

Decision type: **Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers**

Decision date: **9 January 2026**

Decision maker: Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens' Services

Decision title: To enter into agreements to purchase, by the HRA, 80 affordable homes at Mill Lane, Marston from OCH(D)L

Summary	
Decision being taken:	To enter into a Development Agreement with OCH(D)L to facilitate the agreed purchase by the HRA of all the affordable housing units from OCHL within this project approval, for Mill Lane, Marston.
Key decision:	Yes <u>Issue details - Enter into agreements to purchase, by the HRA, 80 affordable homes at Mill Lane, Marston from OCHL Oxford City Council</u>
Source of delegation:	Cabinet, on <u>13 April 2022</u> , resolved to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Give project approval for the continued acquisition of affordable dwellings developed by OCHL for which budgetary provision has been made in the Council's Housing Revenue Account in respect of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The 6 affordable dwellings listed in rows 6 to 10 in Table 3, and b) The development of 80 affordable homes at Almonds Farm, Mill Lane, Marston as laid out in paragraphs 6 to 10. 4. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Communities and People, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Housing Security and Housing the Homeless; the Head of Financial Services/ Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance, to enter into agreements and facilitate the agreed purchase by the HRA of all the affordable housing units from OCHL within this project approval, for Mill Lane, Marston (as recommended at 2b above) and the extensions (as recommended at 2a above).

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Meeting Housing Needs
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020 – 2024

The Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens’ Services decides as follows:

1. **Approve and agree;** to enter into agreements and facilitate the agreed purchase by the HRA of all the affordable housing units from OCHL within this project approval, for Mill Lane, Marston.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Property and Valuation/Cost Information – Mill Lane, Marston	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 since: the information relates to the financial and business affairs of the council
Appendix 2	Property and Valuation/Cost Information – OCHL Extensions	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 since: the information relates to the financial and business affairs of the council

Introduction and background

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple work streams, including the delivery of units through Oxford City Housing Development Limited (OCH(D)L); direct delivery by the Council; joint ventures, such as Barton Park; regeneration schemes; acquisitions; and enabling activity with Registered Providers, Community-Led Housing groups, and other partners.

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2. The Cabinet at its meeting on 13 April 2022 considered a report, further to reports to Cabinet in February 2017 and May 2019 which set out the arrangements between the Council, using its Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL) for delivery of housing units. It report set out how Council-side approvals and delegations needed to be secured to enable the development of the next schemes in the Council's direct-delivery programme, and the buy-back of the new affordable housing into the HRA (Recommendations 1 to 4, and 10 of the report considered on 13 April 2022).

Financial implications

3. The 40 year HRA Business Plan approved at Council in February 2022 makes provision for purchases by the Council of affordable housing from OCHL's 10 year development programme of 1,114 properties within an overall budget envelope of £367m before grant and shared ownership sales, £289m when these are taken into account.
4. Any decision to proceed with a development or buy-back will be supported by a development scheme appraisal/ financial modelling to ensure that financial parameters and requirements are met for OCHL and the HRA, namely, a) a positive Net Present Value (NPV) over a 70 year life; and b) a payback period of up to 70 years; and c) an internal rate of return at which the NPV is zero (IRR) of at least 3%.
5. Meeting these parameters ensures that the HRA business plan remains financially robust, conversely not meeting these parameters will impact this position. The report to the Cabinet highlighted a number of schemes with a small number of dwellings where these parameters would not be achieved but given the small numbers the overall impact compared to the need for the dwellings will be minimal and where they do arise further Cabinet approval will be required.

Reasons for the decision

6. The decision to enter into a Development Agreement with Oxford City Housing (Development) Limited (OCH(D)L) to facilitate the agreed purchase by the HRA of all the affordable housing units from OCHL, for Mill Lane, Marston on completion - enables the delivery of 80 affordable new homes – which supports the Council's strategy and priority of providing more affordable housing. This initiative contributes to the Council's affordable homes delivery programme.

Alternative Options Considered

7. The option to not develop the site would impact the Council's affordable housing target to meet housing need and also consequent impacts from not developing the allocated site set out in the local plan.
8. If OCH(D)L does not deliver this scheme it would impact on the OCH(D)L Business Plan and the delivery approach envisaged in the affordable housing programme and in the decisions made by the Cabinet. The approach of using OCH(D)L as the development manager for this scheme is an alternative, but this scheme is viable for, and has been brought to this point as, an OCH(D)L scheme, with the Council making the purchase (into the HRA) on completion. This is reflected in the Council's budget and the HRA Business Plan.

Equalities Impact

9. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

Level of risk

10. Any risks inherent in this programme are already identified elsewhere, with actions to mitigate these detailed in the OCHL and HRA Business Plans and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

11. All development schemes delivered by OCC/OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

Implications of making the decision

Financial implications	This scheme is budgeted for within the OCHL and HRA business plans which includes an approved capital budget of £179.9million for schemes delivered by OCHL.	Completed by: Jason Jones Finance Business Partner Date: 29/12/2025
Legal implications	The terms of the sale and development agreement, and associated transfers of land, between OCH(D)L and OCC have been reviewed by external lawyers and by the legal department, It is considered that the terms protect OCC's position and are in line with the Cabinet Decision of 13 th April 2022. This decision has been taken in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy.	Completed by: Kathleen Fraser, Locum Commercial Property Solicitor Date: 24th December 2025
Other implications	Include any other relevant implications not listed above. This should include any equalities impact issues.	Completed by: Insert name and job title Date: Insert date
Member declared interests	Include in here details where any member has declared an interest in the matter in line with the Code of	Completed by: Insert name and job title Date:

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	Conduct. Please speak with the Monitoring Officer if you are unsure.	Insert date
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Background Documents	
Cabinet Report - Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.pdf .	
All confidential, exempt, copyrighted and published works are EXCLUDED from this requirement.	

Report author	Rebecca Dedman
Job title	Regeneration Officer
Service area or department	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability
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Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	Dave Scholes, Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead	22.12.2025
Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Nigel Kennedy, Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer)	02.01.2026
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Emma Griffiths Legal Services Manager for and on behalf of the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)	08.01.2026
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	31.12.2025

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Decision Maker Approval

Name and job title	Date
 Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens' Services	09/01/2026

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.**

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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.

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)

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 at 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:
 - 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.