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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 07/02/19</b>

**CABINET**  
**7 FEBRUARY 2019**  
**REVIEW OF THE PROVISION AND DELIVERY OF DISABLED FACILITIES**  
**GRANT WORKS TO COUNCIL OWNED DWELLINGS**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To review the procedure for delivery of disabled facilities grant works to council owned dwellings and provide recommendations for the future delivery of this service.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That Approval is granted for the proposed new policy relating to the delivery of disabled facilities grant works to Council owned dwellings
- 2.2 That approval is granted to procure an external Occupational Therapy Service provider to assist the Housing Section in meeting its obligations set out in the above and if, at a later date, it transpires that it is more cost effective for the Council to directly employ an Occupational Therapist to undertake this work, the Head of Housing and Partnerships shall have delegated authority to review and action this change.
- 2.3 That £415,000 of the following unspent HRA Capital Budgets from the 2018-19 Capital Programme are transferred into the HRA Adaptations Capital Budget for expenditure during 2019-20 with any unspent monies being slipped into the 2020-21 budget:-

Future Enhancements	£175,000
Provision of Drop Kerbs	£ 20,000
Provision of Double Glazing	£ 20,000
External Envelope Contract	£200,000
	£415,000

- 2.4 That the Council continues to support the funding of adaptations to the housing stock and a Capital budget of £550,000 is allocated to the provision of

adaptations for 2020-21 and future years in order to sustain the anticipated waiting times to within 12 months.

### **3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

#### Key Issues

- 3.1 The Disabled Facilities Grant System provides a mechanism for assisting people both financially and practically with the undertaking of adaptations to their home.
- 3.2 For owner-occupiers and private tenants, this service is provided by the Council under the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Legislation in the form of a grant which is means-tested.
- 3.3 For our council housing tenants, although the process reflects the DFG legislation, the works are not a grant but are funded from the HRA budget and we do not means test our tenants. We are still of the opinion that we should not means-test because the works are being carried out to our own housing stock.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.4 There has always been a large demand in the district for adaptations for the Councils' Housing tenants although following a previous increase in funding the waiting time had reduced to around 12 months. However, over the last 2 years the Housing Service has received a steady increase in demand for adaptations.
- 3.5 Following changes in the delivery model for Adult Care Services in April 2018 the Council is now funding the cost of Occupational Therapy Assessments linked to the Adaptations referrals for adult cases which were previously funded by the County. There has also been a further influx in new referrals including a high number of requests for minor alterations such that now the anticipated wait for major adaptations has increased to over 2 years, which is back to the levels of 2012-13.
- 3.6 In order to adapt to these new procedures, since April 2018, the Housing Team have been utilising the services of an external agency specialising in Occupational Therapy Services to undertake assessments of peoples' needs.
- 3.7 We have now undertaken a full review of the service requirements and through this report have made recommendations for the future delivery of the provision of Disabled Facilities Grant Works to the Councils' housing stock.

### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1. This scheme supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
  - (i) 'Community Wellbeing' – specifically the Strategic Objectives of 'Supporting Vulnerable People' and 'Promoting Attractive and Healthy Environments' by increasing resilience within families.

**5 Report Detail**Overview of the Disabled Facilities Grant Legislation

- 5.1 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are mandatory grants provided by Local Authorities to disabled people in order to facilitate the undertaking of alterations and major adaptations to enable greater access and more freedom of movement into and around their homes. The legislation governing the provision of these DFGs is the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
- 5.2 The types of work covered under the DFG legislation include:-
- Access into the dwelling by installing a ramp or widening doorways;
  - Access around a dwelling by widening doorways, moving walls or changing the layout;
  - Access to a bedroom, the toilet or bathroom by providing ground floor facilities or by providing a stair lift or by providing a through-the-floor lift;
  - Providing access to bathing by the provision of a level-access or easy access shower which may also include the requirements of an alternative toilet or wash-hand basin, the provision of a changing table or ceiling track hoist;
  - Providing accessible kitchen facilities if the disabled person is the main meal provider or partially accessible kitchen facilities where there is only the requirement to prepare a drink or snack;
  - Changes or improvements to a heating system or electrical installations;
  - Access into the garden.
- 5.3 Before issuing a DFG the Council should satisfy itself that the works are not only necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person, but are also reasonable and practicable alterations to make to the property bearing in mind its age and condition.
- 5.4 Where it is not reasonable and practicable to alter the existing property, the DFG legislation allows for assisting a person to move to a more suitable property.
- 5.5 The local authority is required to decide within six months of the receipt of a grant application as to whether it has been accepted and following this decision the person then has twelve months within which to undertake the works and submit their final payment request.
- 5.6 Allowable costs include works costs, design fees, OT assessments, moving costs (if their current home is unsuitable) and any other relevant cost.

