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Report of: *Executive Director of People Services*

Report to: *Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families*

Date of Decision: *30th November 2021*

Subject: *Capital Projects – Aldine House*

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
- Affects 2 or more Wards		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Which Executive Member Portfolio does this relate to? <i>Education, Children and Families</i>				
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? <i>Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee</i>				
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (People/LP/BK/191121)				
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

Purpose of Report:

Aldine House have been granted Department for Education (DfE) funding for 5 projects. The total amount of funding granted is £947,306 detailed as follows:

- Internal Doors Replacement (£527,300)
- External Lighting Replacement (£22,264)
- Playground Soft Pour (£27,036)
- Hair Salon (£23,706)
- Corner Infill (£347,000)

The purpose of this report is to provide detailed information on the individual projects that will be sent for approval at Co-operative Executive in January 2021, and for Sheffield City Council to accept the funding.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

- *Accepts the £947,306 of DfE funding for all 5 projects. The benefits to our young people and staff will be immense. Detailed below, more in-depth information regarding each project (1.1).*
- *Approves the Council entering into the grant agreement with the DfE on terms that are not materially different to those detailed within this report.*
- *Notes the approval to spend will be sent for approval by the Co-operative Executive in accordance with the Capital process.*

Background Papers:



210115_Aldine
House Corner Infill I



**Aldine House Door
Replacement Feasib**

In depth feasibility study for the corner infill and the replacement doors attached.

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Mark Wassell</i>
		Legal: <i>Gemma Day</i>
		Equalities: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	<i>Carl Speechley</i>
3	Executive Member consulted:	<i>Cllr Jayne Dunn</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Kieran Hill</i>	Job Title: <i>Service Manager, Aldine House Secure Children's Home</i>
	Date: 24.11.2021	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Aldine House is a modern, purpose built secure children's home for young people aged between 10 and 17. Aldine House has undergone significant expansion and refurbishment over the past few years now and the home and the daily environment for the young people and staff has improved exponentially due to this. Following on from this aesthetic work we have begun to look at aspects around robustness and technological advancement, whilst also relishing the challenge of preserving the nurturing and safe feel of the home.
- 1.2 The Council have applied for and have been awarded £947,306 of Secure Accommodation Grant Capital Funding from the Department for Education for five projects within Aldine House.
- 1.3 The past 18 months of the Covid-19 Pandemic has highlighted the need for larger staff spaces within the home, as many of the smaller offices have now been designated as single person workspaces due to social distancing. The proposed extension would create the single largest staff workspace in the home with the added benefit of creating a fit for purpose archive room. Aldine House has increased the staffing ratios in recent years to enable the support of very complex and traumatised children; we now need the space to safely accommodate these additional staff.
- 1.4 Within the current Phase 3 extension we have included the creation of a large vocational area that we envisage would be used for heavier activities such as painting, brickwork and ceramics. We are now looking to expand our existing vocational offer significantly by transforming an existing classroom into a hair salon and nail bar.
- 1.5 None of the projects listed below are legal requirements, but a choice to benefit our young people and staff.

Corner Infill Extension - £347,000

- 1.6 Aldine House has historically struggled with staff space and several areas of the home have had to be adapted to meet this need over the years. Aldine House were successful in 2017/18 in receiving grant funding to add additional staff and meeting space to the under-croft area of the building, in order to respond to the increase from 8 to 10 bedrooms and remedy some historical shortage in this area.
- 1.7 Part way through this project the Secure Stairs offer, along with an improved primary health contract being negotiated has added further to the pressure on staff space within the home. The building is currently undergoing an expansion project which will provide a further two bedrooms, classroom space, staff space and a secure external MUGA. It

is predicted that once Aldine House has reached 12 beds it will have maximised the capacity it has within its site and will have undergone 50% increase in occupancy in recent times.

