent from more than a dozen tenants in properties from several Housing Association companies.

One property for example has a family of 7 housed in a 2 bedroom flat and the HA are stating they are not eligible for priority rehoming.

I have copies of diaries of complaints, medical letters about the health damage these properties are causing to individual children living there as a result of the damp and mould (reminiscent of the recent tragic death of Awaab Ishak) and letters from schools about the specific social, educational and developmental impact on some of the children who live in these properties.

My allegation is that this council is failing in its basic duty to enforce basic living conditions and is allowing inhumane and unacceptable housing of social housing tenants through the simple act of not carrying out oversight of the Housing Associations they have delegated responsibility to.

To all intents and purpose, this council is failing in its duty and simply using the delegation of responsibility to wash their hands of any oversight.

My request to the council is that a full investigation of the Housing Associations involved is carried out and that all of the cases I have been contacted about, that I will provide details of, are investigated fully and appropriate action taken as the HA's in question are clearly not fulfilling their duties to an acceptable standard.

I would also request a full plan from the council is put in place to ensure more stringent oversight in future to prevent this situation arising in future.

2. Mrs Susan Sullivan, member of the public

Parish councils affected by the City's governance review are disappointed by the lack of support from the City administration for the new shadow parish councils. The work to set up a new council is time consuming and requires new Clerks to be appointed.

The Leader Cllr Robinson is also a shadow parish councillor for the new Chelmsford Garden Community council. In this role, he has asked that the City Council considers whether it can assist with funding for the new council. Will equivalent cash support be given to the new Village Council of Chelmer?

3. Mr David Sismey, member of the public (to be put in person)

Given it is proposed that the living and the dead of Chelmsford are to be stung with above inflation fee increases on services provided by the council, will the Liberal Democrats finally apologise for the shocking cost overruns on multiple recent projects they have managed. These include the theatre foyer refurbishment which has increased from a budget of £1m to almost £4m, including lost revenue; the Aquila House refurbishment which has doubled in expected cost and the new paving at Tindal Square which is hugely over budget and having to be bailed out by the national taxpayer. The council has blamed Brexit when we had left the EU long before the contract was signed, Covid when all the lockdowns happened before the contract was agreed but has failed to take responsibility for its own mismanagement. Now it is expecting the people of Chelmsford to pick up the bill, surely it is time to apologise?