

**Appendix 1 - 29 May 2019**  
**Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee**

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 15 May 2019 concerning Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL). The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<p><i>Recommendation 1: That the Council ensures that the feasibility assessment and design phases of future OCHL developments align with the Council's carbon neutral and environmental ambitions. These stages should also consider the need for appropriate disability access. More broadly, the environmental objectives of the Council should align with all aspects of OCHL's work.</i></p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>	<p>We are committed to moving towards carbon neutral homes in a way consistent with addressing the housing crisis in Oxford and respecting the wishes and needs of tenants; so zero-carbon homes should always be considered as part of any feasibility study.</p> <p>It is essential to consider the need for disability access in everything we do, and this is reflected in our existing commitment to building "lifetime homes" that can be adapted to meet residents' changing needs.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 2: That the Council, through OCHL, establishes a standalone and unallocated funding pot to enable rapid property and land acquisitions. Consideration should be given to other ways that the same outcome might be achieved, such as through urgent decision procedures.</i></p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>There are urgent decision procedures available that can be used to facilitate the acquisition of land for affordable housing. Often ordinary procedures are sufficient, as with the acquisition of new homes off-plan recently approved by Cabinet to be let through the HRA at social rent. Thanks to our ability to borrow prudentially we do have more "wriggle room" in our HRA budget than in previous years, so in my judgement establishing a separate funding pot for rapid property acquisition is unnecessary. Indeed, separating this from the rest of the HRA capital budget could well have the unintended consequence of reducing our flexibility in meeting unforeseen contingencies.</p>

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