

# Report



meeting	SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2004	agenda item number

## **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - DIRECT SERVICES, CHILDREN**

### **UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL STRATEGY**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members of the Standing Select Committee on progress on 2 outstanding recommendations from the implementation of the Children's Residential Strategy.

#### **2. Information and Advice**

**Recommendation H** - The review group supports the removal of the Clasp building behind the Big House.

##### **2.1 The Clasp Building at The Big House, Edwinstowe.**

- 2.1.1 The clasp building at the rear of The Big House is currently unused and is not deemed fit for purpose.
- 2.1.2 Funding from the capital programme 2003/04 was allocated to address this issue. However, it required matched funding from Health who jointly fund this short break service to children with learning difficulties or challenging behaviour. Health were not able to allocate funding to this proposal.
- 2.1.3 Negotiations are underway with Health to renew the current joint funding arrangements which expires in 2006. Indications are that further funding will be allocated to secure the provision of this service into the future.
- 2.1.4 On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2004, a successful bid was made to transfer the capital allocation from The Big House to Caudwell House, Southwell, as urgent adaptations were needed to make that building compliant with National Care Standards - Children's Homes Regulations, 2000.
- 2.1.5 There is currently no allocated capital funding to address the clasp building.

- 2.1.6 The clasp building, whilst unsightly, does not affect the delivery of a high quality service at The Big House. It has not effected the registration of the main building which has been deemed fit for purpose.
- 2.1.7 It does not pose a health and safety risk as it is inaccessible to the users of the service and is currently used for storage purposes only.
- 2.1.8 Planning advice recommended that any proposal regarding the demolition of the clasp building should be alongside a proposal for a new development to enhance the chance of a future planning application being successful.
- 2.1.9 As there are currently no proposals for any development of The Big House, consideration is being given to the option of demolition only. The expected cost of this would be in the order of £45,000 including asbestos removal.
- 2.1.10 Once the revenue budget is secured from Health post 2006, then a bid could be submitted to the capital programme for the demolition of the clasp building.

<p><b>Recommendation K</b> – Maintenance budgets should be established and ring-fenced for each home to enable the upkeep of the building and to continue to meet the requirements of the National Care Standards 2000.</p>
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## **2.2 Ring fenced maintenance budgets**

- 2.2.1 The Local Authority is currently undertaking a Best Value Review of Property. As part of the overall review the issue of property maintenance will be addressed.
- 2.2.2 However, until the outcome of that review is known, to ensure that all of our children's homes remain compliant with National Care Standards, consideration is being given to identifying a budget from Social Services for the financial year 2005/06.

## **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the report be noted.

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(COMM-SELECT) UPCR (RH)