

Decision type: **Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers / Single Member Decision**

Decision date: 11.Dec.2025

Decision maker: Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive - Place

Decision title: To take a decision to acquire 19 properties at Barton Park from the developer

Summary	
Decision being taken:	To confirm the acquisition of 19 units of council housing into the HRA and to enter into the relevant contract and transfer documentation.
Key Decision	Yes https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=39752&PlanId=525&RPID=51424443
Source of Delegation	<p>Cabinet on 16th October 2024 delegated authority to the Executive Director (Development), in consultation with the Executive Director (Communities and People); the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities; the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. agree to the purchase of the remaining 184 Social Rented properties and any associated land from Barton Park in accordance with the agreement with Barton Oxford LLP and Oxford City Council dated December 2014; 2. enter into all agreements necessary, where delegation does not already exist, to facilitate the transfer of the properties [at a.] including but not limited to, any documentation necessary to transfer the benefit of any continuing warranties and guarantees relating to the properties to the Council
Cabinet Member	<p>Following a restructure of the Executive with effect from 1 February 2025, the Executive Director (Development)'s responsibilities for this decision have moved to the Deputy Chief Executive – Place and the Executive Director's (Communities and People) responsibilities have moved to the Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizen Services</p> <p>Councillor Linda Smith - Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Councillor Ed Turner - Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management</p> <p>Councillor Nigel Chapman - Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies</p>

Corporate Priority	More Affordable Housing and Meeting Housing Needs.
Policy Framework	Corporate Strategy 2024-2028

The Deputy Chief Executive – Place, decides as follows:

1. **To approve**, that the Council acquires the first three tranches, a total of 19 units at Barton Park directly from the relevant phase developers for Phases 2 and 4 (“the developer”) at Barton Park as required under the overarching development agreement with Barton (Oxford) LLP;
 - i. as detailed in paragraph 7 below and subject to the conditions set out in this report;
 - ii. The 19 properties to be purchased by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the amount detailed in Appendix 1, which is exempt from publication.
2. **Approve and agree to** the entering into of relevant contract and transfer documentation, ancillary deeds of covenant and agreement for the acquisition of 19 new affordable homes at Barton Park (Phase 2&4) from the Developer directly into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as detailed in the main body of the report.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial detail - confidential	Yes
Appendix 2	Location maps and address schedule of the 19 properties	No

Introduction and background

3. In 2013 the Council took a decision to enter a legal agreement with Barton (Oxford) LLP to purchase all the Social Rent homes developed on Barton Park (40% of the development up to 354 homes). This agreement was signed in December 2014.
4. In June 2021 the Council entered into a Condition Development Agreement with the phase developer for Phases 2&4
5. A report was considered by the Cabinet on 16 October 2024 and approval given to proceed to purchase 174 properties from the phase developer for Phases 2&4 into the HRA.
6. The purchase of each tranche of units was delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive for Place. The 19 units detailed in this report are the first three tranches of properties

Financial implications

7. The price for the freehold acquisitions of the Properties is calculated in accordance with the pricing mechanism set down in the Conditional Development Agreement and equates to a price of £1,996.36 per square metre using the inflation methodology set in that agreement. This produces an IRR of 5.30% and 36 years for payback, alongside a NPV of £ 1,565,478 and is within the parameters of the approved HRA Business Plan.
8. The purchase is to take place in two transactions the details of which are shown in Appendix 1, summary as follows:
 - a. December 2025 – 11 units
 - b. January 2026 – 8 units
9. The retention sum for each unit is £500.00.

10. Included in the oncost sum for the scheme is an estimated transfer cost payable on completion and handover of the units. The estimate is based on average unit fee for previous transfers at Barton Park and will be finalised when the parties issue completion statements. The payment covers legal document, land registry and management company fees.

Legal issues

11. The properties will be let to tenants nominated by the Council at social rents which comply with the s106 agreement for the site.

Level of risk

12. There is a requirement to adhere to the terms of the development agreements, which require the Council to accept transfer at a specific point in time. That point has been formally reached, and the Council is now required to accept transfer with no ability to delay.
13. Any delay in respect of properties now complete and able to be let (as currently owned by the developer) being transferred to the Council would remain vacant for an extended period when demand for council housing is significant.
14. Additional costs and a significant capacity/resource impact would result if there was a need to repeat work already done in preparation for a later transfer date in terms of undertaking new financial assessments, legal advice and updates to that and an impact on capacity of officers in the housing service due to letting delays.

Equalities impact

15. It is considered that there are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need and the tenancy rights provided to tenants through secure tenancy agreements with the Council.

Implications of making the decision

Financial implications	Any risks inherent in this programme are already identified elsewhere, with actions to mitigate these detailed in the HRA Business Plans and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The financial implications of these decisions remain consistent with those contained in the report considered by the Cabinet on the 16th October 2024.	Completed by: Jason Jones Date: 04.12.2025
Legal implications	The transfer documentation has been negotiated by external solicitors acting for the Council who have several years of experience with previous phases in order to protect the Council's position.	Completed by: Catherine Durance Lawyer Date: 05.12.2025
Other implications		Completed by: Allison Dalton Date: December 11, 2025

Member declared interests	None.	Completed by: Allison Dalton Date: December 11, 2025
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Background Documents
Cabinet Report and appendices for the decision of Cabinet taken on the 16 October 2024 - Acquisition of Social Rent Properties at Barton Park https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s81644/Cabinet%20Report%20Barton%20Park%20acquisitions%2016%20Oct%202024%20v3%2019%20Sept.pdf

Report author	Dave Scholes
Job title	Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead
Service area or department	Housing Supply, Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability
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Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
Senior officer	Tom Hook Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizen Services	05.12.25
Group Finance Director	Nigel Kennedy Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer)	05.12.25
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy	Emma Jackman Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)	05.12.25
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Cllr Linda Smith Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	05.12.2025
Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Ed Turner Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management	08.12.2025
Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Nigel Chapman Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies	08.12.2025

Decision Maker Approval

<i>Name and job title</i>	<i>Date</i>
Tom Bridgeman Deputy Chief Executive - Place	 10/12/2025

This form must be completed and sent to Committee and Member Services **on the date that the decision maker signs it. This must be only done once all consultees have given their approval. The decision shall be effective from the date of publication; therefore, it is important that you send to Committee and Member Services as soon as it is completed and dated by the decision maker. Please note that it is not effective until it is published and the call in period has passed.**

NOTES

The law¹ requires the Council to record executive and non-executive decisions taken by officers under delegated powers and to publish them on the Council's website.

These requirements apply to decisions that would have been taken by Council or the Cabinet if delegated powers had not been given to an officer:

- under an express delegation granted at a meeting of Cabinet, Council or a Committee.
- in accordance with Part 4.4 of the Constitution as follows:
 - Awarding a contract where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds or leaseholds granting new leaseholds (excluding assignments and rent reviews) where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Making a regulatory order which affects a number of people, for example a Public Space Protection Order or a Parking Place Order
 - Where the effect of a decision is to grant a licence or permission or it affects the rights of citizens
 - Discharging any other express delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member a committee or Council.

These requirements **do not** apply to:

- planning and licencing matters where there are established arrangements for recording decisions: or
- decisions which are purely administrative or operational in nature

All other officer decisions should be recorded on an officer decision form but do not need to be published. They must though be stored so as to ensure that they are not lost should an officer leave the authority.

Exempt or Confidential information

Information relating to a delegated officer or single member decision does not have to be made public if it is exempt or confidential. Summary information from this decision sheet (excluding all exempt or confidential information) will be published on the Council's website.

Key or Non Key Decision

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Have a significant effect on people living or working in a least two wards or
- Involve spending, income, or saving a significant amount – whether an amount is significant depends on the Council's total budget for the service involved. For this Council 'significant' in budgetary terms is:

¹ the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012/2089 (Regulation 13(4)) and The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014/2095 (Regulation 7)

- Expenditure, income, or savings of £750,000 or greater in the context of the medium term financial strategy,
- Acquiring or disposing of freeholds with a consideration over £500,000 in the context of the medium term financial strategy except for disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation
- Acquiring or disposing of leaseholds where either the rental value is in excess of £250,000 per annum and/or the premium is £750,000 except for statutory lease renewals under Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation.
- Acquiring or disposing of easements with a value over £750,000 and/or rental value over £250,000 each year

A key decision can only be taken and recorded here if notice of it has been published on the Forward Plan for at least 28 clear days. Key decisions taken by officers may be “called in” by any four councillors or the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee within two days of the notice of decision being published.

