

COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

NOTICE OF MOTION

This Council notes the proposed merger of Circle Housing Group Limited with Affinity Sutton. This Council furthermore notes with concern the feeling of many Circle Housing Merton Priory (“CHMP”) residents that the, now imminent, merger will result in the larger combined group being unaccountable to them and recognises the anxiety that many CHMP residents have regarding the Council’s role in being able properly to scrutinise the new Circle/Affinity Group.

This Council therefore requests that the Cabinet seek guarantees from the Board of Directors that:

- a. the merger occurs with appropriate transparency, and further consultation with those tenants, leaseholders and freeholders affected so that it is fully understood what this merger will mean for them;
- b. the significant efficiencies which the new group hopes to realise will not be achieved by a worsening of service quality, particularly given residents’ existing concerns about Circle’s responsiveness with regard to repairs and maintenance;
- c. profits generated by the Merton Estates’ regeneration will be reinvested in Merton;
- d. the new structure will be locally accountable to housing association tenants and that tenants will have representation on the Board of the new association;
- e. the policy regarding disposals of stock is clarified and publicised prior to the merger;
- f. the current financial position of Affinity Sutton is clearly presented prior to the merger, and in particular the impact of any debts and liabilities on CHMP residents; and
- g. the democratic decision making process and the involvement of tenants, leaseholders and freeholders in CHMP’s regeneration plans for the High Path, Ravensbury and Eastfields estates are not prejudiced by the merger.

Cllr Michael Bull

Cllr Suzanne Grocott

Cllr Najeeb Latif

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