- 1.8 Without this capital project, staffing space will continue to be of a premium and potentially increase staff stress in an already challenging environment. Pressure on resource to facilitate important meetings for young people will continue to be present.
- 1.9 Secure archiving space will continue to be an issue; this will increase over time due to the volume of documentation that we are legally obliged to keep for our young people. Our current storage area is at capacity and could potentially become a risk without further dedicated purpose-built metal storage in a dedicated area.
- 1.10 Aldine House will continue to have inadequate staff space and may have to consider reducing occupancy during times of pandemic and may have to re-consider accepting referrals for some of the very difficult to place children who require additional staffing as there is not adequate space to house the staff safely and supportively.

Internal Doors Replacement (£527,300)

- 1.11 A particular area of focus has been the doors within the home. All doors are currently in the style of barrel and key operated lock, with either a one or three point locking systems, with the exception of the initial airlock entry which is magnetic. We are now in a position where we are looking to replace our internal doors for more robust models.
- 1.12 Doors are crucial in any secure environment and there are multiple areas of the functionality of the doors in the home that we would like to improve. Although the doors at Aldine House are solid wooden fire doors, they are susceptible to being damaged where there is intent, in particular the lock being damaged if they are kicked with force or repeatedly. This features in numerous incidents that result in the use of physical intervention. More robust doors would therefore potentially help with the drive towards restraint reduction, which is a focus that the home is fully committed to.
- 1.13 Another feature that we are keen to introduce is magnetic and/or electronic locks, with the view of speeding up access through the core routes in the home for both the efficient movement of young people and staff and also the improved response times to high alarms that this would potentially offer.
- 1.14 Longer term savings may be achieved following an initial greater outlay for more robust doors, but also a longer life span and reduced requirement for repair and maintenance. A feasibility study was granted DfE funding in the last round and has already been carried out to reach this point.

- 1.15 If the project isn't completed then an opportunity will be missed to influence current and future projects, from both a capital and revenue funding stream, in a cost effective way.
- 1.16 With the previous and current extension projects, and significant refurbishment investment, the doors now are a feature that need to be upgraded to lift the whole home, both from a safety, security and homeliness perspective.

External Lighting Replacement (£22,264)

- 1.17 Following the building of the new MUGA with up-to-date external LED lights, we are now in a position where we are looking to replace the rest of our external and perimeter lighting to ensure the same standard of security around our playground and the perimeter of our building. The lighting is better for the cameras to see, less harsh and yellow for young people and staff and more friendly to the local environment with less 'bleed' outwards. It will uplift the entire building rather than emphasise the current dated lights when compared to the newer ones linked to the phase 3 build.
- 1.18 External lighting is crucial in any secure environment and following on from the completion of our Phase 3 extension we would like to ensure that we have the same high quality, high functioning LED lights that will be fitted on the external walls of our new build across the rest of our premises.
- 1.19 LED ensures a higher level of illumination, longer running times and significantly reduced energy costs. They are more durable, reliable and need little to no maintenance. For example, when compared to traditional luminaires, LED light fittings can use up to 65% less energy. This energy reduction counts towards the overall zero carbon target the Government has committed to by 2050.
- 1.20 We are looking to replace 48 of the old type fluorescent external lights with quadrangle style lamps. In addition to this we need to replace 15 emergency light fittings above external doors. This style of lighting will ensure instant full brightness is available, reducing safety risks and other hazards the moment these are switched on and better functionality from the CCTV system.
- 1.21 If the project isn't completed then an opportunity will be missed to influence current and future projects, from both a capital and revenue funding stream, in a cost-effective way. The project could potentially be carried out by the current team identified to deliver the significant phase 3 extension project at Aldine House, which enables savings to be made.

Playground Soft Pour (£27,036)

- 1.22 Within the current Phase 3 extension we will be building over part of the existing playground. The only way to ensure security throughout the

current phase 3 build has been to erect a secure hoarding across the entire width of the playground. We would rather replace the existing, dated and now damaged playground rather than just make it good.