Adaptations for Council House Tenants

- 5.7 Although eligibility for DFGs is tenure neutral, the Council is required to fund DFGs to its housing stock from the HRA budget, not the DFG budget and hence adaptations to the housing stock are processed outside the DFG mechanism.
- 5.8 The types of work undertaken are the same for both DFG applications and for adaptations for Council House tenants.

5.9 The differences are that for Council House tenants the process is simplified in that:-

- There is no formal DFG application;
- The funding is not capped to £30,000;
- There is no means-test;
- However, only the “mandatory scheme” is supported - i.e. the most cost effective solution to meet the needs of the person;
- The works are designed and undertaken by the contracts set in place by the Housing Team and to the same standards as other contract works.

5.10 Over the last few years there has been a significant increase in the DFG funding available for private sector adaptations which means there is now an imbalance such that our Council House tenants are currently waiting much longer for their adaptations than those in the private sector.

5.11 As a Landlord, we also have to consider the general suitability of the facilities we are providing for our tenants regardless of whether the person would qualify for a DFG, which places a further strain on our resources.

#### Referral Process for Council House Tenants (pre April 2018)

5.12 Prior to April 2018, the process for administering adaptations to the Council’s Housing Stock followed the following process:-

5.12.1 An Occupational Therapist (OT) from the SSOTP Access Team would undertake an assessment of the person’s needs.

5.12.2 Equipment would be trialled (eg. a bath board to assist with transfers in and out of the bath) and minor alterations (upto the value of £1,000) would be undertaken (eg. the provision of grab rails to assist with the transfer in and out of the bath).

5.12.3 Where equipment was not suitable, a referral would be sent to the Council recommending major alterations to the property. This would give outline details of the requirements (eg. wider sliding door to bathroom, 1200 x 1000 shower area).

5.12.4 Checks would be undertaken (Council property, person lives at the property, no RTB application in progress, the property is suitable for adaptation and will meet long-term needs) and once approved the case would be placed on the waiting list.

5.12.5 Once at the top of the waiting list, a detailed scheme would be drawn up and sent to the OT for approval.

5.12.6 The works would be undertaken and on completion the OT would sign them off to say they were happy the adaptations were meeting the needs of the person.

5.12.7 The OT would provide any additional equipment the person needed (eg. a shower chair).

5.12.8 Where stair lifts or vertical lifts were provided, the OT would add these and other similar items onto the County Council's maintenance programme.

Current Referral Process for Council House Tenants (since April 2018)

5.13 Since April 2018, the process for administering adaptations to the Council's Housing Stock depends upon the level of need a person has as defined in the Care Act.

5.14 For those people with two or more needs under the Care Act, the referral process is as follows:-

5.14.1 An Occupational Therapist (OT) from the SSOTP Access Team carries out an assessment of the person's needs. As previously, equipment is trialled and minor alterations undertaken. Where equipment is inadequate an outline referral is made to the Housing Team (eg. the person requires assistance with "access to bathing"). The Access Team have no further involvement.

5.14.2 On receiving the referral, the Housing Team checks it is a Council property, the person lives at the property and there is no RTB application in progress.

5.14.3 The referral is then passed onto a private OT company to prepare a detailed report specifying how the needs of the person may be met within the property.

