

**COUNCIL**

**8 July 2025**

**QUESTION ASKED PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.5**

The following question has been asked pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.5 by Councillor L Athwal:

Given our housing targets, which include a 10% punitive uplift as we have not been able to deliver to our targets to date, and that we have not been able to deliver any new social housing across the Borough, is this the right time for us to stop relying on private housing companies and instead, set up our own arms-length building company who could build for social and economic benefit, without the need to make profit for shareholders?

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy (Cllr R Betts:**

Affordable rented tenures, which is what the Council is required to deliver, includes both social rent and affordable rent and units have been delivered under this definition, albeit not directly by the Council but through Registered Providers. Establishing a Local Housing Company (LHC) is included in the Housing Strategy's Years 4 and 5 Action Plan supporting the strategic objective to 'consider options for the Council to influence and take a pro-active role in housing delivery, including through a Local Housing Company'. The initial primary purpose of the LHC could be to facilitate the delivery of resettlement homes through the Local Authority Housing Fund. In the longer term, officers will explore options and present to Members the opportunities for the LHC to support wider corporate objectives and functions, ensuring that a robust business case exists that considers the need to have some minimum levels of operation to make a company viable.