

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

5 December 2017

Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services

**CAPITAL FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE INCREASE IN PROVISION OF
FREE ENTITLEMENT TO EARLY YEARS PLACES**

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval to allocate funding to the conversion of children's centre properties to create additional early years places.

2. Information and Analysis

On 22 November 2016, Cabinet approved the sum of £250,000 for minor alterations to children's centre buildings to meet Ofsted requirements for the delivery of early years places. This was reduced to £244,580 by the approval of a non-Capital project at Ripley Nursery School. The Cabinet Member reports of 14 March 2017 and 1 August approved works at a further six centres, to the value of £87,799.95. A further two Capital and one non-Capital scheme have now been identified at three centres.

Scargill Children's Centre Following a re-organisation after the closure of the children's centre, space in the school's Infant block will be utilised to accommodate private pre-school provision and provide up to 30 new places for 3 and 4 year-olds. Internal alterations are also required in the new classroom block which was originally built in order to release floor area in school for the children's centre. This is to provide a full classroom space for pupils displaced by the pre-school provision.

Fencing works are required to ensure safeguarding. A quote of £9,665 has been received, which includes contingency. Two items of internal work are also required. Removal of a wall between classrooms in the Infant block to create a pre-school room at £5,000, and removal of a wall in the new classroom block to create a full sized Infant classroom at

£24,000. Fees for the above works total £750. This gives a project total of £39,415.

Tupton Children's Centre was created in a stand-alone building on the site of Tupton Primary School. This project is to install three additional infant toilets in the children's centre accommodation. The building will then be suitable for use by the school nursery, creating up to 30 new places; primarily 2 year-olds. The work has been priced at £11,455.59 including contingency. Given that it has been 7 years since the Children's Centre project was completed, an allowance is also made for redecoration and minor repairs. The budget for the project is therefore £16,000, plus fees of £750. Total £16,750

Brampton Children's Centre was created as a phase 1 Sure Start centre within the Brampton Primary School building. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken for a future scheme which would allow the nursery to provide 52 places in high quality accommodation. Currently, the space is being utilised as a base for the school's Enhanced Resource for autistic children. This has satisfied the DfE in terms of avoiding potential clawback of capital funding. The accommodation is in a fair state of repair but the boiler could not be repaired. Works have been carried out to connect the area onto the school's heating system at a cost of £2,500. However, as the works will remove surface-mounted services fittings throughout the whole area, some redecoration will be required. A total of £3,500 is therefore requested in order to satisfactorily complete the works. As this scheme is under £10,000, it does not represent a Capital spend. This urgent repair is charged against the children's centre conversion funds.

Financial Considerations

On 22 November 2016, Cabinet approved a budget of £250,000 from the £2,563,134 of revenue funding approved by the Secretary of State to support Capital projects. The approval of the Ripley Nursery scheme reduced the amount available for Capital projects to £244,580. A Capital spend of £54,698.95 was agreed on 14 March 2017 and a further Capital spend of £38,521 was agreed on 1 August 2017. This left a balance of £156,780.05. As the Brampton Children's Centre scheme of £3,500 is not a Capital project but is still to be funded from the revenue contribution, this reduces the total amount available for Capital projects to £153,280.05. The two proposed Capital projects contained in this paper require a total commitment of £56,165. If approved this would leave a balance of £97,115.05, which will be available for future projects.

3. Legal Considerations

The Childcare Act 2006 and subsequent strategic guidance, requires local authorities to ensure there are sufficient funded Early Years Places to meet the requirement of working parents of three and four year-olds in their area. In addition, this duty has been amended to include funding places for disadvantaged two year-olds.

4. Social Value Considerations

The schemes will deliver affordable childcare for working parents.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered:- prevention of crime & disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

6. Key Decision No

7. Call In

Is it necessary for the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed in the report? No

8. Background Papers

These are held on file in the Children's Services Development Section and County Property Division files

9. Officer Recommendation

- 9.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the following allocations for the Capital projects at the former children's centres at Scargill (£39,415) and Tupton (£16,750), and notes the non-Capital scheme at Brampton (£3,500).

Jane Parfremment
Strategic Director for Children's Services