

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 07 July 2025

Report Title

Housing Delivery Programme Report 2025-26 Update

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-wide

Report Summary

This report provides the regular six-monthly update to Cabinet, setting out the latest developments and plans for the Council's Housing Delivery Programme ('the Programme'). This report also seeks Cabinet approval to ensure the continued delivery of this Programme which recently reached the milestone of the 680th new Council home delivered since 2018.

Contained within the report are proposed changes to the programme, which are designed to manage overall costs and secure the delivery of 1,000 new Council homes by Summer 2027.

It is proposed that Housing Delivery Programme update reports continue to be presented to Cabinet on a six-monthly basis.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the continued progress made in delivering the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, including the delivery of 57 new homes in the period covered by this report, and the ongoing work to deliver 1,000 new Council homes by Summer 2027.

2. Approves the purchase of homes from any of the schemes identified in Exempt Appendix 2.
3. Approves the programme changes outlined in this report to facilitate the delivery of 1,000 new homes 'on time' (by Summer 2027) and 'on budget' (within the financial resources allocated to the Programme from the Housing Revenue Account). This includes the removal and addition of specific schemes as outlined in Section 2, paragraphs 2.10 to 2.20 of the report.
4. Approves the disposal of the four sites listed in Table 4, subject to Cabinet approval of Recommendation 3 (above), and following the usual Council disposal process. The receipts to be ringfenced to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Housing Delivery Programme.
5. Approves the appropriation of 19 Cranworth Road into the Housing Revenue Account, and its refurbishment for use as a Council home via the Market Acquisitions workstream (see Section 2, paragraph 2.19 and Section 6, paragraph 6.7 of the report).
6. Agrees to continue to receive an update on the housing development programme every six months.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Council-owned sites proposed for residential development
- Appendix 2 **EXEMPT** Proposed strategic acquisitions
- Appendix 3 Photographic summary & tenants feedback on housing delivery
- Appendix 4 Initial Equalities Screening (Part A)
- Appendix 5 Equality Analysis (Part B)
- Appendix 6 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Rotherham Housing Strategy 2022-25](#)

[Cabinet Report - Housing Delivery Programme 2024/25 update](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Improving Places Select Committee (via annual updates on the Housing Strategy)

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes – Exempt Appendix 2 (purchase of homes from the open market)

An exemption for Appendix 2 under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is sought, as this part of the report contains commercially sensitive information.

When purchasing homes, either as Section 106 acquisitions, Market Acquisitions or turn-key acquisitions via the Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative, the Council may be

in competition with others. Exempt Appendix 2 sets out planned acquisitions which, if pursued, will be subject to a commercial negotiation. Publishing this information would therefore put the Council at a competitive disadvantage. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

Housing Delivery Programme Report 2025-26 Update

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2018, the Council embarked on a Housing Delivery Programme. Since this time, the Council has established a strong track-record of delivery and achieved success in using its own land and resources to build and acquire new Council homes, delivering 687 new Council homes to the end of May 2025 (552 homes for Council Rent [80%] and 135 homes for Shared Ownership [20%]. In addition, 125 homes have been delivered for Market Sale that do not contribute towards the 1,000 new homes target). The programme remains on track to deliver 1,000 new Council homes by Summer 2027.
- 1.2 This delivery to date has been achieved through a mixed programme of activity, with delivery across four workstreams:
 - New build homes on council-owned sites.
 - Delivery by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SME) developers through the Council's innovative Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative.
 - Section 106 acquisitions from developers as part of their planning obligations.
 - The acquisition of homes from the open market ('market acquisitions').
- 1.3 Specifically, in the period from 1st December 2024 to 31st May 2025 (and covered by this report), the programme has delivered a total of 57 new homes. This has been achieved through 42 Market Acquisitions and 15 Section 106 Acquisitions.
- 1.4 In the same period work has continued to progress on the Council's own new-build programme with construction starting on 14 new Council homes across three sites in West Melton and Swinton, and an application for planning permission submitted for 28 new homes in Wath.
- 1.5 An updated photographic summary of delivery from 1st December 2024 to 31st May 2025, along with a selection of quotes from tenants, is provided at Appendix 3.
- 1.6 The need for this continued delivery programme is evidenced by the more than 7,000 households on the Council's housing register. The Council's ability to meet this demand continues to be eroded by the Right to Buy, which has seen 1,095 council homes sold between January 2018 and the end of May 2025.

