

Decision Number: 13 (2023/24)

Portfolio Holder Executive Decision Statement

The Local Authority (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

Subject: Allocation of DIYSO refund monies to Quercus Housing to deliver new affordable housing

Details of Decision To approve the allocation of DIYSO refund monies to Quercus Housing to deliver new affordable housing

Reason for Decision

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has awarded the Council grant funding under the Local Authority Housing Fund programme. The fund aims to alleviate housing pressures on Local Authorities arising from recent and unforeseen conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

The Council have received £2,802,620 capital funding towards the provision of 16 units of accommodation for Homes for Ukraine and 1 x 4 bedroom unit for the Afghan Scheme through the Local Authority Housing Funding. In the long-term, the properties can be used support the Council's general homelessness demand.

Quercus Housing are delivering the new homes under the programme on behalf of the Council and to date 6 units for Homes for Ukraine have been delivered and guests have been supported to move into their new accommodation.

A further 10 homes have been identified for purchase under Local Authority Housing Funding, subject to the approval of the Quercus Housing Board.

The Local Authority Housing Funding programme stipulates grant monies may only be used to fund a maximum of 40% of eligible purchase costs. The grant rate maximum is applied as an average across the portfolio of homes purchased under the programme.

The purchase of 10 homes triggers the input of £1,200,000 Local Authority Housing Funding grant monies, whilst ensuring the portfolio grant rate maximum is not exceeded. However this level of Local Authority Housing Funding grant means there is a funding shortfall if the purchase is to be viable. The Council have been considering the options for funding the shortfall.

In 2012 following Portfolio Holder approval S106 affordable housing monies were used to fund a "Do It Yourself Shared Ownership Scheme" (DIYSO), in partnership with Moat Housing. DIYSO purchasers are able to "staircase" (increase) their level of ownership. At each point of staircasing, monies originally contributed are refunded to the Council and are ringfenced for onward use as set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (SPD).

When completed a copy of this record must be sent to the Democratic Services Section by e-mail and a signed copy by internal mail

(For Democratic Services use)

Decision Number: 13 (2023/24)

Approval is therefore sought to allocate £220,611 DIYSO refund monies to Quercus Housing to meet the funding shortfall. This will ensure the purchase is viable. DLUHC have confirmed that DIYSO refund monies can be used in this way under their programme.

Planning Policy have confirmed the use of DIYSO refunds monies in the way described in this report, falls within the permitted uses set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2011, ie Housing Pot 1, provision of new affordable housing in the District.

As at 26 October 2023 the Council had received £423,234 in DIYSO staircasing refunds there are therefore sufficient DIYSO monies to fund this request.

All Documents considered:

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2011

Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the Member when making the Decision:
None

Financial implications
The purchase 10 new affordable homes can be fully funded through the input of LAHF grant funding, DIYSO refund monies and loan funding, subject to the approval of the Quercus Housing Board. Sufficient DIYSO refund monies are available for this purpose.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement
None



Equality Impacts (Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty)
The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Local Member (s), other Portfolio Holders and Chief Officer/Head of Service Consulted
Sarah Robson, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer - People and Places
Alison Simmons, Head of Housing

When completed a copy of this record must be sent to the Democratic Services Section by e-mail and a signed copy by internal mail

(For Democratic Services use)

Decision Number: 13 (2023/24)

Details of any conflicts of interest a) declared by any executive member who is consulted by the Decision Taker b) and any details of dispensations granted by the Chief Executive in respect of any declared conflict	
Decision taken by:	Councillor Cole, Portfolio Holder for Housing and 
Signed by Portfolio Holder	
Date of Decision	07 th Nov 23
Record made by:	Phil Magee
Date of record:	8 November 2023

When completed a copy of this record must be sent to the Democratic Services Section by e-mail and a signed copy by internal mail