5.14.4 Once the private OT report is received, the Housing Team review the suitability of the property for adaptation and once approved the case is placed on the waiting list, prioritised firstly in order of level of need and secondly time waiting.

5.14.5 When at the top of the waiting list, a detailed design is drawn up and signed off by the private OT and then once the works are complete the private OT is asked to check that the works meet the needs of the person.

5.14.6 In accordance with current DFG guidance, equipment, such as shower chairs, is now provided as part of the adaptation (previously this was provided by the Social Services Access Team).

5.15 For those people with only one need or no specified need under the Care Act, they are no longer eligible for an assessment by the Access Team and are advised to purchase their own equipment or if they require a DFG to contact the District Council. For this group of people the referral process is as follows:-

5.15.1 A very basic referral is received direct from Staffordshire Cares (eg. confirming the person has expressed difficulty with accessing the bathroom).

5.15.2 The Housing Team checks it is a Council property, the person lives at the property and there is no RTB application in progress.

- 5.15.3 The referral is then passed onto a private OT company to firstly determine whether an adaptation is required and then, if necessary, prepare a detailed report specifying what adaptations the person needs.
- 5.15.4 Once the private OT report is received, the Housing Team review the suitability of the property for adaptation and once approved the case is placed on the waiting list, prioritised firstly in order of level of need and secondly time waiting.
- 5.15.5 When at the top of the waiting list, a detailed design is drawn up and signed off by the private OT and then once the works are complete the private OT is asked to check that the works meet the needs of the person and any equipment is provided which is gifted to the person.
- 5.15.6 In cases where a DFG standard of adaptation is deemed desirable rather than essential, we do not undertake any further works as our current policy does not cover minor works or equipment.
- 5.16 Where a person contacts the Housing Team for an adaptation, in the first instance we refer them back to Staffordshire Cares to ensure that anybody with two needs under the Care Act receives any wider help and support they need (eg. a person may need a whole care package set up and may require assistance from other services besides an adaptation).

#### Proposals to Meet the Future Needs of the Adaptations Service for Council Tenants

- 5.17 A recent review of the service has found the current budgets stretched and it is recognised that we need to be more innovative in our approach to delivering adaptations.
- 5.18 Attached is the proposed new Policy setting out our proposals for a more streamlined customer focussed service (see Appendix A).
- 5.19 Key features of the new policy include:-
- Enhanced support where a person chooses to move to a more suitable property including the option for works to be undertaken prior to moving in and support with removal costs;
  - Higher priority for those cases with more identified needs under the Care Act;
  - Greater emphasis on exploring alternative housing options earlier in the process and the utilisation of properties already benefitting from adaptations;
  - For £20,000 of the 2019-20 budget to be earmarked for minor adaptations works where a risk assessment identifies that the risk of injury could be vastly reduced by the provision of items such as grab rails, handrails, stair rails and lever taps. This area of budget is to be reviewed in 2020-21.

- Review of maintenance provisions for equipment such as stair lifts, vertical lifts, clos-o-mat toilets, etc, to ensure these items of equipment are regularly maintained and safe to use.