- 1.23 We would like to re-cover the whole area with soft-pour and re-mark up the remaining playground into a modern and safe space for physical activity and recreational activities. This work would be spliced into the current phase 3 programme but managed directly by Aldine House to ensure it is delivered by the proposed deadline.
- 1.24 As part of Phase 3 Aldine House has a recent addition of an additional outside area in the form of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). The brand new MUGA was delivered in the past couple of months and opened for use by young people. It has quickly become one of if not the favourite area of the home. However, it is important that we have more than one useable outside space for meaningful sporting and recreational activity. Apart from the playground, the only other existing outdoor space is a courtyard area which is largely a throughway for access to different classrooms and offices and not suitable for regular use by children. Even at 8 beds this at times presented a challenge, however by growing the service we will encounter additional problems by only having limited outdoor space.
- 1.25 The playground surface is dated and has lost much of its bounce since being installed over a decade ago and will be further compromised with the current extension works. We often have to hold young people in this area and need to ensure that the surface is as comfortable as it can be, when such instances arise. This will be safer for all of our young people and staff. Having seen the immediate impact of the recently delivered MUGA, we now seek to bring this area of the home up to modern safe and secure standards.
- 1.26 We often work with very chaotic young people and have to manage young people apart from each other. We also at times would like the opportunity to have groups engaging in sporting activity outside at the same time. It is therefore imperative that our playground has a safe, secure and useable surface. This will ensure that all young people can access fresh air and sporting activities, even when there are operational issues such as separations. Without this useable space, young people at Aldine House will have less outdoor space as many other young people in secure enjoy and thrive with.

Hair Salon (£23,706)

- 1.27 Within the current Phase 3 extension we have included the creation of a large vocational area that we envisage would be used for heavier activities such as painting, brickwork and ceramics.

- 1.28 We are now looking to expand our existing vocational offer significantly by transforming an existing classroom into a hair salon and nail bar.
- 1.29 Within the proposed extension we have included the creation of a large vocational area that we envisage would be used for heavier activities such as painting, brickwork and ceramics. This would complement our existing vocational offer significantly as we have Food Technology, Music and Design Technology already, but lack some of the wider opportunities that young people in larger parts of the estate get access to. Following the successful build of a music Studio, via DfE capital funds in 2016, young people at Aldine House have since achieved numerous music qualifications that has effectively raised their self-esteem, self-confidence and ultimately improved life chances. Aldine House sourced and now employs a music teacher 3 full days per week to get best use from this facility and provided training for 5 care staff to ensure young people get regular access to this amazing resource.
- 1.30 By turning one of our existing classrooms into a hair salon and nail bar we are further expanding our vocational offer. Young people at Aldine House will receive a larger amount of variety in their activities and curriculum which will enable a greater level of personalisation and choice. This will improve the overall health and wellbeing of young people placed within Aldine House. Aldine Houses' facilities will be brought in line with other Secure Children's Homes (SCH's) in the estate and so young people's experiences will also be commensurate with this. Ultimately the outcomes for all young people based at Aldine House will have the potential to improve.
- 1.31 If this work is not completed Aldine House will continue to operate on its existing business plan but will miss the opportunity of strengthening this and robustly safeguarding its future. The opportunity to add additional specialisms into the care and education offers will be missed and the young people at Aldine House will receive a less varied curriculum than elsewhere in the estate

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

2.1 DfE Strategic Objectives

1. Secure children's homes operate in safe and secure buildings.
2. Children requiring a welfare secure placement are able to get a place in a timely manner.
3. Secure children's homes physical environment is fit-for-purpose and can meet children's full range of needs.
4. Secure children's homes provide high quality provision for children that promotes their education, welfare and well-being. Children are supported to have successful transitions in and out of secure.

2.2 Corporate Parenting Strategy Priorities. These priorities link to our

Business Plan:

1. Keeping children and young people in care and care leavers involved in services
2. Supporting success in Education, Training and Employment
3. Supporting children and young people in care and care leavers to be happy healthy and resilient
4. Prepare Children and young people in care for their identified permanent homes and families (through providing quality corporate parenting models consistently)
5. Ensuring there are enough high quality and stable arrangements for all our children and young people in care and care leavers
6. Keeping our Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers Safe
7. Supporting our care leavers journey to independence.

