

Subject: Stop unlawful discrimination against benefit claimants by landlords and letting agents

Date of meeting: 22 June 2022

Proposer: Councillor Fowler

Seconder: Councillor Gibson

Ward(s) affected: All

Amendment to Notice of Motion

Green and Labour Group

This committee notes:

Over one third of Brighton & Hove residents rely on the private rented sector PRS. ~~There is no doubt that private renters face a host of challenges, including disrepair and lack of affordable rents. Tenants and prospective tenants in receipt of housing benefit or universal credit also face the prospect of discrimination. Such practices have been found to be unlawful under The Equality Act 2010 yet are still widespread. A motion to tackle such discrimination was passed at full council in January 2020. It is time to take action.~~ **More recently, the government has expressed its intention to outlaw such practices in its fairer private rented sector white paper.**

This committee resolves to:

Ensure steps are taken to condemn discriminatory practices that act as barriers to benefit claimants ~~such as 'no benefit recipients' such as (No DSS) policies, requiring 6 months' rent in advance, homeowner guarantors and prohibitive terms and conditions~~ by adopting a "no discrimination" policy and introducing enforcement measures to prevent such discrimination. Steps should include:

- The provision of guidance making it clear that "no DSS" policies are discriminatory, **and condemnation of** practices such as requiring 6 months' rent in advance, homeowner guarantors and prohibitive terms and conditions ~~should be condemned as barriers to benefit claimants~~
- Advice and signposting **of** information to help tenants and prospective tenants to challenge such discrimination

- ~~Insertion of as~~ a provision in future landlord accreditation schemes (such as selective landlord licencing) **prohibiting** that benefit discriminatory practices ~~to be forbidden~~
- ~~Inclusion as a provision~~ in any future ethical landlord charter **of a requirement** that signatories desist from such discriminatory practices
- **Addition of a statement on the council website condemning discrimination against benefit claimants**
- **Exploration of the possibility of extending the practice of the council acting as a guarantor.**