

Written statement of a key decision
Cabinet member economy and growth

Title	Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision (previously Acquisition Fund For Housing Development)
Decision maker	Cabinet member economy and growth Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251
Date of decision	30 October 2024
Report exemption class	Open
Reason for being a key decision	<p>This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.</p> <p>This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.</p>
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
General exception or special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	No
Purpose	To seek delegated approval to acquire and develop sites to meet our critical housing need across Herefordshire, enabling a quick response as opportunities arise, subject to the completion of a due diligence business case. In July 2024 full council approved an outline business case (appendix 1) to add £5m to the capital programme to enable the council to develop the critical housing provision we need in the county. The council faces an increasing demand for social housing provision, there is a lack of local provision to meet this need, as such people are being placed in temporary accommodation which isn't fit for purpose and has significant additional costs.

Decision	<p>That:</p> <p>a) The Corporate Director for Economy and Environment or the Corporate Director of Community Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth and the Director for Finance, to be given delegated authority to draw down and up to £5 million (capital) of the Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision allocation, and</p> <p>b) make all required operational decisions to acquire and develop sites to meet our critical social and affordable housing need</p>
Reason for the decision	As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=50049783
Options considered	<p>1. The council could choose not to bring forward the Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision, however this would mean there continues to be a critical social housing gap, with local people who need support either not able to access the accommodation they need or placed in temporary accommodation which has a high cost and may not be fit for purpose. This is not recommended.</p> <p>2. The council could choose to bring forward individual projects for consideration rather than establishing a delegated fund. To date the council has pursued this approach often losing out on key sites given the timescales to be able to pursue and acquire buildings as they become available. Establishing a delegated fund will allow the council to respond quickly as sites become available, subject to the full business case being in place. This is not recommended.</p>
Declarations of interest (see below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	7th November 2024

Councillor: Cabinet member economy and growth (Councillor Graham Biggs)	Date 1 st November 2024
--	------------------------------------

- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;

and

- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.