

[Department]
[Address]

Report of: Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods

Meeting of: Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th July 2024.

Ward(s): All wards

Subject: Purchasing Ex Right to Buy properties progress report.

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. The aim of this report is to provide an update to the Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee relating to the Purchase of Ex Right to Buy properties with funding provided by the GLA/DLUH&C and approved on the 19th of October 2024 Executive Meeting.
- 1.2. To also seek critical appraisal from the Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee relating to the progress of delivering this important programme.
- 1.3. For the Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee to suggest additional actions to ensure the council completes the purchases of these properties before the 31st of March 2026 deadline.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To also seek critical appraisal from the Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee relating to the progress of delivering this important programme.
- 2.2. For the Homes and Communities Scrutiny Committee to suggest additional actions to ensure the council completes the purchases of these properties before the 31st of March 2026 deadline.

3. Background

3.1. The Executive Committee on the 19th of October 2023 approved the borrowing of £85,304,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the DLUH&C to enable the council to purchase 310 Ex Right to Buy properties and to accept the DLUH&C capital grant funding of £81,725,260.

3.2. The 20th of July 2023 Executive also approved borrowing of £26,359,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the GLA/DLUH&C to enable the council to purchase 40 x 1 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties, for care experienced young adults and people sleeping rough in Islington or the prevention of people sleeping rough, 20 x 2 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties 20 x 3 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties and 20 x 4 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are homeless from Afghanistan and the Ukraine as part of the council's humanitarian housing work. With capital funding totalling £20,591,000 allocated to Islington Council by the DLUH&C/GLA.

3.3. The following table shows the number of Ex-Right to Buy properties purchased since the 20th of July and 19th of October 2023, as of the 10th July 2024.

Bedroom size	Properties purchased	Properties agreed/exchanged	Totals
1 bedroom	55	30	85
2 bedrooms	42	26	68
3 bedrooms	49	29	78
4 bedrooms	10	5	15
Total	156	90	246

3.4. The council has purchased 156 Ex Right to Buy properties in Islington since these programmes commenced. This performance shows the council has completed the purchase of four properties every week since the 19th of October 2023 approvals provided by the Executive.

3.5. Therefore, combining the completed purchased properties with the properties due to completed soon will result in 246 (60%) of properties being purchased from the 410 properties in the programme. The Housing Operations services aim to complete the purchase of a further 164 Ex Right to Buy properties in the before the end of the 2025/2026 financial year.

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

- 4.1.1. There are no known new financial implications and the costs for this work will be incorporated within existing budgets.

4.2. Legal Implications

- 4.2.1. There are no known new Legal Implications associated with this report.

4.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

- 4.3.1. There are no known new Environmental Implications associated with this report.

4.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

- 4.4.2 S149(3) provides that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 4.4.3 This work will contribute positively to the council equality of opportunity principles, the Human Rights of individuals the elimination of rough sleeping in Islington and ending homelessness..
- 4.4.4 As a public authority, the council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way, which is incompatible with a Convention right. Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must

be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1. To assist the council's commitment of improving resident satisfaction.
- 5.2. The council have established a project team to ensure this programme can be delivered. The project team provide regular monthly update to track performance and ensure a corporate approach is adopted.
- 5.3. The council is committed to working collaboratively with all residents and partners to deliver this important programme.
- 5.4. To address the housing crisis impacting Islington

Final report clearance:

Signed by: Ian Swift

Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods

Date: 10th July 2024.

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