

Report of the Chief Officer, Children and Young People's Social Care

To Executive Board

Date: 22nd August 2007

**Subject: Design & Cost Report
Improvement Works to Various establishments to reprovide for the loss of Holmfield Children's Home.**

Capital Scheme Number: 13455/000/000

Electoral Wards Affected:

Headingley
Middleton Park
Weetwood
Alwoodley

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity
Community Cohesion
Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In ✓

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

This report outlines Children's Services' proposals for providing residential care services for the children and young people who have moved from the former Holmfield Children's Home, following its closure. It seeks to obtain authority to release part of the capital receipt to the value of £226,210.00.

The proposed measures will improve quality of life and minimise the impact of the placement move for the children affected by the closure of the former Holmfield children's home, as well as those who will now need to share their home and establish new relationships with the newcomers. Whilst the main focus is on the development of facilities and accommodation, this report recognises the one-off costs of supporting transition for staff and children to a new environment. A summary of the proposed work is as follows:

- Converting existing garages at Bodmin Road Children's Home to a non-residential Independent Living facility where older children can prepare for leaving care.
- Refurbishment works to Bodmin Road, Iveson Approach and Squirrel Way which will improve the overall living environment for the children.
- IT Equipment and associated improvements to cables, network and server.
- Costs of relocating the young people involved, including furniture and possessions, and of changing their educational facilities/details.
- Outdoor physical activity / recreation facilities.
- A People Carrier to make sure there are continued arrangements for transport to activities (social, recreational, life skills and fitness).

1.0 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To request approval to release part of the capital receipt from the sale of Holmfield Children's Home to improve quality of life and minimise the impact of the placement move for children affected by the closure of Holmfield. This includes those who have moved from Holmfield and other children who will now need to share their home and establish new relationships with newcomers.
- 1.2 These are one-off costs to support transition for staff and children to a new environment.
- 1.3 The proposals take account of the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes (be happy, be healthy, be safe, achieve full potential and be free from the effects of poverty), as well as performance requirements on stability of placement. The recommendations set out within this report are consistent with the Children and Young People's Strategic Plan and with the recommendations of the Review of Children's Residential Services, approved by Executive Board on 13th December 2006.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Holmfield was one of two homes in the city designated as therapeutic units catering for young people with complex needs, who often present severe challenges to staff in managing the young people's behaviour.
- 2.2 The review of Children's Residential Services identified Holmfield as a building that physically did not meet the needs of the children and young people living there and did not support ways of working with young people that were capable of resulting in sustainable, successful outcomes. The review recommended its closure and Holmfield was closed on 28th February 2007.
- 2.3 It was recognised that, following the closure of Holmfield, a number of facilities the home offered its young residents would have to be re-provided in the homes to which the Holmfield children were moved. These included:
- A separate kitchen area, which provided the opportunity for the young people to develop skills such as cooking, menu planning, budgeting etc. This was particularly useful for young people approaching the time for leaving care and beginning an independent life in the adult world.
 - Particular work centred on encouraging educational achievement and school attendance. Young people at Holmfield had access to computers to encourage them in their school work and project work. They also had access to staff experienced in supporting improved school attendance and access to innovative educational programmes, as well as providing skilled support to out of school learning activities.
 - Regular outdoor activities such as camping, cycling and orienteering as well as access to local outdoor recreation facilities that were beneficial both in terms of physical fitness and social interaction.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Eight young people moving from Holmfield have now been found new placements in the Council's existing residential accommodation.
- 3.2 As identified in the review of children's residential services, much work is required to further upgrade and improve many aspects of our children's residential accommodation. The plans described below are drawn from the findings of the residential review and a thorough analysis of one-off costs relating to the unique issues that have arisen in this unusual situation, where a number of children and young people from Holmfield have moved to new placements, and now need extra support get to know and live with unfamiliar young people and a range of new carers.

- 3.3 In developing the detail underpinning the proposals below, officers have been mindful of the need to provide transitional support at no lesser quality and with no lesser diligence or thought, than if the children were their own. Their corporate carer role and the responsibilities of the Council (which has the overarching Corporate Carer responsibility), has resulted in planning to:
- Create good quality living environments for the young people who have moved, making sure there is no deterioration in amenity (and providing improvements to living conditions, as most people moving house would expect).
 - Provide skilled and timely professional support the young people who have moved from Holmfield.
 - Provide skilled support to the children and young people already living in the homes to which Holmfield children have moved.
 - Create an enhanced programme of activities designed to promote a range of social and life skills using various approaches to ensure the move is completed successfully.
 - Ensure that any disruptions to other aspects of the young people's lives (recreational, sporting, social, educational and physical fitness) are minimised through a careful programme designed to ensure continuity and reduce the potential for distress and disengagement.
 - Ensure the continuity of co-ordinated transition programmes for children and young people.
 - Prepare and support staff who have been redeployed and who will be working with children of different ages and different needs.
 - Prepare and support staff who are receiving the young people to ensure they have supported time with them and opportunities to develop and enhance skills that they may not have needed before.

4 Design Proposals / Scheme Description

4.1 The conversion of the garages at Bodmin Road

The conversion of a large garage into an independence training suite at Bodmin Road will allow young people to learn how to manage the risks they will encounter in adult life. The facility will provide young people with the type of access to independent living practice (cookery, menu planning, budget management etc) that would be available if they lived at home with parents, or in a family environment. The facility will be planned in a way that will link with pathway planning and leaving care plans. The training suite will give the young people engaged in the programme confidence and build up their skill base whilst still being supported by the residential resource. One of the recommendations of the review of children's residential services referred explicitly to the need for this type of facility.

Estimated cost: £70,000.

4.2 Refurbishment of existing homes

All recommendations refer to homes to which Holmfield children have moved, or those to which other young people (who would have gone to Holmfield if it was there) will go. They bring accommodation up to a level of minimum standard, and relate directly to the Asset Management Condition Survey and in some cases, inspection findings from CSC1.

Estimated cost: £35,000 (Bodmin Road); £26,401 (Iveson Approach); £25,000 (Squirrel Way).

4.3 ICT Equipment

The majority of the young people who lived at Holmfield receive their education in alternative, non-school based programmes. All the young people have a difficult history at school for a wide range of reasons and benefit from the motivation that appropriate ICT equipment brings to learning and study. ICT equipment also helps to create easier access to explore post-16 educational possibilities, as well as

supported training schemes and employment opportunities. The provision of lap tops with compatible digital and educational software for the young people who have moved from Holmfield needs supporting with improved cabling to some homes.

Very recent advice from ICT specialists has explained the additional demands of increased use on the current cabling and networking and therefore extra capacity and upgrading is needed.

Estimated cost: £24,000 (laptops); £10,000 (cabling).

4.4 Outdoor physical activity and facilities to support recreation and exercise

Whilst the equipment formerly attached to Holmfield will be used by another residential home, the dispersal of the young people across different homes, and the unrealistic potential for sharing (heavy demand during weekends and school holidays) means increased stocks of equipment are needed. Structured physical activity not only promotes healthy lifestyles, but through supported risk taking activity and the experience of new activities, increases self confidence and develops bonds across newly formed groups of young people with new carers.

Estimated cost: £14,000

4.5 New furniture and possessions

Every child or young person's bedroom is an important place where personalities are developed as an individual puts his or her own 'stamp' on a private space. Inevitably on moving to a new home, there is some demand for new furniture and fittings.

Estimated cost: £6,000.

4.6 A people carrier

The lack of appropriate and supervised transport to outdoor activities can be a barrier to achieving a healthy lifestyle. Ensuring productive activities at weekends, after school and in school holidays is what all parents will try to do for their children. There is a need to continue with a programme of activities for young people who lived at Holmfield, and their re-location to different homes means that there is a logistical need to increase transport capacity. Structured activities in non-school time also minimises the potential for criminal activity – a key aspect of the care programmes for the Holmfield children and young people.

Estimated cost: £15,000.

5 Consultations

Consultations have taken place with the children and young people, staff, within Adult Management Group and in Departmental Management Team meetings.

6 Programme of work

Tenders out – September 2007

Tenders in - October 2007

Start on site - January 2008

Completion - March 2008

7 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

7.1 Compliance with Council Policies

All building work will be completed either within the Multi-Trade Partnering Contract as agreed by Corporate Procurement Unit, which includes all Health & Safety policies and procedures or via the Council's Strategic Design Alliance (for the garage conversion at Bodmin Road).

8 Council Constitution

No implications.

9 Community Safety

The proposals contained in the report do not have any implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

10 Legal and Resource Implications

10.1 Scheme Design Estimate

The scheme will be prepared in-house by Social Care Services or via the Council's Strategic Design Alliance.

There will be no land acquisition but planning permission for the change of use of the garage and building regulation approval for the actual alterations will be required.

10.2 Capital Funding and Cash Flow

Previous total Authority to Spend on this scheme	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST					
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's	
LAND (1)	0.0							
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0							
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0							
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0							
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0							
TOTALS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST					
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's	
LAND (1)	0.0							
CONSTRUCTION (3)	146.4		146.4					
FURN & EQPT (5)	69.8		69.8					
DESIGN FEES (6)	10.0		10.0					
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0							
TOTALS	226.2	0.0	226.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST					
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's	
Part Capital Receipt from the sale of Holmfield House	226.2		226.2					
Total Funding	226.2	0.0	226.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Balance / Shortfall =	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Parent Scheme Number : 13455/000/000

Title : Improvement Works from the sale of Holmfield Children's Home

11 Revenue Effects

11.1 There will be no additional costs to the Departmental revenue budget.

12 Risk Assessments

12.1 Design issues: all will be agreed with staff, children, contractor, structural engineer and Social Care Services management.

12.2 Cost issues: frequent monitoring to ensure project keeps within budget.

- 12.3 Service Delivery issues: all issues to be discussed and implemented by management and contractor to ensure continual safe delivery of services during all construction works.
- 12.4 Programme issues: fully monitored to ensure start and completion on time.

13 Conclusions

The sum of £226,210 is requested to be released from the capital receipt from the sale of Holmfield Children's Home. The proposed improvements in facilities and asset provision will enhance our aim to improve the quality of service for our looked after children. It is strong evidence of the Council's commitment to the 'Every Child Matters Agenda' and to improve the life chances and minimise the impact of the placement move for the children affected by the closure of Holmfield.

14 Recommendations

- 14.1 Executive Board is recommended to give approval to £226,210 of the capital receipt from the sale of Holmfield being used to fund the relocation costs as described in this report.
- 14.2 Executive Board is recommended to approve the injection of the scheme into the capital programme and provide authority to incur expenditure of £226,210.