

**REPORT TO: STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2019

**TOPIC: THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISABLED FACILITIES  
GRANTS AND OTHER NDC SERVICES TO SECURE  
DISABLED ADAPTATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN  
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY**

**REPORT BY: J W MANN; HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH &  
HOUSING**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members established North Devon Council's current policy for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and other Home Improvement Grants at the Executive meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2018 (Minute 45, 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2018 refers).
- 1.2 Government has increased the funding for DFGs this year via the Better Care Fund, and the Council has further benefited from a reallocation of uncommitted funds from other local authorities in Devon.
- 1.3 This paper seeks to update the current policy in line with a new Devonwide policy which has been endorsed by all district authorities and the County Council.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members adopt the Devonwide DFG/Home improvement grant assistance policy, set out in Appendix 1.

## 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide an enhanced and consistent range of home adaptation and improvement grants across Devon in support of the objectives set out in the Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework.

## 4 REPORT

- 4.1 This report sets out in Appendix 1 a new Home Assistance Policy for North Devon Council. The proposed policy significantly enhances the services currently being provided by:
1. Establishing a new small works' grant for urgent repairs.
  2. Putting in place a specific grant for stair lifts where the applicant is not subject to a financial test of resources.
  3. Increasing the 'top up' funding available for energy efficiency measures, where energy providers are part funding energy efficiency measures under their Energy Company Obligation (ECO), to £2,000 per property.
- 4.2 ECO is designed to support households that are deemed to be vulnerable and in fuel poverty. In September 2018, Executive approved NDC's Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent which further widened the number of eligible residents who can now assess support through ECO. Over 400 households have benefited from the current arrangements.
- 4.3 This policy will help more people and make a very positive contribution towards the new Corporate Priority of 'cherishing and protecting the environment'.
- 4.4 A useful guide for Members on ECO is available at:
- [https://www.yesenergysolutions.co.uk/assets/uploads/APSE\\_guide\\_images\\_v20\\_APSE\\_guide\\_images\\_v235.pdf](https://www.yesenergysolutions.co.uk/assets/uploads/APSE_guide_images_v20_APSE_guide_images_v235.pdf)
- 4.5 North Devon Homes has evidenced its ability to provide bathroom adaptations at a cost, quality and efficiency, which is comparable with other providers in the marketplace. This policy provides NDH tenants, therefore, with the option of engaging their landlord to undertake these works through a specific grant.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The capital programme established to support the implementation of this policy is £2,081.401 in 2019/20.

## 6 EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The proposed policy will have a positive impact on disabled people in the community. There may be a more positive impact for women, as it is known that a significant proportion of DFG applicants are older people and the life expectancy of women is generally greater.

6.2 No detrimental impacts have been identified in relation to the other protected groups.

## 7 CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Article or Appendix and paragraph	Referred or delegated power?

## 8 STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

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

## 9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- The development of disabled facilities grants and other NDC services to secure disabled adaptations and improvements in residential property. Report to Executive, 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2018.
- Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent. Report to Executive, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.

The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report.

## 10 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

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

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Reference: Strategy & Resources Committee Development of DFGs & other adapts 4 11 19