

Investing to save for the long-term

Recognising the continuing pressure on our day-to-day revenue budgets, we are exploring early ideas for using capital investment in ways that can support the efficient delivery of essential services and reduce costs for the council. We refer to this as 'investing to save for the long-term'. The table below shows 11 issues we want to solve and our early suggestions for how we might use capital investment to help us do so affordably.

Reference	Issue we want to solve	Suggestion for an invest to save proposition
ITS001	There has been a rise in the number of children with complex needs, children who are recently placed in care, or those with complex emotional needs who have moved from other foster care arrangements, in need of foster care being placed in external residential accommodation due to a lack of carers.	We would put in place a scheme to get accommodation for families where short-term teenage fostering is being provided or supported lodgings are needed.
ITS002	There is a shortage of options for affordable sites for providers to establish new children's homes or supported or temporary accommodation in the city.	We would assess council properties no longer needed which are large enough to be developed into a children's home, disabled children's home, supported or temporary accommodation, develop them so they meet the council's needs and partner with a range of third-party providers who share our values, to achieve the required outcomes.
ITS003	We do not currently have sufficient housing support registered accommodation for the number of asylum seekers (both accompanied and not accompanied) to meet need, which is creating a backlog and inability to move on.	We would buy residential street properties or larger residential multi-functional properties to meet the needs of accompanied, and not accompanied, asylum seekers.
ITS004	We are seeing a rise in the number of young people (aged 16 to 18) entering care for the first time that are classified as homeless, but many are not being housed under our legal pathway as we do not have interim assessment facilities in place.	We would buy, lease or renovate a large property or former council building to establish a youth shelter for 18- to 25-year-olds who are homeless or in crisis. This would increase the number of beds available to young people to meet demand.
ITS005	We are seeing a rise in the number of young people (aged 16 to 18) entering care that are classified as homeless, but many are not being housed under our legal pathway as we do not have interim assessment facilities in place.	We would create an emergency social care assessment unit for children that is open 24 hours a day seven days a week and provides overnight beds. This would increase the number of beds available to young people in crisis to meet demand.

Reference	Issue we want to solve	Suggestion for an invest to save proposition
ITS006	We do not currently have enough specialist or local council-funded education provision locally to meet demand – meaning that affected children need to travel to access independent education provision.	We would increase the number of specialist education places or resource provision for young people locally. This would enable young people to be educated locally and reduce the amount the council spends on travel and education provision outside of the city.
ITS007	Our most complex young people and adults who need places in regulated or other suitable settings may not find them, meaning they remain in hospital or rented homes and temporary accommodation. These often involve high costs to the council and the use of high volume of agency staff support.	We would review the council's investment properties and consider whether we could use them differently, without a financial loss, to provide more placements for young people and adults with the most complex needs or are housed in temporary accommodation.
ITS008	There has been a rise in the number of children in need of foster care being placed in externally sourced accommodation due to a lack of carers. This is particularly the case for those with complex needs, children who are recently placed in care, or those with complex emotional needs who have moved from other foster care arrangements. Similar placement challenges are being experienced for some client groups in adult social care settings.	We would create additional accommodation for children and young adults by constructing living spaces or pods on the grounds of existing children's homes or residential care facilities. This would reduce the need for costly and externally sourced accommodation.
ITS009	We are seeing a rise in the complexity of the care needs for children in care and the demand for tailored, individual placements.	We would create additional accommodation for children and young adults by constructing living spaces or pods on the grounds of existing children's homes or residential care facilities. This would reduce the need for costly temporary accommodation.
ITS010	A number of prospective foster carers are being blocked from applying to be foster carers as their housing is not suitable.	We would consider spending money on home extensions or adaptation to increase the amount of new foster carers or fostering caring capacity available in the city.
ITS011	The use of outdated or unsuitable IT equipment can contribute to less effective customer service and contributes to higher customer debt levels and makes it more difficult for the council to reduce its debt levels overall.	We would invest in our IT systems to improve our ability to collect income that is due to the council, while also making our online payment systems easier for people to use.