

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council meeting, Thursday 11 July 2019

Liberal Democrat Motion on Ending Unfair Evictions

To be proposed by Councillor Michelle O'Doherty

Council:

1. Welcomes the campaign by the "End Unfair Evictions Coalition", calling for Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to be scrapped.
2. Notes that Section 21 brought in "no fault evictions", allowing private landlords to evict tenants with just two months' notice, once the initial term of a tenancy has expired.
3. Notes that fear of "revenge eviction" may discourage renters from complaining about maintenance issues.
4. Notes that housing insecurity can contribute to anxiety and mental health issues, lead to problems with debt, and make it harder for private renters to access services and establish community ties.
5. Acknowledges research published by "Generation Rent" showing the link between Section 21 evictions and rising homelessness in England; and research showing that as many as 80% of private-sector evictions fall under Section 21.
6. Notes that in 2017 the Scottish Government adopted the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act, effectively creating open ended tenancies and banning no-fault evictions, whilst still providing safeguards for landlords.

Council therefore:

7. Supports the "End Unfair Evictions" campaign.
8. Welcomes the recent announcement that government intends to scrap "no fault" evictions.
9. Requests that the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs expressing this Council's support for abolishing Section 21, noting the need for fair safeguards for landlords, and calling for the consultation and legislation to be brought forward without delay.
10. Requests that officers work with the relevant cabinet member to prepare a response to the consultation.
11. Asks the Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning, and Economic Development to consider options for actions the Council could take to improve standards of rental accommodation in B&NES.