### Current Resourcing Issues and Proposals

- 5.20 As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were 108 adaptations cases where the work was either in progress or on the waiting list and since then we have received a further 82 cases making the total 190 cases to progress.
- 5.21 Whilst in the first 3 months of this financial year there was a surge of cases, this seems to have settled down again now and is more in line with the numbers from recent years at an anticipated 90 cases per annum. On that basis, by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 we would anticipate receiving a further 110 referrals making the total number over the 2-year period to be 300 cases.
- 5.22 From historical data, the average cost of delivering the adaptations equates to £6,000 each case, aside of one case which is an extension and needs to be considered separately (estimated cost circa £35k). Onto this figure needs to be added the cost of the external OT service, which equates to an estimated average of £250 per case (although the first 50 cases have still been on the old system and have not attracted OT costs). Thus the total anticipated cost of delivering the 300 adaptations cases by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 would be circa £1.9m.
- 5.23 In line with good practice, it is our intention to aim to reduce the waiting time for adaptations to within 12 months.
- 5.24 Having analysed the impact of different length waiting lists, the conclusion is that the optimum length waiting list is 50% of the anticipated number of referrals being received during the year, so long as the number of adaptations completed also matches the number of referrals received. Progress should be reviewed at the half-year stage and any necessary adjustments made.
- 5.25 Thus, on the current basis of 90 referrals per annum, this would reduce the number of adaptations required to be completed for the 2-year period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 down to 255 cases with an estimated total cost of £1,625,000.
- 5.26 The original revised budget for 2018-19 was £389,000 and for 2019-20 £396,000. On the basis of an anticipated 90 cases per annum, the annual budgetary requirement is requested to be increased to £550,000 per annum along with the addition of the £415,000 of redirected Capital resources.
- 5.27 This means the total budget now allocated over the period April 2018 to March 2020 would be £1,254,000, with a further additional budget of £513k allocated between April 2020 and March 2023. This should be adequate to meet the estimated future demand and reduce the waiting times for adaptations to within 12 months.
- 5.28 A review of the internal staffing requirements for the service delivery since April 2018 shows an increase of 1.5 days per week for the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager and an extra 1 day per week for the Admin Support. Resources are stretched due the need to manage the current waiting list and the

time taken with dealing with an increased number of complaints due to the lengthy waiting times.

5.29 Prior to April 2018 all of the Occupational Therapist assessments and visits were co-ordinated and funded by the SSOTP Adult Access Team and the Staffordshire Cares Children's Access Team. Since April 2018, all new Adult OT assessments have been carried out by a private OT service through a company called Able-2 and funded by the Adaptations budget.

5.30 Based on historical data, it is anticipated 90 adaptations referrals will be received per annum. On the basis of the costs of utilising Able-2, it is anticipated it will cost around £22.5k per annum to process these adaptations. Added to this would be additional visits on complex cases and property assessments to facilitate people moving at an estimated cost of £90 per visit. This is estimated to cost a further £2.5k making the total anticipated cost approximately £25,000.

5.31 By comparison, directly employing an OT to support the service would most likely be a H-grade post (although this has not currently been formally evaluated through the job evaluation process but has been assessed on the basis of salary scale for a recent advertisement for a children's OT post). On that basis it is anticipated this post would cost around £28k per annum 3 days per week.

5.32 The advantages of employing an OT are:-

- The person would have the right skills to manage the waiting list, undertake risk assessments, be on hand to assess the suitability of properties and support people through the process;
- There would be a consistent approach across the delivery of the service and in the recommendations being made;
- There would be a reduction in the excessive amount of time currently being spent on managing the adaptations process by the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager;
- There would be a reduced need to share sensitive personal information to external organisations;
- The OT would be able to work with each case from the first point of contact, providing a more pro-active service by working with the tenants and allocations teams to review housing options and increasing the potential for re-using properties we have already adapted.
- An in-house OT would be best placed to maximise the potential of more cases re-using properties already adapted.

5.33 The disadvantage of directly employing an OT is that there would not be any cover if the person were on holiday or off sick or to cope with any peak demands.

5.34 However, as the costs are unproven, the recommendation is to progress with the employment of an external OT provider and review the service at a later date.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Financial

The allocation of additional short term funding in order to reduce the backlog of current cases to within a waiting time of 12 months.

To review the longer term budget to ensure the waiting time for adaptations is sustained within the recommended maximum of 12 months.

### 6.2 Legal

Reduced risk of claim through issues with mobility and access around a property being addressed in a more proactive manner.

### 6.3 Human Resources

None

### 6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None

### 6.5 Human Rights Act

None

### 6.6 Data Protection

None above the requirements of normal service standards for processing personal and sensitive information of our housing tenants.

### 6.7 Risk Management

A reduction in waiting times for adaptations will reduce the risk of injury.