2. Key Issues

Programme Options and Project Delivery

- 2.1 It is necessary for any programme of this scale, type and complexity, to over-programme to mitigate risks to delivery. The current programme has the potential to deliver 1,108 homes, exceeding the remaining available

budget and target number of homes. This programme position is summarised in Table 1 below with further detail provided in Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2.

Table 1: Current Programme Position – Previously Approved

Workstream	Completed	In Build	In contract	Pipeline	Total
Council Build	411	27	149	42	629
SME	7			46	53
S106	193	69		44	306
Market Acquisition	76		16	28	120
Total	687	96	165	160	1108

- 2.2 At this point in the programme, key decisions need to be made about which projects to progress, and conversely which projects to stop or slow the delivery of. This limits costs, enables the effective and efficient prioritisation of resources, and ensures the delivery of a balanced programme.
- 2.3 Based on current cost estimates, and the combination of estimated future delivery, a total of 1,005 homes can be delivered whilst retaining a programme-level contingency of circa £5m. This contingency provides some flexibility to cover any cost increases, risk areas, and further costs from schemes which may not progress. This proposed programme position, in line with recommendation 3, is summarised in Table 2 below with further detail in Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2.

Table 2: Proposed Programme Position – Recommendation 3

Workstream	Completed	In Build	In contract	Pipeline	Total
Council Build	411	27	104	17	559
SME	7			26	33
S106	193	69		28	290
Market Acquisition	76		16	31	123
Total	687	96	120	102	1005

- 2.4 Set out in paragraphs 2.5 to 2.8 is an overview of the number of homes delivered to the end of May and the proposed future delivery for each workstream of the programme to achieve 1,005 new Council homes by mid-2027. Some movement between the final number of properties delivered per workstream is likely. This is a normal function of a programme of this size and complexity. Any changes will be reported in future updates to Cabinet.
- 2.5 **Market Acquisitions:** Delivered 76 homes since late 2023, with a further pipeline of 47 homes, 16 of which are already in the legal process with a further 31 to identify from the open market. This workstream has been critical in enabling the acquisition of homes for general needs. It has also enabled the Council to quickly increase the supply of homes available for use as Temporary Accommodation, with Local Authority Housing Fund investment secured to purchase 20 homes which can be used to reduce homelessness pressures (directly or indirectly). Overall, this workstream is

expected to deliver a total of circa 123 homes (including the 20 Local Authority Housing Funded properties) towards the 1,000 homes target.

- 2.6 **Section 106 Acquisitions:** This workstream delivers the best value for money new build homes, with homes purchased at a discount as part of developers' planning obligations. Overall, the Council expects to deliver 290 homes through this workstream, with 262 of these homes either already delivered or in contract at the end of May 2025.
- 2.7 **Council New build homes:** This type of delivery, whilst the most expensive and often with viability challenges, provides the greatest degree of control over what and where housing is delivered. Delivered on Council-owned sites, it secures genuine additionality and contributes towards Local Plan housing delivery targets. To date, 411 homes have been delivered through this delivery route, and it is expected to contribute a further 148 new build homes by mid-2027. This includes five new homes forecast for delivery through the conversion of the Hurley Croft Neighbourhood Centre.
- 2.8 **SME homes on privately owned sites through the Council's Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative:** This initiative offers the opportunity to deliver high quality, affordable housing by unlocking development opportunities for SME developers on sites they have secured within the Rotherham borough. This workstream has delivered 7 new-build homes to date with a further 26 expected by mid-2027.
- 2.9 The delivery profile to achieve 1,005 new homes includes the following forecast milestones.
- A total of 1,000 new homes 'locked in' (in contract, have started on site or are already delivered) by 31st December 2026.
 - A total of 988 new homes delivered by 30th June 2027.
 - The target of 1,000 new homes delivered by 31st of August 2027.

