

# RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS OUTLINED IN THE CONSTITUTION – Part 3 Section 16

DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION TAKEN BY: JAYNE IVORY  
PORTFOLIO AREA: Children's Services

**SUBJECT:**  
Appletrees Building work

## 1. DECISION

To approve the finance for work to be undertaken at Appletrees short breaks unit for children with disabilities. This is to ensure adequate provision during the Covid 19 crisis. A detailed plan with estimated costs of £37k has been drawn up and agreed.

## 2. REASON FOR DECISION

To build additional capacity at Appletrees to provide a short term / full time emergency placement for one child with complex health needs / autism alongside children attending for short breaks. It is critical that the short breaks (respite) offer can continue for the children identified as most vulnerable to family breakdown in the current crisis but it is often very difficult to care for profoundly disabled children alongside autistic children, hence the need for a self contained placement within the building.

## 3. BACKGROUND

A survey has been undertaken at Appletrees with a view to undertaking work to convert the current extension into a self contained flat where a single child can be cared for apart from the main group. The survey indicates that the work is feasible and can be completed in a short timescale as long as materials are ordered very quickly.

The plan of works and costs are attached to this document. To summarise, the current sensory room will be converted to an en-suite bedroom and a lounge / kitchen created in the remaining space. A new internal wall will separate the unit off from the rest of the building though it will remain intrinsic to the building.

Approval is given for the works to commence. A decision is required urgently as the majority of suppliers are closed and those remaining are getting very low on stock.

Completion of the work will enable Appletrees to care for children who present challenges in terms of matching. For example, it is difficult to care for children with autism alongside those with very complex health needs and severe disabilities. If we need to provide a full time placement it can disrupt what the service needs to offer other children and families. We have in recent times needed to provide full time emergency short term placements at Appletrees and the matching concerns have compromised the packages of care offered to other children.

Once the Covid 19 crisis has ended, the facility will also allow Appletrees to deliver training to young people to develop their independent living skills – shopping, cleaning, cooking, using a washing machine.

A discussion has taken place with OFSTED who agree that as long as the bed number is not increased from 5 to 6 beds this change can be dealt with by way of a straightforward amendment of the Statement of Purpose. The bed number will remain at 5 because the sensory room will occupy another bedroom. However, the new arrangement will allow the service to operate more efficiently , ensuring that all 5 beds are filled . If capacity increases OFSTED will require the manager to apply for a full variation which will take longer and may not be achieved in time to provide a contingency as the Covid crisis deepens. However, a variation can be considered later if felt to be appropriate. Increasing to 6 beds will have implications for staffing levels.

#### 4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

To provide a placement in an alternative building. Rejected because these children need specialist equipment, beds, hoists, etc in a building fully accessible to wheelchairs and staff trained in specialist feeding, administration of medication and personal care.

*Further information is available from the report author*

#### 5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of the officer with delegation and the any Member who has been consulted, and note of any dispensation granted should be recorded below:

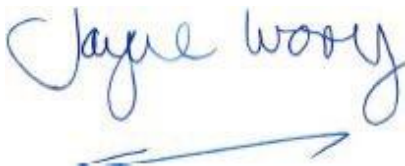
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>ALYSON HANSON</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	03 APRIL 2020
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<b>BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:</b>	
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Signed:



<b>Director Jayne Ivory</b>	<b>Date: 03 April 2020</b>
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