

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a **Cabinet Member**



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

Executive Decision Reference Number – L25 23/24

Decision	
1	Title of decision: Local Authority Homes Fund (LAHF) Round 2 delegated authority to allocate funds
2	Decision maker: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, Leader of the Council
3	Report author and contact details: Jackie Kings, Strategic Manager – Community Connections 01752 305191
4	Decision to be taken: Delegate authority to the Section 151 officer to disperse the LAHF round 2 grant funds to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association.
5	<p>Reasons for decision:</p> <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); • Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Families (2 units). <p>Plymouth has accepted a capital grant allocation of £1,020,000 by DLUHC with an expectation to provide 10 homes (2-4 bedrooms) by March 2024.</p> <p>This paper recommends that the Local Authority Fund Allocation is used by BCHA to source, acquire, refurbish and let 10 family homes to the above-mentioned schemes</p> <p>The decision to allocate the capital funding to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA) is 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 use best endeavours to deliver ten 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>This is a variation to decision L19 23/24 which allocated the LAHF round 2 grant and capital borrowing for delivery by Plymouth City Council.</p> <p>BCHA are ahead of schedule in the delivery of LAHF round 1 and are now in a position to deliver LAHF round 2 units of accommodation also, reducing the costs and risk to the Council and the ability to deliver and manage the 10 units of accommodation.</p>

	<p>Officers had 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> <p>Two social investment companies</p> <p>A privately owned social enterprise</p> <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> <p>Officers have consulted a wide range of potential delivery partners including registered providers, social enterprises, B-corps, and social investors. No suitable organisations have been found to deliver this programme. The two main reasons given were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not having capacity to buy from the open market and refurbishing properties within the deadline; 2. Financial viability due to current interest rates and grant allocation. 																				
7	<p>Financial implications and risk:</p> <p>Minimal financial risk exists for Plymouth City Council, as the scheme will be fully delivered by BCHA, 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	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Is the decision a Key Decision? (Please contact Democratic Support for further advice)</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Yes</th> <th style="width: 10%;">No</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">x</td> <td>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</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">x</td> <td>in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1million</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">x</td> <td>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.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <u>Forward Plan of Key Decisions</u></td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Is the decision a Key Decision? (Please contact Democratic Support for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:			x	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			x	in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1million			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		
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9	<p>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> <p>Providing 8 affordable homes for Afghan refugees and 2 units of temporary accommodation for homeless families:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 Net Zero Action plan. A priority of our Corporate Plan plan involves building more homes that are affordable 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 10 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, we will also support Plymouth's green economy by further stimulating demand for green jobs, skills, products, services and local collaboration.</p>		
Urgent decisions				
11	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 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency:			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:		Date	
	Scrutiny Committee name:			
	Print Name:			
Consultation				
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	x	
		No		(If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development, and Communities)		

I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted	27 September 2023						
I4	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes						
		No	x					
I5	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Gary Walbridge					
		Job title	Interim Strategic Director for People					
		Date consulted	9 October 2023					
Sign-off								
I6	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS53 23/24					
		Finance (mandatory)	HLS091023					
		Legal (mandatory)	LS/00001312/1/AC/10/10/23					
		Human Resources (if applicable)	N/A					
		Corporate property (if applicable)	N/A					
		Procurement (if applicable)	N/A					
Appendices								
I7	Ref.	Title of appendix						
	A	Briefing report for publication: <i>LAHF2 allocation to BCHA Briefing Report</i>						
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment: <i>LAHF2 EIA</i>						
Confidential/exempt information								
I8a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	Yes						
		No	x	If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and 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 in I8b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)				
		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I8b	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 I 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						
Print Name								