

Notice requesting to call in Single Member Decision E3181

**23 Grosvenor Place, London Road, Bath BA1 6BA :- Surrender of existing Guinness Housing Association (GHA) lease, subject to payment of a reverse premium**

The undersigned Councillors wish to call in decision E3181 to “Surrender of existing Guinness Housing Association (GHA) lease, subject to payment of a reverse premium”, taken on 13 December 2019 by Councillor Richard Samuel for the following reasons:

1. There has been no opportunity for Elected Members to scrutinise the proposals.
2. The report was inadequate, lacked information and did not demonstrate how we came to this recommendation.
3. We believe that it is not justifiable to pay £450k for a building that will be handed back to us in extremely poor condition and will require further investment to bring back for a suitable use.
4. The impact of this decision has not been considered fully within the Council and binds the Council to future spending.
5. There is a lack of transparency of information surrounding this proposal. Nowhere within the Council’s report did it address the following areas:
  - a. The tenant approached the Council 2 years ago about their desire to surrender this lease.
  - b. We do not believe it right to allow the tenant to walk away from a full repairing lease without any obligations to contribute financially.
  - c. There has been no discussion or consideration, within the Councils scrutiny panels about the implications of losing 20 dwellings from our vulnerable people’s provision. We already have a housing shortage, and this decision has increased it by another 20 housing units.
6. No reasons have been given as to how or why the decision was reached to accept the surrendering of the building lease.
7. We believe that it is not justifiable to pay £450k of tax payers money as a “pay off” to the tenant without even a business plan being in place. It was stated that B&NES had sought professional advice back in 2018 and the upshot is the £450k cost. Councillors should have had a chance to see that professional reasoning, withholding it means scrutiny cannot be achieved properly and makes the whole figure/process very confusing.
8. Without careful consideration and scrutiny we will be setting a precedent for future tenants to be able to just walk away.
9. There is no detail as to what the future strategy is for the building and what exactly the administration intends to do with it.
10. Ultimately, we do not believe that the Council is getting best value for money from these arrangements.

9 signatures required.

Cllr Colin Blackburn (Lead)

Cllr Vic Pritchard

Cllr Sally Davis

Cllr Paul May

Cllr Karen Walker

Cllr June Player

Cllr Robin Moss

Cllr Liz Hardman

Cllr Chris Dando