Programme Review and Proposed Changes

Council Build

- 2.10 The delivery of new build homes on council-owned sites remains the area of the programme with the greatest risk and therefore has been subject to the greatest amount of overprogramming. The current programme includes a total of circa 218 homes yet to be delivered for this workstream (the combined total of In Build, In Contract and Pipeline homes on the Council Build line in Table 1).
- 2.11 As part of the Council's ongoing approach to programme and risk management, all projects in this workstream not already in build have been re-assessed in terms of technical deliverability, affordability and ability to contribute to the 1,000 homes target.
- 2.12 This has led to the identification of 6 schemes (55 homes) for removal from the programme. There are numerous contributing factors, including escalating costs and unforeseen abnormal costs linked to topography,

ground conditions and infrastructure, which make project delivery unviable and unaffordable for the Council. Regulatory changes, such as Building Regulations and the implementation of Bio-Diversity Net Gain, have added further to the cost of development.

- 2.13 An additional 20 Council Build homes are now programmed to deliver post Summer 2027. These have therefore been removed from the 1000 new homes target and forecast as part of the future, post 1000 new homes programme. Work to bring forwards these homes will continue and a start on site for the construction will be achieved in the current programme period.
- 2.14 The final change to the Council Build workstream is the addition of 5 homes to be delivered via the conversion of an unused Neighbourhood Centre at Hurley Croft.
- 2.15 In summary, the difference between the Council build homes in the current programme (629 – Table 1) and the proposed programme (559 – Table 2) is 70 homes. This is comprised of the removal of 75 homes (55 homes removed from the current programme and 20 homes to be delivered in the future programme after the Summer of 2027) and the addition of 5 homes through the conversion of a Neighbourhood Centre.

SME

- 2.16 An SME scheme which was forecast to deliver 20 new homes via the Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative has been removed from the proposed programme. The proposed developer does not own the site or have an option to purchase it, and the site does not have any existing planning permissions. Furthermore, viability concerns exist on this scheme related to expected land values. The scheme is no longer able to deliver new homes by Summer 2027. This change is reflected in the total number of 53 SME units in Table 1 reducing to 33 in Table 2.

Section 106

- 2.17 For the Section 106 workstream, 16 homes from the current programme need to be deferred to the future programme beyond the Summer of 2027. This reflects the developer's current delivery profile which forecasts these homes will be delivered outside the current programme period. This change is reflected in the reduction of the total number of Section 106 units from 306 in Table 1 to 290 in Table 2.

Market Acquisitions

- 2.18 The final programme change recommended in this report are the addition of 3 homes to be delivered via the Market Acquisitions workstream. These additions contribute towards the programme outturn position of 1,005 new homes and provides some mitigation towards the risk of other homes within the programme not being delivered or delivery coming outside of the current programme period. This change sees the total number of Market Acquisitions increase from 120 in Table 1 to 123 in Table 2.

Further information on mitigating this risk is outlined in paragraphs 2.26.1 to 2.26.3.

2.19 In addition, a former Council-owned 'education property' is surplus to the current operational requirements of the Children and Young Peoples Directorate. There is high demand for this type of property (a 3-bedroom house located at Eastwood) for Council rent. Following a review by the Council's Asset Management Board, the Officer recommendation is that the property should be appropriated (transferred) to the Housing Service and used as a General Needs Council home. The works required to refurbish the property and bring it up to the required standard will be funded from the Market Acquisitions budget.

