

REPORT TO: Cabinet

DATE: 30 September 2010

SUBJECT: Capital Investment for Children subject to Special Guardianship Arrangements

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Colin Pettigrew, Service Director - Children Schools and Families

CONTACT OFFICER: Marilyn Josefsen, Interim Service Manager - Children Schools and Families (Telephone No. 0151 934 5021)

**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the scheme detailed to be included within the capital programme.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

Cabinet approval is necessary to enable a scheme to be included in the capital programme.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Capital Investment is added to the Capital Programme. (Please note that this represents "one-off" capital expenditure that is funded from the Fostering budget).

Cabinet is asked to agree to the inclusion of the scheme (£26,750) within the capital programme, with funding provided entirely from the Children's Services Fostering Revenue budget.

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: No

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Following the expiry of the Call-In period

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

There is an alternative to this capital investment which would involve the placement of the two children with an Independent Foster Agency. This option would not be in the best interests of the children and would commit the Council to considerable additional costs over a number of years.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: None

Financial: There are no financial implications for the Council's general resources as all funding is from specific resources – namely the Children's Services Fostering Revenue Budget.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2009/ 2010 £	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £	2012/ 2013 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure		26,750		
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources		No		
Specific Capital Resources		No		
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources		26,750		
Funded from External Resources		No		
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal:

Risk Assessment: The risk of not providing the funding for the extension is that the Council would need to seek an alternative solution, involving the removal of the children from the family environment and a considerable additional burden on the Children's Services Revenue Budget.

Asset Management:

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

- 1 LEGAL SERVICES.
- 2 FD516. THE INTERIM HEAD OF CORPORATE FINANCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES HAS BEEN CONSULTED AND HIS COMMENTS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THIS REPORT.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community			
2	Creating Safe Communities			
3	Jobs and Prosperity			
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability			
6	Creating Inclusive Communities			
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People	√		

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Cabinet Member Report for Children Schools and Families dated 14-9-2010, Agenda Item 6.

1 BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On the 14-9-2010 the Cabinet Member for Children Schools and Families, Councillor Ian Moncur, considered the report of Peter Morgan - Strategic Director, at Agenda Item 6 regarding this matter.
- 1.2 The Cabinet Member was recommended to consider agreeing to an investment to extend a domestic property in order to allow two children under 5 years old currently in the Interim Care of the Local Authority to be placed in the permanent care of extended family members under Special Guardianship Regulations. This would in effect allow the children to be safely and securely discharged from our care to that of their extended family on a permanent basis, achieving long term stability for them and the positive outcomes associated with that.
- 1.3 In coming to his decision to agree to the investment of £26,750 capital the Cabinet Member gave consideration to the following:
 - The children's ages (both are under 5 years old)
 - That since being removed from their parent(s)' care via a Police Protection Order in June 2009 they had already experience four moves with the proposed move to extended family to be their fifth.
 - That wherever appropriate and safe to do so that children should remain in their own family, including extended family.
 - That a one-off capital investment of £26,750 (funded from Fostering Revenue Budget) would be as an alternative to revenue expenditure of £70,223 per annum for their current care arrangements with an Independent Fostering Agency. The projected cost of this care if the children were to remain with their current carer throughout their childhood would be in excess of £2.1 million.
 - That Sefton MBC protect their investment by way of a contractual obligation with the Special Guardian for a legal charge to be made against the value of the extension in the event of the home being sold.
 - That the plan for the children to be placed with their extended family members is agreed by the Sefton Adoption and Permanency Panel and the Judge hearing proceedings at Liverpool Child and Family Court.