

**CHILDREN IN CARE (CIC) TRANSFORMATION - RESIDENTIAL ESTATE EXPANSION
PROGRAMME**

COMMENTS FROM THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At its meeting on 19 November 2021, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered the report and unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive Councillor.

The following points were confirmed:

- The two new children's homes would provide additional capacity to place children in care within Lincolnshire and deliver a forecasted annual saving of £0.561m by reducing the number of out of county placements which were very costly for the Council.
- The Committee was pleased with the very low rate of return on investment of 2.67 years for the £1.5m capital cost for the two new children's homes as this was a lot shorter than the usual rate of return on investments.
- The benefits of children in care being placed in accommodation within Lincolnshire was recognised as this enabled these young people to maintain contact with friends and families.
- Some out of county placements would still be required where specialist accommodation was needed.
- There was a number of young people placed in out of county placements during the Covid-19 pandemic due to a shortage of placements within Lincolnshire. Consideration was being given to how to carefully transition these young people back into Lincolnshire accommodation when they were now settled in their current placements. These young people were being closely monitored by Children's Services.
- The proposed two new children's homes were the first stage for increasing in county placements, and it was hoped that a third new children's home could be developed in the future.
- The number of children in care would start to decrease as the family courts begin to consider more cases.
- Several factors were taken into consideration when deciding the location of children's homes. These included demographics, criminality in the area, access to education including post 16, access to public transport, and whether high quality staff could be recruited in the area to ensure stability of staff in the children's homes. Ofsted would ensure that these factors were taken into account. It was

confirmed that Ofsted was satisfied with the proposed locations for the two new children's homes.