2.20 The specific changes to the proposed programme are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Proposed Programme Changes

Scheme	Location	Ward	Delivery Route	Change	Units
Hurley Croft Neighbourhood Conversion	Brampton Bierlow	Hoober Ward	Council Build	Added	5
Market Acquisitions	Borough wide	Borough wide	Market Acquisitions	Added	3
Symonds Avenue (Site A and Site B)	Rawmarsh	Rotherham West Ward	Council Build	Removed	14
Occupation Road	Broom Valley	Boston Castle Ward	Council Build	Removed	9
Far Lane	East Dene	Rotherham East Ward	Council Build	Removed	14
The Lanes	East Dene	Rotherham East Ward	Council Build	Removed	8
Carver Close	Harthill	Wales Ward	Council Build	Removed	7
Staple Green/St Leonard's Ave	Thrybergh	Dalton & Thrybergh Ward	Council Build	Removed	3
Roberts Grove	Aston	Aston & Todwick Ward	SME	Removed	20
Maltby Tickhill	Maltby	Maltby East Ward	S106 Acquisition	Deferred (future Programme).	16
Tenter Street	Thornhill	Rotherham West Ward	Council Build	Deferred (future Programme).	20

2.21 These changes result in Council owned sites across 6 schemes not being used for delivery of the Council's Housing Delivery Programme as per previous Cabinet reports. The recommendation for 4 of these sites is to

dispose of them in line with all statutory consents and approvals (including Secretary of State consent where required) and the Council's established process. Part of this process is consideration as to whether other Council Services have a use for sites prior to marketing them for disposal. The specific sites and recommendations are presented in Table 4 below. Any disposal of sites will be specifically for housing, meaning the Council is enabling housing delivery by others.

Table 4: Site Recommendations

Scheme	Ward	Units	Site Recommendation
Rawmarsh - Symonds Avenue (Site A and Site B)	Rotherham West Ward	14	Disposal subject to the usual Council process
Broom Valley - Occupation Road	Boston Castle Ward	9	Disposal subject to the usual Council process
East Dene – Far Lane	Rotherham East Ward	14	Disposal subject to the usual Council process
East Dene - The Lanes	Rotherham East Ward	8	Retain - Development to be considered as part of potential area investment
Harthill - Carver Close	Wales Ward	7	Retained as HRA asset
Thrybergh - Staple Green/St Leonard's Ave	Dalton & Thrybergh Ward	3	Disposal subject to the usual Council process
Total		55	

2.22 Costs have been incurred in exploring the feasibility of the schemes recommended to be removed from the programme. These costs are estimated to be £613,671, subject to contract termination agreement and negotiations. This estimate includes all fees and costs to the Council including Survey Fees, Professional Fees and, where projects have progressed to further stages, Planning Fees and Pre-Construction Services Agreement Fees (where a Contractor has been appointed at the design stage).

2.23 A total investment of circa £222.5m has been identified to deliver the target of 1,000 new Council homes (those already delivered and those in the remaining programme). The cost of the feasibility work for schemes to be removed from the programme is therefore less than 0.3% of the total programme investment. With such a complex development programme, it is normal to incur costs of this type, often at a far higher value, as 'the cost of doing business'. A review of processes and programme decision making will be undertaken to inform the planning of the post Summer 2027 programme, with the aim of further limiting such costs in future.

Delivering a Balanced Programme

2.24 The HRA Business Plan 2025/26 approved by Council on 15th January 2025 includes provision for £151m investment to deliver the existing pipeline of projects and to ensure the continuation of the Housing Delivery Programme into 2027/28 and 2028/29. The provision was based on existing cost assumptions when the HRA Business Plan was finalised.

- 2.25 The proposed programme changes outlined in this report recognise that the HRA Business Plan effectively sets the maximum level of investment which can be committed to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, and balances this against the need to provide 1,000 new homes in the current programme period.

