

Delegated Decision Briefing Paper – Purchase of Properties for Children's Homes

Part I



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Purpose of Purchase

Plymouth City Council is purchasing two four-bedroom properties to develop as children's homes as part of its programme to improve outcomes for children in care and reduce reliance on costly external placements. These homes will collectively provide provision for up to six children with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and will be operated directly by the Council. This initiative will help address the shortage of local provision, reduce the number of children in unlawful placements, and provide emergency and long-term care closer to Plymouth.

This decision supports the Council Plan commitment to keeping children safe and aligns with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which includes anticipated savings from reducing external placement costs.

Background

The proposal to purchase and run children's homes was initiated in July 2024. The original model sought properties with annexes (2+1 model) to allow flexible care arrangements. Following market challenges and restrictive covenants, the search criteria were broadened in April 2025 to include homes suitable for two children, aligning with other providers in the city.

Since the programme was agreed;

- 118 title deeds reviewed.
- 76 properties rejected due to restrictive covenants.
- 33 properties viewed.
- 3 offers made.

Properties

Following the purchase of the property and the planned schedule of works, both homes will comply with Ofsted standards and will enable the Council to deliver local, high-quality registered care provisions.

Current Status

Both purchases are progressing to completion. Exchange and completion for one property is expected during the week commencing the 8th of December 2025. Exchange and completion for the other property is anticipated in February 2026.