

18 June 2012

Agenda Item: **12****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****COSTS OF EXTENSION TO PROPERTY TO ENABLE TWO CHILDREN,
PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER, TO REMAIN WITH EXTENDED FAMILY
UNTIL ADULthood****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about a delegated decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services under the governance arrangements in place prior to 18 May 2012.

Information and Advice

2. Approval was sought to fund an extension up to the cost of £45,000 to enable two children, who were previously Looked After, to remain in their placement with extended family. The current house is not a suitable size to meet the children's long term placement needs and the extension will allow for two additional bedrooms, a family room, downstairs toilet and utility room.
3. The request was approved on 14 May 2012 and details are contained in delegated decision report CF/2012/00041, which is available as a background paper.
4. This agreement will allow these children to achieve permanence within their extended family of origin in a safe and secure environment, in line with the Human Rights Act and the Children Act. The Local Authority has met its obligations in terms of legislation.
5. A legal charge will be attached to the family property. In the event that both children do not remain in placement until they reach 18 years of age, the Local Authority will have the right to reclaim the cost of the extension.

Other Options Considered

6. In the course of the Assessments being completed for Court, the children's parents were ruled out as possible carers, as were other extended family members. Adoption was given consideration; however due to the positive assessment of uncle and aunt, an adoption plan would not have been approved by the Adoption Panel. Hence the only realistic option for gaining permanency for the two children is by means of a Special Guardianship Order to uncle and aunt. For this to be achieved the extension was required to improve the living conditions for the family.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

7. To ensure the safety, security and wellbeing of these two young children within their extended family group in order that they can grow up to achieve their maximum potential with the least intervention from Statutory Agencies.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the report be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments

9. As the report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (NDR 28/05/12)

10. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Delegate Decision Report CF/2012/00041

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.