Securing the Delivery of 1,000 Council Homes by Summer 2027 - Options and Mitigations

- 2.26 The proposed programme retains sufficient flexibility to consider options within the budget allocations for both the current and future programme (from mid-2027). These options provide mitigation against the risk of schemes not progressing which are planned to contribute towards the 1,000 new homes target. The options are listed in paragraphs 2.26.1 to 2.26.3.
- 2.26.1 Accelerated delivery of schemes expected to start on site in the current programme period, but that won't complete until after mid-2027. Specifically, this relates to the sequencing of the projects at Grayson Road and Tenter Street, with flexibility to deliver either one of these projects first.
- 2.26.2 Respond to new opportunities which may come forward via the Small Sites Homebuilding Initiative – given these are market/opportunity-led, the pipeline is less visible.
- 2.26.3 Accelerate the delivery of Market Acquisitions towards the end of the current programme period should there be any risk to the delivery of the 1,000 homes target. This is the most flexible delivery option at relatively short notice which provides the most controllable mitigation of this risk.
- 2.27 Whilst the current Programme is focused on the delivery of 1,000 new Council homes, work on building a future pipeline of sites and schemes is ongoing and will be the subject of a future Housing Delivery Programme Cabinet Report.

External Funding

- 2.28 To deliver the Housing Delivery Programme, it is estimated that a minimum of circa £30m of non-HRA funding from a range of sources (some of which are already held by the Council) is required to invest alongside the Council's own HRA resources. The main source of this external grant funding is from the Government, with funding currently available via the Affordable Homes Programme.
- 2.29 During 2024, and with the current Affordable Homes Programme coming to an end, Government indicated that almost all the available AHP funding (circa £11.5bn across England since 2021) had been deployed. This led to a short pause in accepting new bids for funding.
- 2.30 In October 2024, as part of the Autumn Budget, the Government announced a £500m top-up to the Affordable Homes Programme. These

funds were almost entirely committed by the end of January 2025. During this time, the Council secured circa £2.96m of grant to support several of its new build projects.

- 2.31 In February 2025, Government committed a further £300m top-up. Projects that can start on site during the first 3 months of the 2025/26 Financial Year and complete by March 2027 will be prioritised for funding. The Council expects to secure further grant funding as part of this extension.
- 2.32 In March 2025, Government committed a further £2bn to the 2025/26 Affordable Homes Programme, as a bridging fund to the multi-year settlement expected to be announced at Spending Review. Positive conversations have begun about the ability to apply this grant funding to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme project, many of which are due to start on site during the current (2025/26) financial year. Notably this includes the Maltby cluster, the largest Council build scheme in the programme at 45 homes, and most expensive in terms of total scheme costs.
- 2.33 The total amount of Affordable Homes Programme funding secured by the Council since January 2024 is over £3.5m. When including Local Authority Housing Fund and Brownfield Housing Fund, the total amount of external grant funding since January 2024 is circa £5.32m.
- 2.34 Discussions are ongoing with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority regarding recently announced Brownfield Housing Funding and the potential to secure investment from this source to several of the Council's schemes.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

Option 1: Maintain the existing programme without the changes outlined in this report and retain for delivery the sites that are recommended for disposal in Table 4.

- 3.1 The HRA Business Plan 2025/26 effectively sets the maximum level of investment which can be committed to the Council's Housing Delivery Programme. Housing delivery is reliant on a range of different factors and the cost escalation on specific Council build schemes detailed in this report is such that it is not now feasible to deliver all previously programmed build units. There are further schemes included in the report which will no longer deliver new homes or are forecast to deliver outside of the current programme. It is a normal function of this type of programme to both add and remove sites and opportunities in response to the changing environment.
- 3.2 This option is not therefore recommended.

Option 2: Approve proposed programme changes in line with recommendation 3, to take forward the reviewed programme of an anticipated 1005 new homes by the Summer of 2027. To appropriate 19

Cranworth Road. To ensure that the delivery target of 1000 new homes is achieved within the budget provision set out in the HRA Business Plan 2025/26. Dispose of the sites that are recommended for disposal in Table 4.

