

Record of Urgent Executive Decision(s)

1. Subject of decision

Block purchase of four places within a children's home.

2. Name and Title of Decision Maker

The Elected Mayor (as urgent executive on behalf of Cabinet).

3. Details of any Conflict of Interest and any Dispensation granted in respect of such Interest

Not applicable.

4. Executive summary

Urgent approval is sought for the Authority to enter into a block contract arrangement with the Moncur Group for a new four bed children's home in Seghill: 'The Gables.' The contract would be for a period of one year with the option to agree an extension, subject to the quality of the service and the prevailing business needs.

The rationale is to address demand for additional children's residential home provision, including for some specific children identified as a suitable match for this home, who require urgent placements, where there have been extensive efforts to identify suitable placements from existing provision including both internal and externally commissioned services.

The home is fully staffed and is ready to accept children from week commencing 1st August 2022. There are four children already identified for whom this home would be ideal, two of these children require immediate moves and any delay in this would impact on the planning for the remaining children who also require moves during August/September once the first two children are settled.

****Note:** This report is 'Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. Alternative Options considered

Consideration was given to developing another in-house three or four bedroomed children's home, however there are currently no suitable properties available in the right location. It could take up to a year to establish a new in-house children's home, taking into account the process of identifying a property, agreeing a business case for capital/revenue funding, planning, recruitment and Ofsted registration.

Consideration was also given to a tender exercise for a block contract, this was ruled out on the basis that there are no other external children's homes which are currently available for block purchase in the location required. Any new external home could take up to a year to be registered and open.

6. Decision(s)

The Elected Mayor approves that the Authority enters into the block contract with Moncur Group for the purchase of four places in The Gables children's home.

7. Reasons for the Decision(s)

Given current occupancy levels and demand for placements, should this decision not be approved, the Authority would be at risk of not meeting its statutory duties to ensure sufficient residential placements for children in care.

8. Date Decision Made

8 August 2022

9. Is this decision subject to call-in and if so expiry date of call-in period

*Not for call-in as indicated below

10. Date of Publication

8 August 2022

11. Implementation Date

8 August 2022

*Note – this is an Urgent Decision, as agreed by the Chair of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, and not subject to call-in, as agreed by the Chair of Council.

The reason for urgency is as follows:

The provider requires urgent commitment from the Authority to enter into this contract. The home is fully staffed and is ready to accept children from this week (01/08/22). There are four children already identified for whom this home would be ideal, two of these children require immediate moves and any delay in this would impact on the planning for the remaining children who also require moves during August/September once the first two children are settled.

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