

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 07 October 2025

Report Title

Housing Market Acquisitions

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-wide

Report Summary

This report details decisions taken under the provisions of the Housing Acquisitions Policy and the associated delegation to the Assistant Director for Housing to acquire 100 homes from the market, approved by Cabinet on 16th October 2023.

On the 10th of February 2025, Cabinet approved a decision to amend the number of new homes the Council has authority to purchase from the market from 'up to 100 homes' to 'a minimum of 100 homes purchased within the approved budget', as part of the Housing Delivery Programme Report.

This is the second progress report to be produced, and further reports will be submitted on a quarterly basis hereafter.

This report covers Quarter 4 of 2024-25 and Quarter 1 of 2025-2026. In Quarter 4 of 2024-25, 26 homes were purchased and brought into the Council's housing stock. A further 13 homes were purchased and brought into the Council's housing stock in Quarter 1 of 2025-26.

Recommendation

Note that 39 properties were acquired under the Housing Acquisitions Policy in the last reporting period.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Properties Acquired to Date

Background Papers

Housing Delivery Programme Report – January 2025

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s150452/Report%20-%20Housing%20Delivery%20Programme.pdf>

Housing Acquisitions Policy Cabinet Report – October 2023

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s143427/Housing%20Acquisitions%20Policy%20Cabinet%20Report%20October%202023%20FINAL%20SK.pdf>

Housing Acquisitions Policy – October 2023

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s143428/Appendix%201%20Housing%20Acquisitions%20Policy.pdf>

Housing Delivery Programme Report – January 2024

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s144733/Cabinet%20Report%20-%20Housing%20Delivery%20Programme%2024-25.pdf>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Council Housing Acquisitions

1. Background

- 1.1 The Housing Acquisitions Policy was approved at Cabinet on 16 October 2023. The policy detailed the approach to acquiring homes to meet local housing need. It set out the different methods of acquisition, how the Council assesses housing need and the criteria for decision making on each acquisition opportunity.
- 1.2 Cabinet approved the acquisition of an initial 100 homes as part of the Housing Delivery Programme, contributing to the delivery of 1000 new homes by summer 2027. This was in addition to the strategic acquisition opportunities approved by Cabinet in prior Cabinet reports.
- 1.3 It was subsequently identified that there was scope within the total Market Acquisitions budget allocation of £18m to acquire more than 100 homes. On the 10th of February 2025, Cabinet therefore approved an increase to the number of new homes the Council has authority to purchase under the Housing Acquisitions Policy from 'up to 100 homes' to 'a minimum of 100 homes' and not exceeding the approved budget.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Housing Acquisitions Policy provides a clear framework for assessing properties and has facilitated an effective approach to acquiring properties under market acquisition. The Council is on target to deliver a minimum of 100 additional acquisitions, within the approved budget. 78 properties have been acquired to date, including 39 in the period covered by this report. An additional 16 offers had been made by the Council and accepted by vendors at the end of Quarter 1 and were progressing through the legal process.

3. Options Considered and Recommendation

- 3.1 A total of 267 properties had been considered to the end of Quarter 1. Each acquisition opportunity is assessed against the criteria set out in the Housing Acquisitions Policy, and acquisitions that fail to meet the criteria are not pursued. The status of these properties is as follows:
 - 78 properties acquired.
 - 16 accepted offers in the legal process.
 - 36 opportunities that are being actively considered.
 - 137 acquisitions withdrawn, not pursued, or rejected by the vendor.
 - 3.2 Details of the 39 properties acquired in the period covered by this report are shown in the table at **Appendix 1.**
- ### 4. Consultation on proposal
- 4.1 Each acquisition opportunity is assessed against the criteria set out in the Housing Acquisitions Policy to include:
 - Current housing need.
 - Recent and proposed delivery of affordable housing via the Housing delivery Programme.
 - Property Condition.

- Value for money.

4.2 In line with the approved governance process, the decision to proceed on each acquisition was approved by the Assistant Director of Housing.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The properties subject to this report have been acquired in line with the delegation allowing the Council to acquire a minimum of 100 homes purchased within the approved budget'

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The Policy outlines that acquisition opportunities will only be pursued if there is funding available at the time they are offered, and the Council has the right to refuse any housing acquisition opportunity where no funding is available at that time.

6.2 The properties subject to this report have been assessed in line with the value for money criteria set out in the Housing Acquisitions Policy.

6.3 The budget for market acquisitions was allocated based on an average purchase price of £140k per unit. Average purchase prices are currently under this creating capacity within the budget for the acquisition of an increased volume of properties.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no substantive legal issues arising from the contents of this report. All legal implications were covered in the drafting of the Housing Acquisitions Policy and the necessary resource is in place to ensure that the Council can meet the statutory timescales associated with Right of First Refusal properties.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no Human Resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The Housing Acquisitions Policy allows for adapted homes to be prioritised and accommodation to be considered that will create opportunities for providing supported, shared dispersed accommodation for Care Leavers. It also allows for the acquisition of family-sized homes which will help to ensure children are able to live in homes that are safe and secure. This has the potential to help with other issues such as the prevention of overcrowding or allowing families to access larger homes where they can support fostering opportunities or for those being supported through a Pathway to Care.

9.2 As per the Housing Acquisitions Policy, a variety of homes have been purchased to meet the current housing needs of the Borough. The majority of the 39 homes purchased in this reporting period are family accommodation, with the following breakdown of property types, and bedroom numbers:

Houses:

3-Bedroom House	17
2-Bedroom House	18
Total Houses Acquired	35

Flats:

2-Bedroom Flat	4
Total Flats Acquired	4

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are over 7000 active applications on the Housing Register. All 39 properties were purchased in areas with demand. The type and size of properties added to the housing stock under Market Acquisitions attract multiple bids in the relevant wards. The number of bids for similar properties ranges from 37 to 230.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Where properties acquired under the Market Acquisitions workstream do not already have an EPC rating of C or above, works are undertaken prior to the first let to achieve a C rating.

12. Implications for Partners

The Council has existing contractual arrangements with Equans and Mears through the housing repairs and maintenance contracts. The refurbishment required to bring acquisitions to the Council's lettable standard and EPC C are undertaken by these contractors.

13. Risks and Mitigation

	Risk	Mitigation
13.1	Cost escalation during refurbishment works	Properties are surveyed prior to acquisition and a full scope of works identified. Review of actual refurbishment costs have informed how initial surveys are conducted and the schedule of work identified.
13.2	Structural or other significant defects on new build acquisitions.	Warranty provided by the developer.
13.3	Difficulty letting	The housing need of all properties was assessed prior to acquisition. There is housing need and demand for all 39 properties.

14. Accountable Officers

14.1 John Holman, Interim Assistant Director of Housing

Report Author: Alex Young, Housing Growth Manager