

Report of the Chief Executive

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS – GRANTS CASEWORKER1. Purpose of report

To seek approval to appoint a temporary part-time Grants Caseworker to assist with the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) process.

2. Background

Since DFG allocations became part of the Better Care Fund from 2014/15, there has been a significant increase in the capital allocation awarded to district councils for this purpose with a resulting increase in the number of mandatory DFGs awarded. In addition, in a number of discretionary grant schemes funded from this capital allocation have also been introduced.

Broxtowe's Disabled Facilities Grant policy was approved by Housing Committee on 17 January 2017. Broxtowe has always dealt with DFG applications in a timely fashion to prevent the creation of a waiting list. However, the recent increase in the number of referrals is leading to delays in starting the grant process with a corresponding wait for the adaptations to be completed.

3. Proposal

It is proposed that a Grants Caseworker be appointed to assist with the process. This approach has been adopted in a number of other authorities. The Grants Caseworker would be the primary contact for applicants and thus allow the Private Sector Housing Officer to focus on the technical aspects of the schemes.

The post of Grants Caseworker has been evaluated at Grade 5 and the postholder would work on a part-time (three days per week) with an initial fixed term contract of 12 months. This can then be reviewed in the context of the annual DFG allocations from the Better Care Fund.

4. Financial implications

The Council's DFG capital allocation for 2018-19 is £803,661. The estimated annual cost of the Grants Caseworker of £15,245 will be met from this allocation.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:

- i) A temporary part time Grants Case Worker as set out above be appointed.**
- ii) Authority to extend the contract be delegated to the Chief Executive based on need and the level of DFG capital grant allocations received.**

Background papers

Nil