- 3.3 To manage risk and maximise delivery of a programme of this scale and complexity within the desired timescales, there is a need to over programme and retain a degree of delivery flexibility. As the deliverability of such a programme clarifies over time, it is necessary to determine which schemes will contribute to the programme.
- 3.4 The re-assessment of Council build schemes, including the technical deliverability, affordability and ability to contribute to the 1,000 homes target, and the wider review of the remaining workstream schemes, has informed this decision-making process. The proposed programme changes will enable the Council to deliver the 1000 new homes target within the maximum level of investment set out in the HRA Business Plan.
- 3.5 This option is recommended.

As option 2 but retain the sites recommended for disposal in Table 4.

- 3.6 Despite the challenges posed to the Council by these sites, they are likely to remain attractive to a self-builder or small developer and therefore generate a capital receipt for the Council. Retention of the sites, which have already been identified as surplus by Housing Management and are not feasible for development by the Council, only serves to retain a liability in terms of the financial and resource costs of site maintenance.
- 3.7 This option is not recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Local Ward members have been consulted on the impact of recommendations of the Programme Review where this affects proposed projects in their Wards. Ward members whose ward includes a Council Build scheme recommended for removal from the programme were invited to in-person or Teams meetings to advise them of the recommendations regarding those developments. Where ward Members were unable to attend, those members in attendance agreed to share the information with colleagues or an email was sent outlining the recommendation, background and next steps. In one ward there will be by request, a further meeting to update members regarding the future of the relevant site. All ward members will be kept informed of key decisions regarding future of the sites.
- 4.2 Ward members will be engaged with directly through the neighbourhood working model regarding any changes to the Housing Delivery Programme which affects schemes in their respective wards.
- 4.3 As individual new build schemes are progressed through the design process, Ward Members will continue to be consulted through the

neighbourhood working model at an early stage, and ahead of planning permission being sought.

- 4.4 Ongoing engagement is undertaken with developers, Registered Providers of Social Housing, and external funders through a range of communication channels, including the Council's Strategic Housing Forum and a Housing Growth and Affordable Housing Roundtable event held by the Council in March 2025.
- 4.5 The Strategic Housing and Development Service will use all stakeholder feedback to shape the future programme and help ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of new Council homes.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Interim Assistant Director of Housing will have responsibility for implementing the programme. The Assistant Director, Legal Services will have responsibility for the negotiating, approving, and completing of all applicable legal documentation necessary to deliver the scheme, including contracts.
- 5.2 In-line with previous programme reports, this latest report presents a rolling, continuous programme of delivery. Further reports will be presented to Cabinet on a six-monthly cycle through to Summer 2027 to keep Cabinet appraised of progress, refresh existing approvals and to seek new approvals as required.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The HRA Business Plan (BP) model tests the programme for affordability and budgets are in place to support the existing programme. The HRA BP and the budgets assume a level of grant income received from Homes England and the use of Right to Buy receipts. A six-month review of the HRA BP will assess revised scheme costings and expected external income.
- 6.2 The development of sites identified in Appendix 1 and the programme of acquisition opportunities listed in Exempt Appendix 2 will be subject to individual business cases and assessed for affordability. The changes outlined in this report balance the available budget against the need to provide 1,000 new homes in the current programme period.
- 6.3 External grant funding will be sought on a scheme-by-scheme basis and will be subject to the usual governance processes prior to applications being made. See paragraph 2.33 for information on grant funding secured for completed or in progress schemes since January 2024.
- 6.4 There will be a financial impact on the programme if funding is not secured at levels included within the HRA Business Plan. Recent grant approvals have exceeded Business Plan assumptions, assisting the programme to mitigate increased costs.

