

EXECUTIVE DECISION

REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER




Executive Decision Reference Number – L35 2022/23

Decision	
1	Title of decision: Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) grant and Memorandum of Understanding
2	Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title): Councillor Richard Bingley (Leader of the Council)
3	Report author and contact details: Jackie Kings, Strategic Manager – Community Connections 01752 308989
4	Decision to be taken: To <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accept the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) grant from (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; DLUHC) 2. Delegate authority to the Section 151 officer to sign the Memorandum of Understanding 3. Delegate authority to the Section 151 officer disperse the funds to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association to deliver in line with the MOU where they do not already have authority to do so.
5	Reasons for Decision: <p>The Local Authority Housing Fund is a £500m capital grant fund in financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 to support selected local authorities in England to obtain and refurbish property. Administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), the fund is designed to provide sustainable housing for those unable to secure their own accommodation who are here under the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), • Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) • Ukraine Family Scheme, • the Homes for Ukraine • and the Ukraine Extension Scheme <p>Plymouth has been offered a capital grant allocation of £1,531,181 by DLUHC with an expectation to provide 16 homes (2-4 bedrooms) by March 2023. This is broken down to include:</p>

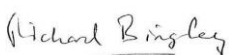
	<p>✓ £1,055,600 to provide 13 homes with a minimum of 2 bedrooms. This includes £61,200 per property (40% of capital costs) plus an additional £20,000 per property for refurbishment costs.</p> <p>✓ £475,581 to provide 3 homes with a minimum of 4 bedrooms for Afghan families currently residing in bridging accommodation. This includes £138,527 per property (50% of capital costs) plus an additional £20,000 per property for refurbishment costs.</p> <p>This paper recommends that the Local Authority Fund Allocation is used by BCHA to source, acquire, refurbish and let sixteen family homes to the above-mentioned schemes</p> <p>The decision to allocate the capital funding to BCHA is solely based on the nature of their organisation and that it is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The organisation is subject to regulation and scrutiny around key areas such as current and future rent levels; building quality and safety and how its properties are let.</p> <p>BCHA have agreed to deliver all sixteen homes by the 31st of March 2024, at an affordable rent. The timescales have been agreed by DLUHC.</p>			
6	<p>Alternative options considered and rejected:</p> <p>Officers have consulted a wide range of potential delivery partners including registered providers, social enterprises, B-corps, and social investors.</p> <p>Four organisations sent in financial modelling and expressed an interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two social investment companies • A privately owned social enterprise <p>They were rejected based on the nature of their organisations and the lack of assurance around maintaining affordable rent levels, housing quality and who the houses could be let to, in the medium to long term.</p>			
7	<p>Financial implications:</p> <p>Minimal financial risk exists for Plymouth City Council, as the scheme will be fully delivered by BCHA (Bournemouth Churches Housing Association), a traditional registered housing provider and a member of the Plymouth Alliance. There are no penalty clauses for Plymouth City Council within the Memorandum of Understanding with DLUHC.</p>			
8	<p>Is the decision a Key Decision?</p> <p>(please contact Democratic Support for further advice)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:</p> <p>in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total</p>

			X	in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1 million
			X	is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.
	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <u>Forward Plan of Key Decisions</u>	N/A		
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	<p>Providing 16 affordable homes for Afghan/Ukrainian refugees, refurbished to EPC C, aligns with the following PCC policies, plans and priorities:</p> <p>Policy HEA8 of the Plymouth Plan outlines aims to ensure everyone has access to a decent, safe and affordable home, achieved through identifying sites and delivery programmes to develop a range of new and affordable homes to rent and buy. Section 4.71 of the Plymouth Plan further outlines the significant need for more affordable homes in Plymouth.</p> <p>Policy SPT3 of the JLP makes provisions to deliver 4,550 new affordable homes by 2034. In addition, Policy DEV7 of the JLP outlines the need to ensure there is a broad range of housing available to suit households with specific needs, including large family homes.</p> <p>This project will refurbish properties to an EPC C rating, thereby improving the energy efficiency of homes and supporting plans to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Plymouth as outlined in the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).</p> <p>A star action of the Plymouth's Future 'Our Opportunity, Our Delivery Plan' involves delivering affordable homes in the city through our housing partnership agreements with housing associations. Furthermore, the reduction in carbon emissions from housing is outlined as a key measure of success.</p>		
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	<p>Refurbishing 16 homes up to EPC C will improve the energy efficiency of these homes, thereby reducing carbon emissions of these properties, whilst simultaneously reducing fuel poverty/energy costs, and improving tenant comfort. By commissioning these works, the delivery partner will also support Plymouth's green economy by further stimulating demand for green jobs, skills, products, services and local collaboration.</p>		

Urgent decisions

I1	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?	Yes		(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No	X	(If no, go to section I3a)
I2a	<p>Reason for urgency:</p> <p>Officers have explored options to deliver this in the best way possible for the Local Authority, for those accessing the homes and for the provider to support health and wellbeing, a standard of property and ensure best value for money.</p> <p>BCHA were late to the table as the only Registered Provider interested in providing and managing this accommodation to deliver against the grant.</p> <p>Talks with DLUHC at the end of last week confirmed they would be willing to release the Grant to us on the basis that BCHA were in a position to make best endeavours to deliver.</p> <p>BCHA have agreed to deliver all sixteen homes by the 31st March 2024, at an affordable rent. The timescales have been agreed by DLUHC.</p> <p>The deadline for the submission of the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed and returned to DLUHC in order to access these funds is 15th March.</p>			
I2b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:		Date	15/03/2023 (Confirmed via email)
	Scrutiny Committee name:	Performance Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
	Print Name:	Councillor Chris Penberthy		
Consultation				
I3a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes		
		No	X	(If no go to section I4)
I3b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Councillor Smith		
I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted	08/03/2023		
I4		Yes		

	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer				
15	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name		N/A				
		Job title		N/A				
		Date consulted		N/A				
Sign-off								
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)		DSI 18 22/23				
		Finance (mandatory)		DJN.22.23.420				
		Legal (mandatory)		MS/00001326/14.03.23				
		Human Resources (if applicable)		N/A				
		Corporate property (if applicable)		N/A				
		Procurement (if applicable)		N/A				
Appendices								
17	Ref.	Title of appendix						
	A	Briefing report for publication						
	B	DLUHC Grant Prospectus						
	C	MoU						
Confidential/exempt information								
18a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)				
		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:							

Background Papers								
19	<p>Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.</p> <p>Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</p>							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabinet Member Signature								
20	<p>I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.</p>							
Signature			Date of decision		15/03/2023			
Print Name	Councillor Richard Bingley, Leader of Plymouth City Council							