



ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP HOUSING & SOCIAL MOBILITY



Title: All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Social Mobility

Purpose: To champion social housing providers that support communities to secure sustainable livelihoods. To examine evidence led insights into the role that Government, housing providers and stakeholders can play to best support social housing tenants and communities to access long-term, rewarding employment.

Meeting: Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 6th December 2022, 15:00-16:00

Attended

Peter Aldous MP	Member, Co Chair
Stephen Timms MP	Member
Rt Hon. Lord McNally	Interested Party
Rt Hon. Lord Best	Interested Party
Secretariat	
Lynsey Sweeney	Communities that Work
Lindsey De Bartolo	Communities that Work
Guests and Speakers	
Mr Tony Wilson	Institute for Employment Studies
Mr Liam Gregson	Northern Housing Consortium
Dr Mercy Denedo	Durham University Business School
Dr Amanze Ejogu	Newcastle University Business School
Observers	
Lisa Birchall	National Federation of ALMOS
Sue Ramsden	National Housing Federation
Clementine Flack	Optivo
Matthew Johnston	Northern Housing Consortium

1.0 Welcome & Introductions

The Co-Chair, Peter Aldous MP welcomed all and opened the business of the AGM at 15.05.

Apologies submitted:

- Liz Twist MP, Co-Chair, APPG
- Ian Byrne MP, Member, APPG
- Ian Mearns MP, Chair of APPG for Housing in the North
- Jane Hunt MP



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- Yasmin Qureshi MP

2.0 Co-Chairs Address

Peter Aldous MP, Co-Chair

- P. Aldous welcomed all to the first face to face / hybrid meeting of the APPG post covid era.
- A brief introduction was provided to each of the research items to be shared with the APPG.

3.0 Research Briefing: 'Building opportunity: how social housing can support skills, talent and workforce development'

Tony Wilson, Director | Institute for Employment Studies

T. Wilson provided a background of the research piece, which was commissioned by Communities that Work, National Federation of ALMOs and National Housing Federation for Learning and Work Institute and Institute for Employment Studies to look at the current situation of social housing residents and the labour market.

Context

We have avoided an unemployment crisis post-pandemic. Instead, we have nearly a million fewer people in work than the pre-crisis trend; nearly a million people more who are economically inactive since the pandemic; and there are as many vacancies now as there are people unemployed.

Outcomes

It is the contention of the research that there is no road to recovery without engaging and supporting with social housing residents.

Social Housing residents are twice as likely to be out of work than private renters or homeowners. Most of this difference is explained by economic inactivity – because they are significantly disadvantaged in the labour market and face social exclusion. Over half of inactivity in the labour market for social housing tenants is due to long-term health conditions or disabilities. It was noted that social housing tenants are twice as likely when in work to be in Elementary occupations (i.e. bar work, manual labour, cleaning etc.) than their private renter/homeowner counterparts, resulting in lower pay.

Case studies in the report

Case study research with six social landlords investigated what is working well, what can be working better and what should be changed in the future.

There are three important ways that services are being delivered.

- Core employment services – for all the community.
- Specialist support for those more disadvantaged.
- Direct employment, apprenticeships and social value clauses

Key Strengths

- Often reaching those outside mainstream services and further from work.
- Personalised and open-ended support
- Strong partnerships with public services – but not enough of it
- Strong employment focus, but joining up across services

Challenges

- Continuity of funding, especially with the end of European Social Fund
- Fragmentation, duplication, and gaps in delivery
- Inflexible commissioning and delivery models

Case for Change

Proposals

- New ‘Plan for jobs, growth and incomes’. Need to invest better and sooner, with social residents being the key focus.
- Partnerships and Coordination
- Sector action
- Supporting Innovation

Questions

P.Aldous MP commented that his concerns were around short-term funding and the disadvantages of funding terms and asked T Wilson his thoughts on funding streams.

T Wilson agreed and confirmed he will be raising this point with Mel Stride MP in a meeting shortly. There are two things that would help; bringing forward the Shared Prosperity Fund, Employment and Skills strand which is currently not expected until 2024; and, secondly, to look towards longer-term settlements across other funding streams. Some services have already closed down or stopped taking clients that are being funded by ESF money, so there is an urgent need for funding to be addressed at a Government level.

S. Timms MP asked around the outlined proposals; which could be taken now by the Social Housing providers and which needed the Government to get behind them.

T. Wilson said that for the most part, there has been a focus on where the Government policy could make a difference. The immediate priority is to work with Economic Inactivity Review. The Partnership and Coordination proposal is longer terms and needs planning.

Lord Best enquired about the Shared Prosperity Fund. T Wilson noted that the timing issue of the UKSPF is the biggest problem, where there is a delay to the Employment and Skills strand not coming until 2024. We can think of different ways for the DWP to commission targeted support. There are examples of health commissions for employment.



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Lord McNally noted the contrast between his home town of St Albans and his birth town where he still has connections on the Fyfe Coast. Noting his experience in Fleetwood, where there is a big drop out to unemployment in the 16-25 year old group. There doesn't seem to be a coordinated national approach to support this group.

T.Wilson, we need to think about greater devolution and more local powers to deal with localised employment issues.

Conclusion: The APPG resolved to write to the Secretary of State at the DWP, Mel Stride MP, to outline the 'Building Opportunity' report, its findings, and its recommendations.

4.0 Research Briefing: From Net Zero to Housing Decency: Housing Providers and Levelling Up at the Local Level

Liam Gregson, Member Engagement Manager | Northern Housing Consortium

L Gregson provided an introduction to the Research which was completed by Northern Housing Consortium and the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence.

Background

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities is reviewing the Decent Homes Standard (DHS).

The Government encouraged social housing providers to think differently about their role as a place-based agent, the intertwining issues of improving housing quality, regenerating town centres or neighbourhood amenity hubs, and how all this corresponds to residents' sense of pride or belonging.

A comprehensive national mission to invest in the quality of our homes and neighbourhoods, if coordinated correctly, invested in appropriately, and tied to the local, provides a real opportunity to upscale training and skills opportunities across traditional and green trades, and tie down good quality jobs at the community level.

Three lessons for delivery:

- 1) The benefits of a holistic approach to decency - combining long-term planning, programmes and funding.
- 2) Resident engagement is key to building momentum around DHS2 and building trust
- 3) Combining DHS2 with complimentary policy across Net Zero and the wider Levelling Up agenda – in homes and in neighbourhoods

In conclusion:

A holistic approach makes sense.

The standard needs a coherent implementation programme and, importantly, a target deadline.



The Levelling Up Missions provide both an accountability mechanism and a north star to focus minds and drive ambition.

Resident engagement & communication matters

Finally, housing quality is ingrained across our national priorities. Going beyond the front door and working with residents to improve homes, tackle climate change and co-create healthier, sociable, more prosperous areas.

Questions:

Lord McNally recalled a case from his time as MP where Stockport Council supported an initiative to put underfloor heating into homes, which unfortunately resulted in tenants not being able to afford the heating bills. How can we be sure that the improvements being made are within the capacity for the tenants affordability?

L. Gregson responded that there was absolutely consultation with tenants, with communication and collaboration being the key with tenants.

Lord. Best noted that the schemes need to be advantageous to the tenant and need to sell the improvements to the residents. There is a big undertaking, and resistance to change should not be underestimated.

L. Gregson, the social housing landlords are ready and willing to take on the improvements but agreed challenges in communicating with the residents.

5.0 Research Briefing: 'Challenging Stigmatisation of Social Housing Tenants in England'
Dr. Mercy Denedo | Durham University Business School Dr. Amanze Ejiogu | Newcastle University Business School

Regretfully, the Committee agreed with the Speakers that the research briefing should be postponed to the next meeting to allow for sufficient time to discuss an important subject. The secretariat will make further arrangements.

6.0 AOB and Close

There were no further discussion points and the meeting closed with P.Aldous' thanks at 16.00