- 6.5 The estimated cost of removing the Council build schemes from the programme is £613,671, subject to contract termination agreement and negotiations. This will be a charge to revenue budgets which will be a pressure in 2025/26.
- 6.6 A total of 4 sites have been recommended for disposal as per Table 4 in Section 2, paragraph 2.21. These sites have been valued at total of £570k. All valuations are subject to market conditions and the disposal route and should be viewed cautiously to reflect the subdued land market.
- 6.7 The appropriation of 19 Cranworth Road will result in a change to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) to reflect the appropriation. The property is valued at £125k so the General Fund CFR will decrease by this amount and the HRA CFR will increase by the same amount. This will result in the HRA paying additional annual interest of £4.5k which is charged at 3.56% of the increase of £125k to the CFR.
- 6.8 Housing Services continue to engage with the Council's Procurement Team to ensure procurement activity is being undertaken in compliance with the relevant procurement legislation (Public Contracts Regulations 2015 / Procurement Act 2023, whichever is the applicable dependent on the route to market), and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the Council's constitution and former Cabinet reports on this subject matter. The regular updates allow for timely and flexible decisions to be made in respect of potential housing delivery and the changes to the delegations proposed allow flexibility which has been shown to be desirable in the operation of this programme thus far.
- 7.2 The contractual implications of removing schemes from the programme, including the contract termination process, have been subject to internal and external legal advice. Under the contract terms, the Council can terminate the contracts at this stage and by doing so will not create legal implications.

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 development programme will deliver two, three, and four, bedroom homes which will allow families with children to access high quality, affordable homes, thus contributing to improving children's health, wellbeing, and opportunity.
- 9.2 The programme is further delivering bungalows and more specialised 'disabled person units' (DPU) which will allow older and disabled people to

live in safe, suitable accommodation that meets their needs and allows them to live independently for longer.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Through its wider development programme, the Council will increase the local supply of high quality, affordable homes to meet a range of needs. The Council holds a wide range of data which is used to determine the different needs and influence the types of homes being acquired. For example, of Rotherham's 265,800 residents, around 26% are aged 60 years or over and 9% are aged 75 years or over and the proposed acquisitions include bungalows that are suitable for older people, as well as people with disabilities.
- 10.2 The Council's development programme is critical to supporting families who are on the Housing Register, into high quality and affordable accommodation. Any new homes offered for rent by the Council are managed through the Council's Allocations Policy to ensure a fair and transparent approach to helping people in the greatest housing need to gain access to suitable and appropriate accommodation.
- 10.3 Surveys will be carried out with the occupants of new homes, and equality and diversity results analysed and compared with other relevant data sets such as the Housing Register. This will allow the Council to understand whether any protected characteristic groups are over or under-represented in new build homes and take appropriate action if required.
- 10.4 Both an Initial Equality Screening (Part A) and an Equality Impact Assessment (Part B) have been completed and are attached as Appendices 4 and 5.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on local, national, and international scales. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.
- 11.2 Council Build: Through its own delivery programme, the Council has the ability to ensure that the new homes are high quality and energy efficient, which will contribute to reducing domestic carbon emissions in the longer-term.
- 11.3 Section 106 Acquisitions: The level of carbon emissions allowed for all new homes is subject to increasing controls. Changes to Part L of the building regulations came into force in June 2022, requiring a 31% reduction in CO2 emissions compared to 2013 standards. All new homes that submit plans after June 2022 or which have not begun construction before June 2023 must comply. New homes acquired by the Council from private builders are specified and built to the housebuilder's usual specification with some changes paid for by the Council to ensure the

Council's requirements are met. Further to this the Council will examine whether further changes can be agreed, on a case-by-case basis, to reduce carbon emissions beyond the requirements of building regulations.

