

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).
 The form must be completed and passed to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

To note and acknowledge the outcome of the independent audit report provided by Homes England, which confirmed that the Council met Homes England's funding conditions and contractual requirements and has properly exercised its responsibilities as set out in the Capital Funding Guide.

2. Date of decision

31 August 2023

3. Reasons for decision

To meet the requirement from Homes England for the Council to acknowledge the outcome of the audit.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The alternative of not acknowledge the outcome of the audit was considered and rejected.

5. How decision is to be funded

There are no costs arising from this decision.

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Not Applicable

Signed Ta Wootton

Date 31 August 2023

Name of Decision Taker TOM WOOTTON

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published:31 August 2023.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in:12 September 2023.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....NO)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Regulatory Services and Housing

31 August 2023

Report by: Chief Officer for Assessment, Application & Business Support

Subject: Acknowledgement of the Outcome of an Independent Audit of Compliance with Homes England Grant Conditions

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Council accepted capital grant funding of £2.171m from Homes England on 24 November 2020 towards the cost of purchasing Roger’s Court and converting the disused office building into 20 units of accommodation for people who would otherwise be sleeping rough.
- 1.2. Following completion of the project, Homes England required an independent audit to be undertaken to confirm that the Council had complied with the grant funding conditions. The audit has been completed and submitted to Homes England, who have confirmed that the Council has received a “green” rating with no breaches of the terms and conditions of the grant identified.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **The Portfolio Holder is requested to note and acknowledge the outcome of the independent audit report provided by Homes England, which confirmed that the Council met Homes England’s funding conditions and contractual requirements and has properly exercised its responsibilities as set out in the Capital Funding Guide.**

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1. To meet the requirement from Homes England for the Council to acknowledge the outcome of the audit.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Issues

4.1. There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Policy Issues

4.2. There are no policy issues arising from this report

Resource Implications

4.3. There are no risk implications arising from this report. The Council has received £2.171m in grant funding from Homes England and the independent audit has confirmed that the funding has been used properly in accordance with the grant funding conditions.

Risk Implications

4.4. The audit has confirmed that the Council has complied with the grant conditions, therefore, there are no risks arising as a result of the audit.

Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Council by 2030

4.5. None

Equalities Impact

4.6. In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the need to;

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

4.7 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

5. DETAILS

- 5.1. The Council successfully bid for capital funding under the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme to provide 20 units of accommodation for people who were rough sleeping or at immediate risk of sleeping rough. The grant funding of £2.171m was provided by Homes England and was subject to a variety of terms and conditions regarding the use of the funding.
- 5.2. The grant funding was used toward the cost of purchasing a disused office building, Roger's Court, and converting it into 20 units of accommodation for people who would otherwise be sleeping rough. The project was completed successfully within the timescales required under the funding arrangements.
- 5.3. Following completion of the project, Homes England required an independent audit to be undertaken to verify that the Council had complied with the grant funding conditions. The audit has been completed and submitted to Homes England, who have confirmed that the Council has received a "Green – Meets requirements" rating which confirms that the Council met Homes England's funding conditions and contractual requirements and has properly exercised its responsibilities as set out in the Capital Funding Guide.
- 5.4. Homes England require their report regarding the outcome of the audit to be formally acknowledged by the Council. Therefore, the Portfolio Holder is requested to acknowledge the report from Homes England shown at Appendix A to this report.

6. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 6.1 The alternative of not acknowledging the report was considered and rejected.

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND OUTCOME

- 7.1. The following Council units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in the preparation of and their comments have been incorporated into this report:

Director of Corporate Services
Head of Internal Audit

Report Contact Officers: *Lee Phanco, Chief Officer for Assessment, Applications and Business Support*
Lee.phanco@bedford.gov.uk

File Reference: *None*

Previous Relevant Minutes: *Executive Decision 1497*

Background Papers: *None*

Appendices: *Appendix A*



Compliance Audit Report – 2022/23

5117 – BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Final Grade	Green - Meets requirements
Independent Auditor Organisation	Robert Baxter
Independent Auditor Name	Robert Baxter

Report Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Compliance Audit report is to confirm that grant recipients have met Homes England's funding conditions and contractual requirements and have properly exercised their responsibilities as set out in the Capital Funding Guide.

We use the audit findings (which are confidential between Homes England and the grant recipient) to inform our future investment decisions and to reassure the Homes England Chief Accounting Officer that public funds have been properly used.

Where findings have been determined as breaches they are then used as the basis for recommendations and final grades for Providers. Grades of green, amber or red are awarded; definitions are provided at the end of this report. Where applicable the Provider is to use the recommendations to prevent similar breaches from reoccurring in the future and to aid good governance for complying with Homes England's policies, procedures and funding conditions.

Information about the audit process and guidance is available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/compliance-audit>

Compliance Audit Grade and Judgement Summary

Final Grade	Green - Meets requirements
Judgement Summary	On review of the evidence provided, the outcome of the audit has shown the provider has complied with all the programme requirements and guidance. A GREEN grade has been assigned and no breaches were identified.



Scheme/Completions details

Scheme ID/ Completion ID	Address/Site ID	Scheme type
1028609	Rogers Court,MK42 9AH	Next Steps Accommodation - Capital

Audit Results

Number of Schemes/Completions Audited	1
Number of Breaches Assigned	0
Number of High Severity Breaches	0
Number of Medium Severity Breaches	0
Number of Low Severity Breaches	0

Provider's Acknowledgement of Report

The contents of this report including all recommendations must be acknowledged by your Board's Chair or equivalent. Confirmation of this acknowledgement must be recorded in the IMS Compliance Audit System by your Compliance Audit Lead no later **than three calendar months** of the report email notification being sent.

Report acknowledged by:

Date:

Confidentiality

The information contained within this report has been compiled purely to assist Homes England in its statutory duty relating to the payment of grant to the Provider. Homes England accepts no liability for the accuracy or completeness of any information contained within this report. This report is confidential between Homes England and the Provider and no third party can place any reliance upon it.

Compliance Audit Grade Definitions

Green Grade	No high or medium severity breaches identified, although there may be low
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	breaches identified. The Homes England audit report shows that the provider has a satisfactory overall performance but may identify areas where minor improvements are required.
Amber Grade	One or more medium severity breaches identified. The Homes England audit report will shows that the provider has failed to meet some requirements but has not misapplied public money. The provider will be expected to correct identified problem(s) in future schemes and current developments.
Red Grade	One or more high level severity breaches identified, the Homes England audit report shows that the provider has failed to meet some requirements and there has been a risk of misapplication of public funds.