



North Devon Council

Report to: Full Council

Report Date: 21st July, 2021

Topic: Better Care Funding for DFGs and Home Energy Efficiency

Report by: Jeremy W Mann; Head of Environmental Health & Housing

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The disabled facilities grant (DFG) is a capital grant paid from MHCLG to county councils to adapt older and disabled people's homes to help them live independently and safely. Adaptations can include ramps, stair lifts and suitable heating systems/energy efficiency measures. In 2015, the DFG became part of the Better Care Fund (BCF).
- 1.2. The DFG aims to support disabled and older people to be independent, enabling carers to continue their role safely, preventing accidents and helping people to return from hospital. It therefore crosses the boundaries between housing, health and social care and reflects the increasing national focus on the integration of housing with health and social care services.
- 1.3. In consultation with Devon County Council (DCC), housing authorities in Devon use their Regulatory Reform Order Policies to maximise the support which is delivered under this programme⁽¹⁾. Furthermore, effective collaboration across Devon is now co-ordinating the allocation of BCF to areas of greatest need.
- 1.4. These negotiations have resulted in NDC being awarded a BCF grant of £1,510,574 for 2021/22, an uplift of £532K.
- 1.5. This paper seeks to amend the capital programme for 2021/22 and gain endorsement of proposals on how to allocate the revised funding.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council:
 - (i) Approve the variation to the DFG/ECO capital programme 2021/22 in paragraph 5.1. of £532K.
 - (ii) Allocates and releases funds for the interventions set in paragraph 4.4.

(1) Home Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty, Strategy and Resources Committee: 12th April, 2021

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.2. Reason (2.1.1) to revise the Capital Programme.
 - 2.3. Reason (2.1.2) to set out a series of interventions which are compliant with the Government's BCF policy, and which maximises the public health and environmental benefits of a larger capital programme.
3. REPORT
- 3.1. NDC's policy for the allocation of its BCF was revised in April 2021, the policy is available at: [Appendix E\(1\) The Revised Regulatory Reform Order Policy](#)
 - 4.2 The outcomes delivered by this policy in recent years are summarised in the following tables.

Table 1: Grant Outcomes by Category (1st April, 2019 to 30th June, 2021)

	Financial Year			Total
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	
Total Grants Completed	168	214	31	413
Value	£955,290.54	£1,254,364.53	£209,288.46	£2,418,943.53
Accessible Homes Grant Completed	1	13	2	16
<i>Associated Building Works</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>Complex Shower</i>	1	0	0	1
<i>Extension</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>Fast-Track Shower</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>Ramp</i>	0	2	1	3
<i>Shower</i>	0	7	1	8
<i>Thru-Floor Lift</i>	0	1	0	1
Accessible Homes Grant MOVING Completed	0	3	0	3
<i>Removal Costs</i>	0	3	0	3
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Completed	167	138	14	319
<i>Associated Building Works</i>	4	3	0	7
<i>Complex Shower</i>	13	2	0	15
<i>Extension</i>	0	2	0	2
<i>External Stair lift</i>	1	3	0	4
<i>Fast-Track Shower</i>	66	53	4	123
<i>Fast-Track Stair lift</i>	4	2	0	6
<i>Hardstanding</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>Intercom/Entry System</i>	2	3	0	5
<i>Ramp</i>	10	8	2	20
<i>Shower</i>	37	38	8	83

Specialist Bath Equipment	0	1	0	1
Specialist Kitchen	0	2	0	2
Specialist WC	0	2	0	2
Stair lift	30	16	0	46
Step lift	0	1	0	1
Widen Doors	0	1	0	1
Stair lift Only AHG Completed	0	60	15	75
External Stair lift	0	1	0	1
Fast-Track Stair lift	0	40	14	54
Stair lift	0	19	1	20

Table 2: ECO Flex and ECO Top-ups (1st April, 2019 to 30th June, 2021)

2019/20			
	Flex	Top up	£
Q1	79	42	
Q2	112	27	
Q3	120	50	
Q4	100	46	
	411	165	£269,953.53
2020/21			
	Flex	Top up	£
Q1	8	4	
Q2	23	2	
Q3	56	0	
Q4	77	5	
	164	11	£35,986.40
2021/22			
	Flex	Top up	£
Q1	36	0	
Q2	0	0	
Q3	0	0	
Q4	0	0	
	36	0	£6,658.08

Table 3: An analysis of the number and type of ECO Flex and ECO Top-ups measures (1st April, 2019 to 30th June, 2021)

	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL
1 Measure	318	83	18	419
2 Measures	59	71	15	145
3 Measures	7	10	3	20
Not stated/duplicate	27	0	0	27
TOTAL	411	164	36	

1 Measure	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL
Insulation (either cavity or loft)	170	41	10	221
Boiler or 1st time central heating	148	42	8	198
TOTAL	318	83	18	

2 Measures	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL
Insulation (cavity or loft)	51	17	4	72
Boiler or 1st time central heating & insulation (either cavity or loft)	8	28	11	47
Insulation (either cavity or loft) & Electric Storage heaters	0	1	0	
1st time central heating & controls	0	25	0	
TOTAL	59	71	15	
3 Measures	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL
Insulation - both cavity & loft & boiler or 1st time central heating	7	10	2	19
Insulation - both cavity & loft & Electric storage heaters	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	7	10	3	

- 4.3 The prevailing demand for adaptations (expressed by the rate of Statement of Needs received, 5 / 6 wk⁻¹), in conjunction with the Council's efficiency in delivering these interventions, has resulted in a significant uplift of funding for 2021/22 of £532K.
- 4.4 Officers consider that this additional funding could be most effectively used if it was allocated for the following categories of assistance set out in the Council's policy:
- (i) Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.
 - (ii) North Devon Homes' Bathroom Adaptations.
 - (iii) Accessible Home Grants.
 - (iv) Accessible Home Grants – stair lifts.
 - (v) Accessible Home Grants - moving applications.
 - (vi) Health Homes Grants.
- 4.5 These interventions meet the primary aims of the Government's BCF policy.
- 4.6 The capital funding for Warm-up Grants of £550K in 2021/22 would remain the same. The latest household energy efficiency statistics released by BEIS show that 2,472 households have received ECO funded measures.
- 4.7 The current level of capital funding will enable over 270 households to be helped by Council Warm-up grants.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The uplift in funding of £532K establishes a DFG programme of 1.960M for 2021/22. To date in 21/22, the Council has spent over £200K and has approved in excess of £350K of grants, which has not yet been completed.
- 4.2. The human resources required to deliver this scale of programme will need to be increased. Officers have identified a new funding stream to contribute to the cost of this resource and this matter will be subject to further reports, as required.

5. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

5.1. The completed Equality Impact Assessment for this report is available from the Corporate and Community Services Team at equality@northdevon.gov.uk.

6. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

6.1. Part 2, Article 4.5.22 and Referred.

7. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

1. Home Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty, Report to NDC Strategy and Resources Committee, 12th April, 2021.

9. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

9.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers:

Jeremy Mann Head of Service (Environmental Health and Housing)
12th July 2021