

COUNCIL

16 OCTOBER 2014

ADDITIONS TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Alan Jarrett, Finance
Report from: Mick Hayward, Chief Finance Officer
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Summary

This report seeks approval to add two schemes to the Capital Programme.

1. Budget and policy framework

1.1 Additions to the Capital Programme are a matter for Full Council.

2. Background

2.1 The Cabinet recommended two schemes, at its meeting on 30 September 2014, for approval by Full Council:

- Smarter working @ Gun Wharf project
- Semi-independent accommodation at the Old Vicarage children's home.

3. Smarter working @ Gun Wharf Project

3.1 Cabinet considered this project in the Capital Budget Monitoring report and agreed to recommend to Full Council to approve a £400,000 addition to the capital programme to take forward the Smarter Working @ Gun Wharf project. This would be funded through a virement from the non-ringfenced Adult Social Care Capital Grant.

3.2 This project will enable the better, more space efficient use of Gun Wharf, including the co-location of Adult Social Care teams and allow the vacation of expensive third party accommodation. The overall impact of the project could see £1m of revenue savings plus the avoidance of £500,000 of maintenance works and a revenue liability of £600,000.

4. Semi-independent accommodation at the Old Vicarage children's home

4.1 Cabinet considered a Gateway 1 report on the transfer of the Old Vicarage to the Independent Sector. Within the report, it was recommended that the £120,000 to complete the works required to develop the semi-independent

provision for two care leavers be funded from the existing Adult Social Care capital budget. This included £8,000 to fund the required support from Building & Design to complete feasibility and costs for the semi-independent provision; and for Property & Capital Projects to support all property related issues, including the value and lease of the building.

4.2 Further information, as presented to Cabinet on 30 September, is attached at Appendix A to the report.

5. Risk management

5.1 The risk of overspending against the programme is managed through regular monitoring and remedial action as appropriate throughout the year. There are no specific risks to report at this time.

6. Financial and legal Implications

6.1 It is proposed to fund these two schemes from the Adult Social Care Capital Grant. This funding is not ring-fenced, but was originally earmarked to reprovide the ECU and Napier Centre and provide alternative accommodation for the integrated older people teams. The Council's capital requirements have changed and part of grant is now available to fund the two new schemes referred to in this report, totalling £520,000.

6.2 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. The specific legal implications regarding the overall procurement process for the transfer of the Old Vicarage to the independent sector are set out in the relevant Cabinet report.

7. Recommendation

7.1 Council is asked to approve the following additions to the capital programme, both of which are to be funded through virements from the Adult Social Care Transformation budget:

- Transfer £400,000 from Adult Social Care Transformation to fund the Smarter Working @ Gun Wharf project;
- Transfer £120,000 from Adult Social Care Transformation to fund the construction of additional provision on the Old Vicarage site.

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Background papers

Capital Budget Monitoring Report – Round 1: 30 September 2014
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=12923>

Gateway 1 Procurement Commencement: Management of the Old Vicarage: 30 September 2014:
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=13332>

DEVELOPMENT OF SEMI-INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION FOR TWO CARE LEAVERS

Appendix A

1. SUMMARY

This report outlines the current arrangements for the provision of residential care at the Old Vicarage children's home. The home was previously operated as an 8 bed provision and currently operates as a 6 bed provision for children with severe emotional and behavioural needs following CADMT approval on 1 May 2014.

Further, it outlines the proposal to develop semi-independent accommodation for 2 care leavers.

This would ensure that every opportunity is made to maximise the use and occupancy of the property/site to best meet the needs of children who are looked after and leaving care in Medway; to meet the Sufficiency Duty and enable young people to live locally. This proposal and funding from existing budgets [£120,000] was recommended at CADMT on 5 August 2014 and at Procurement Board on 13 August 2014.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Medway

As a corporate parent, Medway Council is ambitious and aspirational for its looked after children and care leavers. The authority demonstrates its commitment and the prioritisation of improving outcomes for these young people through a number of strategic plans aimed at meeting individual needs and improving outcomes.

As at the end of March 2014 Medway Council had 378 looked after children and 202 care leavers.

