

7th October 2024**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF GREEN GROWTH, INVESTMENT AND
ASSETS****PURCHASE OF A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR CHILDRENS HOME****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to the purchase of the freehold interest of a residential property for use as a children's home on terms as outlined in the exempt appendix to this report.

Information

2. This report contains an exempt appendix, which is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (Information relating to any individual and the business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information). Disclosure of this information would prejudice the parties' commercial interests.
3. At its meeting on 18th March 2020 Policy Committee approved the establishment of the first two of six 2-bed children's homes so that the authority would improve its position with regard to its Sufficiency Duty and reduce its exposure to the market for children's care which is characterised by rapidly rising costs and insufficient supply.
4. At its meetings on 10th January 2022 and 17th January 2022 respectively Finance Committee and Children and Young Peoples Committee approved the release of funding for the remaining four 2-bed homes. Subsequently the Council has purchased three houses to meet this need.
5. After a search on the private open market a further house has been identified which is deemed suitable by the children's residential service to be used as a Tier 4 step down children's home to provide a two bedroomed home. It has a suitable layout to function as a children's home and a large garden. It has the capacity for the parking of at least 4 cars. The property will be adapted and managed by a third party and a tender pack is currently being prepared.
6. A member of the Property team and two Registered Managers, one from the Council and one from Homes2Inspire, who operate a number of children's homes for the Council, have judged it to be a suitable property in a suitable area. The Council's Placements team, who would be responsible both for placing children in the care of the local authority in the home and conducting the Council's internal inspection (section 48) visits have a positive view of its immediate neighbourhood. In addition both Nottinghamshire Police and the Council's Highways have not objected to its proposed use as a Children's Home. These are both essential to secure planning permission for a change of use.

7. Terms have been agreed with agents acting for the vendors of the property as outlined in the exempt appendix to this report. The property has been subject to an independent valuation which has confirmed the agreed price as reflecting market value. The property has also been subject to a full Homebuyers Survey conducted by the ARC Partnership. All items picked up in this report will be considered as part of the works to adapt the property for its intended use.

Consultation

8. The Ward members will be consulted on this proposal.

Other Options Considered

9. The Council continues to seek potential properties to buy on the open market and the identified house is suitable for the proposed use.

Reasons for Recommendations

10. To enable the purchase of the property to meet identified need for childrens home places.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial implications

12. The purchase price, stamp duty and other costs arising from the purchase will be funded through existing capital programme provision.
13. The purchase is at risk of change of use planning consent. If not forthcoming the Council can mitigate financial risk by resale of the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That approval be given to purchase the freehold interest of the property on the terms as outlined in the exempt appendix to this report.

Michael Wayne Bexton
Director of Green Growth, Investment and Assets

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Jonathan Marriott, Head of Property & Estates, Tel: 0115 977 3922 jonathan.marriott@Nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (CJ 18/09/2024)

14. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Cabinet Member Economic Development and Asset Management.

Financial Comments (GB 12/09/2024)

15. It is proposed that the costs set out in this report will be funded from the Increasing the Residential Capacity for Looked After Children capital budget which is already approved within the Children and Families portfolio capital programme.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- Report to Policy Committee on 18th March 2020 titled 'Increasing residential capacity for looked after children.'
[INCREASING RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/INCREASING_RESIDENTIAL_CAPACITY_FOR_LOOKED_AFTER_CHILDREN)
- Report to Finance Committee on 10th January 2022) Increasing Residential Capacity for Looked after Children [INCREASING RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/INCREASING_RESIDENTIAL_CAPACITY_FOR_LOOKED_AFTER_CHILDREN)
- Children and Young People's Committee on 17th January 2022) titled 'Development of Children's home provision.'
[Document.ashx \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/Document.ashx)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- Kirkby South, Rachel Madden