

## Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

### Review of the Disabled Facilities Grants and Additional Grants Policy

#### 1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the review in respect of updated Disabled Facilities and Additional Grants Policy. This is in accordance with the Council's Corporate Priority of Housing to provide a good quality home for everyone by responding to need and to facilitate adaptations for disabled people in the private sector.

#### 2. Recommendation

**Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the updated Disabled Facilities and Additional Grants Policy be approved.**

#### 3. Detail

The Council, in its role as a local housing authority, is under a statutory duty by virtue of the provisions of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act) to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for private sector residential adaptations where the appropriate legislative conditions are met. The purpose of a Disabled Facilities Grant includes making sure the dwelling is safe for the disabled occupant and to overcome obstacles which prevent access to its facilities and amenities.

Although the provision of mandatory DFGs is covered by the Act and the Council must comply with the legislation, the policy (which was developed in collaboration with the other Nottinghamshire authorities) sets out how these matters will be dealt with regard to matters not covered by the legislation and in respect of other priorities and discretionary grants administered by officers within the Private Sector Housing Team.

The grants are funded by an allocation from Central Government through the Better Care Fund. The Policy includes the priority given to mandatory grants and that discretionary grants will only be awarded where the funding is available.

The policy has been updated to reflect legislative and operational changes, to improve the clarity between the mandatory and discretionary grants and increase the discretionary limit. The Policy does not deal with adaptations in Council property which is subject to a separate policy.

A copy of the proposed amended policy is attached at **Appendix 1**. A table summarising the key Policy updates is attached at **Appendix 2**.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as the policy applies to all wards in the Borough and the total DFG budget is above £250,000.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

There are no updates from the Policy Overview Working Group as the Policy is an existing and established Policy.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

The cost of Disabled Facilities Grants is recognised in the Council's approved Capital Programme with the scheme being fully funded by an allocation from central government through the Better Care Fund (BCF).

A key consideration is the increase of the discretionary top up to the mandatory grant from £20,000 to £30,000 to allow greater flexibility in cases and reflect the increase in costs of works. Other matters are the inclusion of Warm Homes on Prescription (WHOP), which has historically been approved separately, and the introduction of the Armed Forces revised means test. All of these changes will be funded by the BCF allocation with the caveat in the Policy that any grant is subject to the necessary funding being available.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The relevant legislation is outlined in the report and policy. The Council must comply with the legislation in order to avoid any challenges that may arise. By having an approved policy in place also helps avoiding such challenges.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable

10. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

As this is a variation to an existing established policy no equality impact assessment has been included.

13. Background Papers

Nil.