Of the 35 children placed in children's homes at the end of March 2014, 10 [29%] were placed within 20 miles of their community/family/friends; including the 6 young people living at The Old Vicarage. The remaining 25 young people [71%] were placed over 20 miles from community/family/friends.

For all children in care, placements outside of the Medway boundary have increased from 33% in 2013 to 38% in 2014. The proposed semi-independent accommodation for two care leavers will support young people being placed in Medway, close to schools, community, family/friends and support services when they are ready familiar.

This will mean that these care leavers are in close proximity to staff who they have already formed good relationships with; and be able to access support quickly when needed whilst developing their independence skills in a safe and secure environment.

Predicted numbers relating to type and complexity of needs, unmet needs and future demand are currently being researched. This information will be needed to provide a stronger basis in the future to better inform decision making about commissioning and managing the provider market more effectively in order meet demand, minimise costs and maximise outcomes, quality and performance.

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Appendix A

The Old Vicarage

The Old Vicarage was previously a 6 bed home, however in 2009 the property was extended and became an 8 bed provision. The decision to expand was made in order to increase residential provision within Medway. However, due to the complex and severe emotional and behavioural needs of the young people being referred/placed, it has not been feasible for the home to operate at full occupancy and successfully meet the needs and improve the outcomes of individual young people at the same time. Notably, during the twelve month period prior to the report being written, occupancy averaged between 4-5 young people in place.

The demands related to meeting the complex individual needs and improving outcomes for eight young people would be profound, problematic and likely unattainable, even with increased staffing levels. It is best practice within children's residential homes to provide care to smaller numbers of looked after children, preferably no higher than 5 or 6. National research and national trends support the concept of lowering the number of young people living in children's homes in order to impact positively on improving outcomes, particularly when individual needs are deemed severe.

CADMT agreed to The Old Vicarage operating as a 6 bed home from 1 May 2014; providing care for young people with complex and challenging behaviours.

Maintaining a residential children's home in Medway in order to meet the Sufficiency Duty should be a prioritised key requirement. This would ensure that the council does not become totally reliant on commissioning external provision whilst proactively managing the risks associated with securing sufficient local provision.

Proposed Semi-Independent Provision

A scoping paper dated the 14 March 2014 was presented to CADMT regarding the future provision of the home and expanding the type of placement available to include semi-independent accommodation/support for care leavers.

For the most part, available semi-independent accommodation in Medway does not meet the required quality/performance standards at present and the ability to offer choice is very limited.

The feasibility and costings of three remodelling options to provide semi-independent accommodation for two young people has been undertaken. [Please refer to the Options Appraisal set out in the Exempt Appendix.]

Endorsement of this project will mean that the home will have places for up to six young people of either gender and aged between twelve years and eighteen years. In addition, two places will be separate from the main part of the home with private access and used to help prepare young people who have lived in the home for transition to semi-independence whilst they are living in their own accommodation; with personalised onsite support from staff who they have lived with, know and trust and with whom they already have positive and meaningful relationships.

Cabinet are asked to agree to the proposal to remodel The Old Vicarage on this basis.

DEVELOPMENT OF SEMI-INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION FOR TWO CARE LEAVERS Appendix A

The Property

The property is currently leased to Northern Care. This arrangement covers the two year life of the current contract and is therefore due to cease on 15 July 2015.

FINANCE

CADMT recommended the following funding from the existing Adult Social Care capital budget:

- £8,000 initial budget to fund the feasibility study, planning and costings that will be done by Building and Design; and the support we will need from Properties regarding the building and lease.
- £112,000 for building works required.

£120,000 Total

As this constitutes a new capital scheme it will require both Cabinet and Full Council approval. In the interim, a cost code has been provided for the £8,000 required for support services. This cost will be transferred when the capital scheme has been set up.

Note: If we are able to go ahead with the works, it is most likely, based on feedback from Building & Design, Conservation and Planning; that we will be constructing a timber frame building that will include two bedrooms/en-suite shower rooms and shared kitchen and bathroom. Initial feedback from the Planning Department is very positive. If Cabinet and Full Council approve the capital funding for the semi-independent provision; Building and Design will complete and submit an application to the Planning Department. It is estimated that a formal decision/response will take approximately 8 weeks from the date of receipt.
