

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD**

13<sup>th</sup> November 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Avondale Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Paul Briggs, Assistant Director – Resources and Support Services  
John Collings, Assistant Director – Performance and Achievement  
Mark Smith, Connexions Locality Manager  
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team Manager

## **19. 2007-08 Capital Works Programme - Update** *(Director of Children's Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non Key

**Purpose of report**

To provide an update on progress in relation to the 2007/08 Children's Services Capital Works Programme and to identify specific variations in the cost of individual schemes together with approval to those variations.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Further to approval of variations in costs approved at a Portfolio meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2007, the report provided an update on developments in the Capital Works Programme. The majority of individual projects included in the programme had been successfully achieved. A clear timetable had been prepared for those schemes still outstanding.

Client (school) concerns had been expressed in relation to two individual schemes (Barnard Grove Pipework and Dyke House boiler work). In both cases further investigation had taken place involving all parties and lessons had been taken on board to avoid similar situations developing in the future.

The Portfolio Holder's attention was drawn to Appendix 1 which provided an overview of the works programme under the three separate funding streams. In particular, attention was drawn to eight schemes, two new and six where there had been a significant increase to the original approved cost for those projects. The appendix highlighted both positive and negative impacts of cost variations. The net effect on overall expenditure was expected to be marginal, moving from £2,133,000 to £2,135,000 and was still well within overall budget of £2.2 million (the balance at this stage being held in reserve in case of any unexpected developments).

In terms of risk management, the programme of works referred to in the report had been compiled and modified on the basis of buildings showing clear signs of failure, addressing these issues removed a significant element of risk.

### **Decision**

The revised costing relating to the 2007/08 Capital Works Programme, as appended to the report, was approved.

## **20. Progress Report for the Connexions Delivery Plan 2007/08** *(Director of Children's Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-Key

### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made towards achieving actions in the Connexions Local Delivery Plan for the second quarter of 2007/08

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Further to the Portfolio meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2007 when the Local Delivery Plan had been endorsed, the report summarised progress over the second quarter of 2007/08 on actions within the Plan. There were a small number of areas highlighted where there had been some slippage in actions/targets being achieved within stated timescales.

### **Decision**

The report was noted. It was also noted that further updates would continue to be submitted to the Portfolio Holder.

## **21. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and

public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 22 - Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (Para 1 - Information relating to any individual).

**22. Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports** (*Director of Children's Services*)

**Type of decision**

Non-Key

**Purpose of Report**

To present the Regulation 33/34 report of visit to Children's Home for Exmoor Grove

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Portfolio Holder was reminded that reporting on the conduct of Children's Homes is a statutory function and came under the Children's Homes Regulations 2001, which took effect on 1 April 2002. Previously the reporting function had fallen under the Children's Homes Regulations 1991, which had now been superseded. The Regulations provided minimum standards for the oversight of the function and running of Children's Homes by the Registered Provider, and a schedule of issues to be monitored regularly. The present format was set up under the original Regulation and a review of the standards and reporting format was taking place to ensure that the requirements of the new Regulations are complied with. Reports would continue to be provided on a monthly basis.

The report covered visits to the Exmoor Grove Children's Home during the months of May, June and July 2007.

**Decision**

The report was received and noted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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