### 6.8 Equality & Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

### 6.9 Best Value

None

## 7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1: New Policy for The Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant Works and Other Adaptations to Council dwellings

### Previous Consideration

None

**Background Papers**

- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 03011, 22 July 2018 – Disabled Facilities Grants for home adaptations (by Wendy Wilson)



**POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE DELIVERY OF  
DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT WORKS AND OTHER  
ADAPTATIONS TO COUNCIL OWNED DWELLINGS**

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Cannock Chase Council is responsible for the provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to assist disabled people with undertaking major alterations to their home in order to facilitate access in and around the property.
- 1.2 Although the DFG legislation is tenure neutral, there is separate funding for adaptations to the Council's Housing Stock compared to that of privately owned dwellings and hence this policy only relates to Council-owned dwellings.
- 1.3 Further information on DFG applications for private owner-occupiers or private tenants may be obtained from 'Private Sector Housing', which sits under Environmental Health.

## **2 What are Disabled Facilities Grant Works**

- 2.1 Disabled Facilities Grant Works are adaptations or alterations made to a property to enable the disabled occupant greater access and more freedom of movement into and around their home. The principle is around what alterations are required to the property in order to meet the needs of the disabled person.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that all works will either be defined as a Major or Minor Adaptations Work and may involve the provision of building works and/or equipment. Examples of the types of work covered are provided within this policy, although the lists are not exhaustive.
- 2.3 However we will only consider undertaking works which are deemed necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person and the proposed alterations must also be reasonable and practicable bearing in mind the age and condition of the property.

### **3 Major Adaptations Works**

3.1 Major Adaptations will typically cost more than £1,000 and works will generally be undertaken by external specialist contractors.

3.2 Major adaptations works include:-

- Access into the dwelling by installing a ramp or widening doorways;
- Access around a dwelling by widening doorways, moving walls or changing the layout;
- Access to a bedroom, the toilet or bathroom by providing ground floor facilities or by providing a stair lift or a through-the-floor lift;
- Providing access to bathing by the provision of a level-access or easy access shower which may also include the requirements of an alternative toilet or wash-hand basin, the provision of a changing table or ceiling-track hoist;
- Providing accessible kitchen facilities if the disabled person is the main meal provider or partially accessible kitchen facilities where there is only the requirement to prepare a drink or snack;
- Changes or improvements to a heating system or electrical installations;
- Access into the garden.

### **4 Minor Adaptations Works**

4.1 Minor Adaptations will typically cost less than £1,000 and works will generally be undertaken by the in-house Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service.

4.2 Minor Adaptations Works include the following:-

- Grab rails;
- Hand rails;
- Stair rails;
- Lever taps;
- Minor kitchen, bathroom or layout alterations;
- Any other simple minor alterations.

## **5 Fixed Equipment**

- 5.1 Large items of fixed equipment include stair lifts, vertical lifts, clos-o-mat toilets, step lifts, changing tables and ceiling-track hoists (this list is not exhaustive).
- 5.2 Ongoing servicing and maintenance to large items of equipment.

## **6 Unfixed Equipment**

- 6.1 Any equipment which is not fixed to the building structure (eg. shower chairs or slings for ceiling track hoists). Unfixed equipment will only be provided where necessary to facilitate the use of a major adaptation.
- 6.2 All unfixed equipment provided will be gifted to the tenant.

## **7 Eligibility Criteria**

- 7.1 The primary eligibility criteria for an adaptation under this policy are as follows:-

- The person must be a Cannock Chase District Council Housing tenant or a dependant of the tenant who lives with them and able to prove they are permanently resident at the property and that this property is their only home;
- That any works will substantially improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the disabled person. This will most likely be determined by the undertaking of a risk assessment to assess the impact of the proposed adaptations and whether they will substantially reduce the risk of serious injury or infection to either the disabled person or their carers.

