



COUNCIL CABINET
7 December 2022

ITEM 14

Report sponsor: Alison Parkin, Director of
Financial Services
Report author: Toni Nash, Head of Finance,
Resources

Compliance with Contract and Financial Procedure

Purpose

- 1.1 To approve capital programme changes in support of the Council's Children's Residential Accommodation strategy for Looked after Children.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To approve the addition to the 2022/23 Capital Programme of this priority Homes 2 Inspire scheme for £0.060m for a small Children's Home scheme placement, and approve scheme commencement, as outlined in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 and as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To approve the amendment of the approved 2022/2023-2024/25 capital programme for this small children's home scheme, to be funded from the existing approved Childrens Homes accommodation strategy budget of £1m, as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Strategic Director for People Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, subject to negotiation of acceptable terms, to award a grant for up to £0.060m to Homes 2 Inspire to deliver the capital works associated with the scheme, if necessary, as outlined in paragraph 4.4.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 In accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, this amendment to the Council's capital programme, and the award of the grant, are required to be reported to and approved by Cabinet.

Supporting information

4.1 Children's Residential Accommodation Strategy – Smaller Children's Homes.

As part of the Council's approved Children's Residential Accommodation strategy for Looked after Children, the Council has now procured and commissioned an experienced and well established Children in Care provider to work in a close hybrid partnership with the Council to establish smaller children's homes for solo placements, using a Council owned property, which already has planning permission for a children's homes. A young person has also been matched for this new home.

- 4.2 As part of the mobilisation process, it is necessary to start the refurbishment of the home to meet Ofsted registration requirements, and alongside this, the provider will progress with seeking Ofsted approval to register the home, which is a complex process. The home is likely to be registered by March 2023.
- 4.3 The estimated budget costs to refurbish the home is £0.060m. This will be funded from the approved £1m Children's Homes capital programme funding as set out in Appendix 1. Subject to paragraph 4.4, the refurbishment works will be undertaken by the provider, as the provider has other similar homes and is experienced in refurbishing homes to meet Ofsted requirements. This is the approach the provider has taken with other Local Authorities, with similar partnerships.
- 4.4 The provider is currently completing a feasibility study which will be completed by the middle of December. The provider will work in partnership with the Council. Subject to the feasibility, it is proposed that a grant of £0.060m will be awarded to the provider to complete these required refurbishment works. Discussions are continuing to finalise this. The aim is for the building work to be completed by March 2023, and for the young person to move in, in April 2023. The related care support package for the young person will also be in place for April 2023.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 The Council will work closely with the service provider and service user in developing this scheme.

Other options

- 6.1 The proposed scheme forms part of the Council's Sufficiency and Accommodation strategy which aims to enable more children and young people to be closer to home, particularly for those with complex/challenging behaviour where there is insufficient local provision to deliver appropriate placements and work towards reducing additional costs of out of area placements.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Appendix 1 outlines the current approved capital programme funding available to deliver the Council's approved Children's Residential Accommodation strategy for Looked after Children and the proposed capital allocation to this smaller children's home scheme. The appendix also outlines the remaining balance in capital funding available for further priority schemes following the commitment of funding to this project. Further schemes are to be brought forward for Cabinet consideration in due course.
- 7.2 As set out in paragraph 4.4, it may be necessary for the construction works associated with the proposed project to be funded through a standard Council grant agreement with Homes 2 Inspire, and for the provider to be responsible for delivery of this project and to undertake the works directly, working closely with their appointed professional and technical advisors. Therefore, if necessary, it is proposed to enter into a grant funding agreement with the provider and for the grant award of up to £0.060m as set out in Appendix 1.

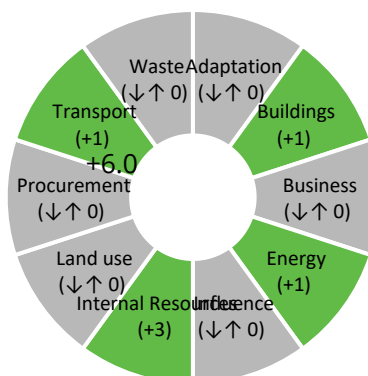
Legal implications

- 8.1 The smaller children's home scheme already has planning approval. The Council and the provider will ensure all Ofsted registration procedures are followed, and the young person will only be placed there following Ofsted approval.
- 8.2 If it is necessary for the Council to award a grant for the provider to undertake the works directly, the grant will be made on the Council's standard grant terms and conditions.

Climate implications

- 9.1 The proposed scheme will be required to meet all current Building Regulations on environmental performance and the Council have specified the energy efficiency rating required following refurbishment.
- 9.2 In line with Council requirements for Cabinet reports, an initial Climate Impact Assessment summary is set out below. This indicates that the proposed scheme will make a positive contribution to the Council's climate change commitments, and in particular for, Transport, Buildings, Energy and Resources.

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Socio-Economic implications

- 10.1 The proposed scheme is part of the Council's strategy to address shortfalls in placements, ensuring sufficient provision for children with more complex needs and establishing innovative approaches to reduce the number of children needing care over time.

Other significant implications

- 11.1 None

This report has been approved by the following people:

| Role | Name | Date of sign-off |
|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| Legal | Olu Idowu, Head of Legal Services | 17/11/22 |
| Finance | Toni Nash, Head of Finance | 18/11/22 |
| Service Director(s) | Gurmail Nizzer, Director of Children's Integrated Commissioning | 17/11/22 |
| Report sponsor Other(s) | Alison Parkin, Director of Financial Services | 19/11/22 |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Background papers: | None |
| List of appendices: | Appendix 1 – Proposed Capital Programme Changes |

| Proposed Capital Programme Changes | Phasing | | | Total |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | |
| Current approved Capital Programme funding for the Childrens Homes Strategy. | £0.100m | £0.300m | £0.600m | £1.000m |
| New Proposal – Homes 2 Inspire small home project, as set out above. | £0.054m | £0.006m | - | £0.060m |
| Remaining balance of Childrens Homes Strategy Funding, following proposed scheme, to be allocated to future projects. | - | £0.340m | £0.600m | £0.940m |