

Elected Member Visits to Children's Homes

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the contents of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 This report covers the following visits by elected members to children's homes:
 - 14 January 2009 by Councillors Bayliss, Leeming and Jackson to Coronation Avenue
 - 18 February 2009 by Councillors Grimadell, Baxter and Tuplin to Cricklewood Road
 - 17 March 2009 by Councillors Berry, Ginns and Harwood to Bute Walk
 - 15 April 2009 by Councillor Turner to Redwood
 - 20 April 2009 by Councillors Rawson and Winter to Elmhurst
 - 20 April 2009 by Councillors Ginns and Hird to Wragley
 - 6 May 2009 by Councillors Holmes and Jennings to Queensferry Gardens.
- 2.2 The responses to the specific issues raised for each home are summarised below.
- 2.3 **Coronation Avenue**

Property Services are costing the extension of the boundary fence and it is hoped to include this item in improvements to be carried out this year. Two new computers are on order for the home and, in addition, one older resident, who is a college student, is to have a PC for his own use.
- 2.4 **Cricklewood Road**

No issues requiring response.

2.5 **Bute Walk**

The manager and staff are being consulted about the planned refurbishment and will be involved in decisions about the layout of the building and fixtures and fittings.

Violence to staff is being addressed with the support of CAMHS, the Police and Youth Offending Service. The suitability of placements for this home is kept under constant review.

A Suitability and Sufficiency Survey has been carried out jointly by Property Services and CYP Department and this will assist to form long-term plans for the building in the coming weeks.

2.6 **Redwood**

Due to their emotional and behavioural needs some of the children at Redwood and the other Moorfield units are unable to cope with the demands of full-time education or mainstream schooling. For them the Kingsmead School and Pupil Referral Unit provides a range of flexible packages tailored to match their individual needs.

2.7 **Elmhurst**

Moorfield is to be refurbished in the summer. In addition a Suitability and Sufficiency Survey has been carried out jointly by Property Services and CYP Department and this will assist to form long-term plans for the building in the coming weeks.

2.8 **Wragley**

Options for improving the heating system, taking into account the cost and long-term plans for Moorfield, are being assessed and plans will be included in the improvements taking place this year.

2.9 **Queensferry Gardens**

The visit report had not been received at the time of writing

**For more information
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Background papers:

None

List of appendices:

Appendix 2: Reports and responses

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. Homes managers are responsible for their own cost centre. Budgets are managed and monitored to ensure they give value for money as well as good quality care.

Legal

2. Children's Homes are registered and regulated by Ofsted, which has power to withdraw registration from Registered Providers or Homes which fail to meet national standards.

Personnel

3. Homes Managers are required to be registered by the Ofsted and are assessed before they are registered. Other staff are required to hold a minimum qualification.

Equalities impact

4. Standards require services to be provided which meet the needs of individuals arising from their gender, disability, religious, racial, cultural or linguistic background or sexual orientation. The Home is required to have appropriate policies and procedures and to provide training for staff on these issues. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the service as a whole and equalities issues are monitored.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. Children's Homes support the Five Outcomes for Children identified in Every Child Matters, which form the basis of the objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan.