


Report to:	STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPITAL MONITORING PANEL
Date:	14 March 2022
Reporting Officer:	Councillor Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families) Tony Decrop – Assistant Director Children’s Services
Subject:	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE CAPITAL SCHEMES UPDATE REPORT
Report Summary:	This report provides an update on the Children’s Social Care Property Capital Scheme and sets out details of the major approved property capital schemes in this Directorate.
Recommendations:	That Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel be recommended to note the progress update in the report.
Corporate Plan:	The schemes set out in this report supports the objectives of the Corporate Plan and enable the delivery of the Children’s 7 point plan.
Policy Implications:	In line with Policy and Financial Framework
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	The Council has limited resources available to fund Capital Expenditure. On 29 September 2021, Executive Cabinet approved the allocation of the remaining capital reserves to immediate priorities. No new capital investment will be agreed until the revenue budget position for 2022/23 is clearer and the Council has a sustainable medium term financial plan. A further review of Capital Priorities and the affordability of future borrowing to fund Capital Expenditure will be undertaken following conclusion of the 2022/23 budget setting process. No further capital projects will be approved in the short term unless the schemes are fully funded from external sources.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	Members will note that in relation to the assessment and solo units’ progress has be made to the point of staffing the units. In relation to the respite unit progress has unfortunately stalled as it transpires having reviewed the buyer’s pack it appears the courtyard part of the property is not owned by the sellers. This can be remedied in a number of ways but may take time and the council has no control over the process save to threaten to pull out of the purchase. Legal services remain in regular contact with the seller’s solicitors to seek clarification and to endeavour to resolve the issue. The various remedies also carry different levels of risk for the council, predominately financial. Therefore officers are currently drafting an options paper which will include comments from both legal and finance in order that an informed decision can be taken in relation to if and how the purchase of this property will proceed.
Risk Management:	This is covered in the content of the report.
Background Information:	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Children's Social Care property capital projects, within the Capital Programme managed by the Directorate and sets out details of the major approved property capital schemes in this Directorate.
- 1.2 Full details of existing schemes are set out below:

Scheme Name	2021/22 Approved Budget Allocation £	Re-Profiling £	2021/22 Budget (Subject to Re-Profiling Approval) £	2022/23 Budget (Subject to Re-Profiling Approval) £
Respite Unit	367,000	(140,000)	227,000	140,000
Assessment Unit	51,800	0	51,800	0
Solo Unit	30,000	0	30,000	0
Total	448,800	(140,000)	308,800	140,000

2. PROGRESS UPDATE

Respite Unit

- 2.1 The purchase of a respite property is underway. All land searches have now been completed and contact made with vendors solicitors seeking clarity over a small area of land to the side of the property. Once the vendor's solicitors have provided an update, a further report will be prepared outlining the options on how to proceed. Updated costs have been provided for the refurbishment and fit out costs.

Assessment Unit (St Lawrence Road)

- 2.2 Works on the unit have been completed and handed over to Children's Services, the Ofsted registration process is underway, however, registration cannot be completed until a named Residential Manager and residential staff team have been completed. Recruitment is currently underway with live adverts out both for permanent and agency staff. It has to be noted that similar to the situation in the adult residential sector, there are significant pressures in recruiting suitable qualified and experienced children's residential staff.

Solo Unit (66 Chester Avenue)

- 2.3 Works on the unit are now complete and have been handed over to Children's Services. The Ofsted registration process is in progress and a young person with high complex needs has been placed in the unit as part of a discharge plan from hospital. Originally supported by a combination of permanent and agency residential staff, due to the young person requiring specialist bespoke intervention and to stabilise the placement, we have commissioned a specialist mental health team to work with the young person. We have agreed with this staff team it will operate under the home management and support the registration process. The provider will support the training of our staff through access to their CPD pathway to deliver a consistent and coherent model of care. We will work with the provider to blend in Tameside staff as part of a managed handover of the care to a Tameside staff team that will over the medium to longer term result in the withdrawal of the specialist care team

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As set out at the front of the report.