- 7.2 The general eligibility criteria for an adaptation under this policy are as follows:-

- The property must not have a current Right-to-Buy (RTB) application. If at any point during the adaptations process a RTB application is submitted, the referral will be put on hold until the RTB is either withdrawn or completed. Withdrawn RTB cases will be reactivated and completed RTB cases will be passed onto Private Sector Housing to progress under the DFG legislation;
- The property must not have any current un-managed rent arrears or other unmanaged debt with the Council. Where any unmanaged arrears exist we will require confirmation from the Housing Income Management Team or other relevant department that the debt is being satisfactorily managed prior to us accepting the adaptation referral;

- There must not be any current tenancy breaches. Where any tenancy breaches exist we will require confirmation from Tenancy Services that these have been satisfactorily resolved prior to us accepting the adaptation referral;
- The property must meet the general needs of the occupants. Where a property is under or over occupied or where an alternative property would eradicate the need for certain adaptations (eg. ground floor accommodation would not require the provision of a stair lift or vertical lift), we will work with the tenant to find a more suitable property prior to us accepting the adaptation referral;
- The property must not be earmarked as “unsuitable for adaptation”. Unfortunately some of our properties are not suitable for adaptation and others are only suitable for certain types of adaptation. This may be due to the external topography of the ground, the construction type or some other reason. Where a property cannot be adapted we will work with the tenant to find a more suitable property prior to us accepting the adaptation referral;
- In adapting a property the number of bedrooms must not be reduced. Where this would be the case, we will work with the tenant to find a more suitable property;
- The person must be intending to continue to reside at the property as their main and only residence for at least 5 years after the adaptation works have been completed;

7.3 Where a tenant who needs an adapted property wants to move, approval for the move needs to be obtained so that the suitability of the new property may be assessed. This may be someone who already has the benefit of some adaptations in their home or who may be waiting for some adaptations to be undertaken. This will ensure the property is suitable for the person’s need prior to moving and will also enable essential adaptations to be undertaken prior to their move.

7.4 Approval will not be given for a move to a property which is less suitable or more expensive to adapt than the current accommodation.

7.5 Where a tenant who benefits from some adaptations removes those adaptations either personally or through tenant choice from a property upgrade, a new adaptations referral request to re-install those facilities will not be accepted until the latter of 5 years after the date of the original adaptation and 12 months after the date the adaptations were removed.

- 7.6 Where a tenant who benefits from some adaptations moves to a property which is not adapted to meet their needs, a new adaptations referral request to provide those facilities which were installed in their previous home will not be accepted until the latter of 5 years after the date of the original adaptation and 12 months after the move-in date.

## **8 Assessment of Need**

- 8.1 As part of the DFG process, the Council is required to consult with the Staffordshire Social Services Authority regarding the provision of DFG's. In meeting this requirement all cases will be referred to Social Services for an initial assessment and review.
- 8.2 Parents of disabled children will need to contact the Children's OT service on 0800-131 3126 to discuss their needs. Where a DFG is required an OT will forward their assessment onto the Council.
- 8.3 Adults requiring adaptations will need to contact the Adult Social Care Team on 0300-111 8010.

## **9 Meeting the Needs of the Disabled Person**

- 9.1 The eligibility criteria will be applied equally to all cases.
- 9.2 Once a need has been identified, the first consideration will be to look at properties which have already been adapted to see whether any or how many suitable properties may exist.
- 9.3 Where suitable properties are identified we will work with the person / family to meet the need by facilitating a move to an alternative dwelling. This will be reviewed every 3 months up to a maximum of 12 months.
- 9.4 Once the option for suitable alternative properties has been explored, where there is no waiting list, cases will then be processed in the order they are received.
- 9.5 Where there is a waiting list, cases will be split into High, Medium and Low priority groups and will be moved off the waiting list in batches on the basis of the oldest cases within that group.
- 9.6 Higher Priority Cases will include:-
- Cases where the person has two or more needs as defined under the Care Act;

- Any Medium Priority Cases which have been waiting over 6 months;
- Any Lower Priority Cases which have been waiting over 12 months.

9.7 Medium Priority Cases will include:-

- Cases where the person has only one need as defined under the Care Act;
- Any Lower Priority Cases which have been waiting over 6 months.

9.8 Lower Priority Cases will include:-

- Cases where the person doesn't have any needs defined under the Care Act.

