



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2023/05231

Jane Roney
CEO
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

8 December 2023

Dear Ms Roney,

I write following three findings of severe maladministration by the Housing Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman's report identifies numerous failings in your letting of an uninhabitable property to a young family. There were multiple serious failures in this case, including extensive delays and unacceptable handling of their complaint. You let the property with no regard for the resident's wellbeing and safety. The floor was rotten, the home was riddled with damp and mould, and the garden path was in a dangerous condition.

Due to your inaction your resident moved out and stayed with family in overcrowded conditions. You did not offer alternative accommodation. You failed to investigate the cause of the poor condition of the property despite water coming up through the floor. It took you six months to respond to her complaint and 67 weeks to repair holes in the roof that were causing leaks. When these delays led to her carrying out repairs herself, you did not reimburse her.

After she had moved back into the property, your own surveyors confirmed that the repairs had not been completed. Despite this, you presented her with an arrears notice. When the tenant instructed a solicitor to start legal proceedings you used this as a reason not to progress repairs, which led to further delays in remedying the situation. This is unacceptable.

Everyone should be able to live in a decent home and have their complaints taken seriously. Residents must be treated with respect and courtesy by their landlord and their health and safety should be paramount. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak has shown us that we must be especially vigilant when it comes to protecting children and vulnerable people. This Government expects social landlords to intensify their efforts to provide the high-quality social housing that residents deserve.

I will be taking a personal interest in the changes you make to improve the quality of service you deliver to your residents.

I am copying this letter to Mayor Andy Burnham, Mike Kane MP, Afzal Khan MP, Lucy Powell MP, Jeff Smith MP, and Graham Stringer MP. I am also copying Councillors Bev Crag, Astrid Johnson, and John Leech, the Select Committee for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Housing Ombudsman.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations