

Ref:

Called in

Yes/No

**THE THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION OF CABINET**

Cabinet Member

Councillor Rob Yates

Relevant Portfolio:

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Date of Decision:

25 July 2024

Subject:

Local Authority Housing fund (LAHF) Round 3 funding

Key Decision

Yes

In Forward Plan

Yes

Brief summary of matter:

In December 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched the Local Authority Housing Fund. This was a £500 million capital fund for local authorities in England to obtain accommodation for families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK fleeing the war in Ukraine and families on Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes. The reason for this was to help ensure that those communities who had been generous in welcoming new arrivals were not 'penalised' with longer social housing waiting lists.

Last year, Thanet District Council was awarded £694,000 as part of the second round of the LAHF project (approved by Cabinet members on 16th November 2023) and now it has been awarded £619,500 as part of the Government's £450m two-year expansion to the scheme which aims to provide local authorities with a longer-term pipeline of support and to unlock more new supply and developments.

Given Thanet District Council's proactive acquisitions programme, it has been able to secure the four properties that are required of it through the criteria for round 3. These homes have been secured through Vistry at Westwood Point.

Thanet is purchasing four properties: three x 3-bedroom properties (one for TA and two medium-sized resettlement properties) and one x 4-bedroom property (again, for the resettlement element).

Decision made:

Cabinet agreed that:

1. The Council proceeds with the acquisition of the four homes at Westwood Point - being acquired through Vistry for £1,255,000;
2. The properties are provided as per the LAHF Round 3 funding criteria, i.e. one for temporary accommodation and three for resettlement purposes.

Reasons for decision:

These recommendations will enable the council to purchase the units for Affordable Housing and participate in the Local Authority Housing Fund Scheme.

Alternatives considered and why rejected:

Council could decide to not purchase the identified units as part of the Local Authority Housing Fund. This option is not recommended as it would require the council to seek alternative units, which would put our compliance to complete on purchases by 30<sup>th</sup> March at risk. We would then have to advise the central government that we are unable to participate in the scheme and the allocated grant funding will not be taken up.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted and of any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee:

None

Author of Officer report:

Ashley Jackson, Head of Housing and Planning

Background papers

LAHF Round 3 - Cabinet paper 25th July 2024 - Google Docs

Statement if decision is an urgent one and therefore not subject to call-in:

None

Last date for call in: 2 August 2024