- 11.4 Market Acquisitions: All existing stock acquired through the Market Acquisitions will be improved to Energy Performance Certificate C as part of the refurbishment work required to meet the Council's lettable standard. Future energy performance improvements will be considered as part of wider stock investment programmes.
- 11.5 Both Council-build and acquisitions will increase emissions. Whilst mitigations are in place, with an explicit aim to exceed Building Regulations Part L requirements where feasible, the overall net carbon emissions status of Rotherham's social housing stock will increase in the short term. Homes brought forward with electrically sourced heating and hot water provision, however, should become effective carbon neutral once the electricity grid itself achieves zero-carbon. In addition to delivering new homes, the Council continues to improve and sustain its existing homes, including investment to maintain the Decent Homes Standard and improve energy and thermal efficiency.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The Council has an existing partnership with Equans and Mears through the housing repairs and maintenance contracts and the existing contract terms allow for some housing development. As such, the delivery programme may also provide an opportunity for the partners to work with the Council on housing development schemes where this would not be at a detriment to the core repair and maintenance functions.
- 12.2 Housing associations continue to play an important role in delivering affordable housing in Rotherham. The Council has a successful track record of working with housing associations to bring land forward for development and maintains strong relationships with many of the largest and most reputable organisations through the Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The key risks are summarised in the table below. A detailed risk assessment will be provided alongside the business case for individual schemes as they are brought forward.

13.2	Risk	Mitigation
	Pressure on construction labour and materials (both in terms of supply and costs) resulting from the Covid pandemic, EU Exit and invasion of Ukraine.	Risks recorded and monitored for all individual schemes, advance ordering, and storage of materials where appropriate / possible. All costs remain projections as actual costs will be highly dependent on the nature of the sites, the construction method, specifications, and property

	types. Options to reduce costs may need to be explored and this could include switching tenure or rent type, delivering more smaller properties and amending specifications
Site suitability - even at a late stage in the process, sites can be found to be unsuitable (for example due to severe contamination or high flood risk) or need to be restricted in terms of the type and numbers of new housing which can ultimately be achieved.	<p>A mixed approach will be taken with regards to scheme procurement. The Council are carrying out ground investigations at an early stage and are engaging with developer partners early to ensure optimal delivery within the programme timeframe and that any particularly problematic sites are dealt with and potentially removed from the programme before the Council is contractually committed to build. The Council have also allowed for an expected degree of over-programming to mitigate against the removal of any sites.</p> <p>Grant funding will also help the Council to mitigate against the cost of ground remediation works but where a site is ultimately unsuitable for development it will not be brought forward.</p>
Volatility in the construction sector and uncertainty of contractor interest, capacity and capabilities.	<p>Early market engagement activity (December 2023 and March 2024) with contractors has led to a change in the Council's procurement strategy for the programme and a range of procurement methods are being used including different frameworks and contractors.</p> <p>The programme also consists of multiple workstreams to allow for flexibility.</p>
Delays to housing development schemes resulting from utilities connections and other statutory undertakings	Early engagement with relevant organisations and internal services, and robust project management processes in place with realistic contingencies for costs and delays
Internal staff capacity – Housing, Legal, Procurement, Asset Management etc	Explore different partnering arrangements to reduce client-side resource pressures, including pre-contract service agreements whereby the contractor carries out early feasibility work at risk. Ongoing dialogue between services regarding forward planning and resource requirements, and HRA contributions to staffing costs in key supporting services.
Community opposition	Formal resident consultation takes place as part of the Planning process. However, early engagement will take place with

	Ward Members and the Neighbourhoods team to identify local knowledge and intelligence about the area, which will be utilised to help inform site specific communication plans including any pre-planning resident engagement activity.
Funding availability / eligibility	Continual dialogue with external funding bodies. Investment of time in robust business case preparation to ensure overall costs remain within approved HRA Business Plan affordability modelling and Capital Programme approvals. Regular meetings with Finance colleagues to monitor programme.
Ensuring Value for Money and delivery within the overall HRA Business Plan cost assumptions	The modelling makes assumptions about the level of grant income available from Homes England and other agencies, which in practice must be negotiated scheme by scheme. While it makes an allowance for the cost pressures facing the housing development industry, all costs remain projections as actual costs will be highly dependent on the nature of the sites, the construction method, specifications, and property types. Options to reduce costs may need to be explored and this could include switching tenure or rent type, delivering more smaller properties and amending specifications.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adults, Housing and Public Health

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	23/06/25
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	09/06/25
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	04/06/25

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