2.3 Council Strategic Objectives:

1. An In-Touch Organisation - The Council will be actively supporting adversity within society and be seen to taking a proactive approach to supporting young people with special requirements.
2. Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities - Providing a facility where challenging young people can be homed who at present struggle to integrate within society, will provide a strong foundation to build thriving neighbourhoods and communities.
3. Better Health and Wellbeing - Providing young people the facilities and resources to obtain vocational training that will promote job security later in life.
4. Tackling Inequalities - Providing a facility where young people who have come from challenging backgrounds are instilled with equality when they leave the unit.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 CDS have been heavily involved in a number of these projects and were appointed to undertake feasibility studies on the two highest value projects; Corner Infill and Internal Doors Replacement (both studies attached under Background Papers).

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

4.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

4.1.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and highlights that the funding of these 5 projects will help ensure an improved, safer, more secure living environment for the young people and an increased vocational offer. Staffing and archiving space will also be increased, alleviating staff stress in a very challenging environment. There are anticipated positive impacts on the vulnerable young people aged 11-17 whilst resident at Aldine House as well as longer term positive impacts on their health and financial inclusion.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 Key features (not exclusive) of the draft DfE Funding Agreement are summarised below. The Project / Grant Manager will need to read, understand and comply with all of the grant terms and conditions and will need to develop a viable exit strategy for when the grant funding ends to ensure that there are no unfunded ongoing costs.

- 4.2.2
- The grant covers five projects estimated at £947,306 (see para 1 above) and is only for eligible expenditure / funded activities (Annex F)
 - No project changes without Funder approval
 - SCC to inform the DfE if it applies to third parties for project funding.
 - SCC must not apply for duplicate funding for any part of the project
 - If the DfE changes any activities, SCC will try and accommodate these
 - Grant Payment is subject to compliance with the terms/conditions
 - Funding via Grant Offer Letter and for future years via notification.
 - Funding paid in any financial year will be based on SCC estimates for the grant funded activities (see Annex F)
 - Payment of funding is dependent on SCC meeting match funding requirements, if there are any agreed
 - Any match funding should be eligible, evidenced and available to use and a failure to meet requirements to be reported to the DfE
 - Payments made in instalments in arrears and claims signed by CFO
 - Funding maybe reduced if it has not been used in accordance with payment criteria or has not been spent in accordance with the Agreement
 - Funding withheld in a range of circumstances (see Section 11) including performance issues, not spending funding as per the Agreement.
 - All expenditure claimed must be net of VAT
 - SCC must not incur expenditure in advance of need and a range of costs are excluded (see Section 12.3)
 - Comply with monitoring/reporting requirements (see details)

- If project delivery is unsatisfactory, DfE may suspend/cancel the grant
- KPIs may be set and subject to change.
- Project subject to DfE evaluation / review with notice provided.
- Inform DfE if the project is to engage in income generating activities who will decide if monies can be retained.
- Subject to External Audit and records to be retained for 7 years
- Maintain a record of all assets (see details)
- DfE approval needed for sale/change of use of assets (see details)
- All procurement, subsidies compliant with UK law/Grant Agreement.
- Procurement, subcontracting, VFM: comply with UK/EU legislation (see full details)
- Comply with international subsidy rules and maintain records of compliance (see full details)
- Funding/delivery reviewed annually and allocations adjusted if needed.
- A change in government policy may see this agreement terminated or reduced.
- Comply with Codes of Conduct for Suppliers and Grant Recipients or the grant is subject to clawback (see link)

Codes of conduct for suppliers and grant recipients - GOV.UK
[\(\[www.gov.uk\]\(http://www.gov.uk\)\)](http://www.gov.uk)

4.2.3 The Grant Agreement may be terminated in a range of circumstances including (not exclusive, see Section 36.5 for full details):

- Grant not used for the required purposes
- Failure to comply with KPI requirements (as per Annexe F)
- Duplicate funding is obtained.
- A material breach of the agreement.

