

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Delegated Officer Decision – 27 March 2026

**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)**

Alex Young, Housing Growth Manager

[alex.young@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:alex.young@rotherham.gov.uk)

**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 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> 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 report covers Quarter 3 of 2025-26 in which 11 homes were purchased and brought into the Council's housing stock.

**Recommendation**

Note that 11 properties were acquired under the Housing Acquisitions Policy in the last reporting period.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 – Properties Acquired in Quarter 3.

**Background Papers**

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>

Housing Delivery Programme Report – January 2025

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s150452/Report%20-%20Housing%20Delivery%20Programme.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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 the market acquisition workstream. The Council will deliver a minimum of 100 additional acquisitions within the approved budget. A total of 99 properties had been acquired to the end of Quarter 3, including 11 in the period covered by this report. An additional 8 offers made by the Council, and accepted by vendors, were progressing through the legal process at the end of Quarter 3.

### **3. Options Considered and Recommendation**

- 3.1 A total of 302 properties had been considered to the end of Quarter 3. 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:
  - 99 properties acquired.
  - 8 accepted offers in the legal process.
  - 12 opportunities that are being actively considered.
  - 183 acquisitions withdrawn, not pursued, or rejected by the vendor.
- 3.2 Details of the 11 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 Service Director of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing. Thresholds have been agreed with the Cabinet Member for when individual acquisition opportunities require consultation outside of regular Cabinet Member Steering Group meetings.

#### **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. The average acquisition cost to date is lower, creating capacity within the budget for the acquisition of an increased number 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 11 homes purchased in this reporting period are family accommodation, with the following breakdown of property types, and bedroom numbers:

Houses:

3-Bedroom House	6
2-Bedroom House	2
Total Houses Acquired	8

Flats:

2-Bedroom Flat	3
Total Flats Acquired	3

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 There are over 6500 active applications on the Housing Register. All 11 properties were purchased in areas with demand. The type and size of properties added to the housing stock as part of the Market Acquisitions programme attract multiple bids in the relevant wards. The number of bids for similar properties ranges from 32 to 186.

## **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.

5 of the 11 homes acquired in Quarter 3 were new build homes, purchased directly from the developer. These homes had an EPC A rating and benefited from high performance glazing, solar photovoltaics and electric vehicle chargers.

## **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 an EPC C rating, 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.<br><br>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. Housing need and demand exists for all 11 properties.   |

**14. Accountable Officers**

- 14.1 Sarah Clyde, Assistant Director of Housing

*Report Author: Alex Young, Housing Growth Manager*