

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

3rd April 2012

**Joint Report of the Strategic Director for
Children & Younger Adults and the Director of Property**

**ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR
HOLBROOK CENTRE FOR AUTISM POST-16 BASE, AT WHITEMOOR
CENTRE, BELPER – (Education)**

1. **Purpose of Report** To seek approval to fund adaptations to the accommodation at Whitemoor Centre, Belper, to enable Post-16 students from the Holbrook Centre for Autism to establish a temporary base.
2. **Information and Analysis**
 - 2.1 The Holbrook Centre for Autism is a highly effective Community Special School catering for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder. The school is registered to meet the needs of children and young people aged 5 to 19 years old, but until relatively recently the majority of the student population has been in the younger age range. However, as the young people have grown up, there has been an increasing number of young people aged 16 years and over. There are currently 8 students aged 16 years or older at the school; this will rise to 13 in the next academic year (2012/13) and will reach 35 potentially in another three to four years.
 - 2.2 The accommodation used for the post-16 students' learning base has been in what was formerly the caretaker's bungalow, in the grounds of the school. The limitations of this accommodation have become increasingly evident as the numbers of students have risen. The inadequacies of the accommodation have been noted in OfSTED inspections of the school. Strenuous efforts are being made to secure other accommodation which would provide a suitable base for the post-16 students on a permanent basis.
 - 2.3 Some rooms at the Whitemoor Centre, Belper – a base for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities run by Derbyshire County Council –

have been identified as potentially suitable for providing some temporary additional accommodation in the current academic year. It is these rooms which require some adaptation to accommodate the 16 – 19 young people from Holbrook Centre for Autism on a temporary basis pending a more permanent solution in the future. The Whitemoor Centre has some areas of accommodation which are under used currently by the existing service users. Changes and adaptations to the building can and will be useful for the adult service users of the Whitemoor Centre, but it is anticipated that it will provide opportunities for students at Holbrook Centre for Autism to work at Whitemoor Centre in the future in addition to having a dedicated location for post-16.

3. **Financial Considerations** The funding required for the project at the Whitemoor Centre, Belper is £12,000. This can be met from savings in the 2011/12 CAYA Capital Programme which currently total approximately £500,000.
4. **Other Considerations** In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered:- prevention of crime & disorder; equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, legal & human rights, property and transport considerations.
5. **Key Decision** No
6. **Call in to be waived?** No
7. **Chief Officers' Recommendations**

That approval be granted to an allocation of £12,000 utilising savings in the 2011/12 CAYA Capital Programme to provide a temporary base for post-16 students from Holbrook Centre for Autism at the Whitemoor Centre, Belper.

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

Jeremy Goacher, Director of Property