4.2.4 **Commercial Implications.**

- All public sector procurement is governed by and must be compliant with both the Grant Agreement and UK National Law. In addition, all procurement in SCC must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).
- CSO requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase / acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process.

4.3 **Legal Implications**

4.3.1 The grant is paid to the Council under Section 82 of the Children Act 1989. Section 82(2) permits the Secretary of State to *'make grants to local authorities in respect of expenditure incurred by them in providing*

secure accommodation in community homes other than assisted community homes’.

Under Section 82(3) of the Children Act 1989, the Secretary of State may *‘require the local authority to repay the grant, in whole or in part’,* if it is *‘not used for the purpose for which it was made or the accommodation is not used as, or ceases to be used as, secure accommodation’.*

The Children Act 1989 contains several obligations on local authorities to provide accommodation for children in need within their area. Section 25 of the Children Act 1989 sets out circumstances in which a Local Authority may be authorised to place a child who is being looked after by them in accommodation provided for the purpose of restricting liberty (“secure accommodation”).

If a decision is made to accept the grant, then the Council will be required to enter into a grant agreement (the Agreement) with the DfE.

Officers involved in the delivery of the project must be aware of and comply with all requirements of the DfE. Key terms from the Agreement are:

- Funding must only be used for the delivery of the *Funded Activities*.
- Any change to the funded activities or the milestones must be requested in writing to the DfE setting out the change requested, reason and impact.
- There is the ability for the DfE to withhold or reduce the funding in specific circumstances for example if the funding has not been spent in accordance with the Agreement or the Agreement has been breached.
- If the Council subcontracts any of the Funded Activities, they must ensure that the subcontractor is not able to further subcontract unless permission is given from the DfE.
- If using funding for marketing, communications and consultancy, permission must be sought prior to any expenditure in this area.
- The Agreement may be terminated in specific circumstances including for example if the funding is used for purposes other than for those which it has been awarded, KPI targets are not complied with.
- The DfE may require all or part of the funding to be repaid if the Agreement is not complied with.
- Any unspent funding must be returned to the DfE.

The Council must comply at all times with the Data Protection Act 2018,

GDPR, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Health and Safety Act 1998, Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Subsidy Control all as amended from time to time.

The grant to the Council is not deemed to be a subsidy. If any details around the project change then this will need to be re-assessed.

The current documents provided to the Council are in draft form, once final versions are received these should be sent to legal to review.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 None

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 Alternative Option 1 – Revenue Funding

An alternative option would be to use revenue funding. However, this is unnecessary due to successfully applying for funding from the DfE.

5.2 Alternative Option 2 – Decline the grant

The other option would be to decline the grant. However, this would mean that Aldine House will continue to operate on its existing business plan. As a result, we will miss the opportunity of strengthening this and robustly safeguarding its future. The opportunity to add additional specialisms into the care and education offers will be missed and the young people at Aldine House will receive a less varied curriculum than elsewhere in the estate. Staffing space will continue to be of a premium and potentially increase staff stress in an already challenging environment. Pressure on resource to facilitate important meetings for young people will continue to be present.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 **Young People**

Young people at Aldine House will receive a larger amount of variety in their activities and curriculum which will enable a greater level of personalisation and choice. This will improve the overall health and wellbeing of young people placed within Aldine House. Aldine Houses' facilities will be brought in line with other SCH's in the estate and so young people's experiences will also be commensurate with this. Ultimately the outcomes for all young people based at Aldine House will have the potential to improve.

6.2 **Staff**

Staff at Aldine House will be significantly better resourced and supported

to continue to provide a high level of support, safety, education and enrichment to the young people based here. Staff morale and retention will be boosted by better infrastructure and facilities which offer more opportunity to specialise and diversify. Staff will be safer through additional space and resource and so ability to manage chaotic young people apart when required.