9.9 Where the request for an adaptation is only deemed a "desire" rather than a "need" we will not undertake any adaptations however we will work with the person to find alternative accommodation which meets their desires.

## **10 Occupational Therapist (OT) Assessments**

10.1 The Children's Team from the Staffordshire Social Services Authority provide a full assessment service and hence all children's cases will be progressed in consultation with the children's service OT's.

10.2 For adult cases, once an initial assessment has been received from the Staffordshire Social Services Authority a detailed OT assessment will be undertaken to determine how the needs of the person may be met.

10.3 For both adult and children's cases, potential solutions will be considered in the following priority order:-

- i) Re-housing to a property already benefitting from the required adaptations and where the long-term housing need will be met;
- ii) Re-housing to a property already benefitting from the required adaptations;
- iii) Re-housing to a partly adapted property or one which would be substantially cheaper to adapt than the current home and where the long-term housing need will be met;
- iv) Adapting the current home if it meets the long-term housing need;
- v) Re-housing to a property which is not currently adapted but is one which will meet both the long-term housing need and is suitable for adaptation;

vi) Adapting the current home.

10.4 Where a person is not intending to stay in their current home for the next 5 years, suitable alternative accommodation is the only option which will be considered.

10.5 The services of an OT will be used to undertake the risk assessment, determine what adaptations or equipment are needed and assess the suitability of alternative accommodation.

## **11 Moving to an Adapted Property**

11.1 To assist with facilitating a move to an adapted property:-

- We will hold a register of properties with adaptations on the Northgate Housing system. The information held will include details of the facilities provided within each property;
- Where individual properties are deemed unsuitable for adaptation or unsuitable for certain types of adaptation, this information will also be logged.

11.2 Where it is agreed that the needs of the persons would be best met by moving to an alternative property:-

- The property must first be vetted and accepted as suitable for the needs of the person and the family;
- Where additional adaptations works are required to be undertaken and the property being moved to is already empty, the tenant will have the choice as to whether to move before or after any adaptations works are completed (this option is not available where the move involves a “mutual exchange” with another family);
- Where the agreement is for the works to be completed prior to the move, the tenant must sign-up to the new property prior to any works commencing and they will be required to move within 2 weeks of the Council confirming the works are satisfactorily complete as after that time they will become responsible for the rental on both properties;
- We will provide assistance with removal costs up to the value of £1,500, however this does not mean that all cases will be entitled to that amount.

- 11.3 Where a person, or a family member who is permanently resident with the family, has been identified as needing an adaptation or has already benefitted from the use of an adaptation, a mutual exchange will only be approved where it meets the needs of all parties.

## **12 Charges for Adaptations**

- 12.1 Currently there is no 'means test' and we won't charge for adaptations made to our properties under this policy, however this may be reviewed at a later date.
- 12.2 Once the works are complete we will review the weekly rent payable in line with the rent policy.

## **13 Sundry Items**

- 13.1 Sundry items include things such as shower chairs, shower curtains or grab rails.
- 13.2 Where sundry items of equipment are provided, these will be gifted to the tenant and will be their responsibility to maintain.

## **14 Guarantees and Warranties**

- 14.1 Guarantees and warranties for equipment and materials will be those stated by the suppliers.
- 14.2 All building and installation works shall benefit from a 12 month warranty.
- 14.3 Where the installation forms part of the fabric of the building the Council will undertake the ongoing maintenance works.

## **15 Budgets**

- 15.1 The budget will be reviewed annually in order to keep the waiting list times for adaptations to within the target waiting time of 12 months.
- 15.2 A section of the budget will be allocated to minor adaptations and the split of budget between major and minor adaptations will also be reviewed annually.

Policy Title:	Policy And Procedure For The Delivery Of Disabled Facilities Grant Works And Other Adaptations To Council Owned Dwellings
Department:	Housing
Section:	Housing Property Services
Reference Documents:	Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996  House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 03011, 22 July 2018 – Disabled Facilities Grants for home adaptations (by Wendy Wilson)
Date Approved By Cabinet:	
Revision No:	New Policy
Date Policy Issued:	
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