

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 17 JULY 2013

PORTFOLIO: COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION, BENEFITS AND STRATEGIC HOUSING FUNCTIONS

REPORT FROM HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT: DISABLED FACILITY GRANT WORKS UPDATE

1. DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That Members note the content of the report that provides an update on the factors that impact on the time taken to complete Disabled Facility Grant Works.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The average time taken to complete Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) Works is reported to Members as part of the regular Quarterly Performance Report. At the meeting of the Executive on 12 June, the year end DFG figures were reported for 2012/13. Members had concerns about the length of time taken to complete works and required further information on the factors that were impacting on performance times.

- 2.2 The figure for the average time taken from receipt of Occupational Therapist recommendation to completion of DFG works (LPI571) for 2012/13 was 36 weeks against a target of 30 weeks. In the previous year, 2011/12, the same figure was 50.7 weeks against a target of 40 weeks. Whilst the 2012/13 figures show a considerable improvement there is still a drive to produce further improvement.

- 2.3 With regard to the 2012/13 performance, further analysis of the figures provides the following information:-

- No. of completed grants in the year – 40;
- No. of grants under 30 weeks – 21;
- No. of grants 25 weeks or under – 11;
- No. of grants 20 weeks or under – 6;
- No. of grants 30-36 weeks – 13;
- No. of grants over 36 weeks – 6;
- No. of major works within the 40 completed grants – 5.

- 2.4 As mentioned in previous discussions, there can be various reasons and circumstances that cause a delay to the DFG process, many of which are out

of the control of either the Council or the Papworth Trust, which assist the clients with the process. Some of the more common issues are:-

- The Occupational Therapist needs to revise the original specification and, therefore, certain scheduling work has to be re-done;
- The client does not have all the required financial information and time is taken to gather this together;
- The client does not always have documentation to hand confirming proof of title and so delays in obtaining this can be incurred;
- The client does not always want the work done at the earliest opportunity for a number different reasons;
- The availability of the client can be affected by medical issues/hospital stays.

2.5 In calculating the figures for the performance indicators it has been previously agreed that time incurred through client led delays and other delays that cannot be prevented or foreseen by either the Council or the Papworth Trust should be taken out of the calculations. Whilst this has been implemented it is considered that, in some cases, perhaps not all genuinely unavoidable delays had been accounted for, leading to an element of distortion to the figures. Changes have now been made to processes to ensure that all relevant delays will be accounted for in future figures.

2.6 Regular meetings are continuing to take place with the Papworth Trust to specifically monitor and discuss all outstanding grant applications and immediately identify problems with any part of the application process. These meetings are attended by Cllr M Maddocks as the Portfolio Holder.

2.7 The recently completed first quarter of 2013/14 has been a reasonably busy period. Provisional figures (subject to final checks) are as follows:-

- Total no. of grants/works completed – 13;
- Average time from OT recommendation to completion of works – approximately 22 weeks;
- No. of major works within the 13 grants completed – 1;
- 5 of the 13 completed grants had come in under 20 weeks with the lowest being 11 weeks.

2.8 The above figures indicate that performance times are improving significantly. The process will continue to be managed and monitored closely to ensure improvement continues.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The overall DFG process is managed by the private sector housing team within the Council's Community Services Section. The services of the Papworth Trust are utilised to assist the clients through the application and works process.

The actual spend on DFGs in 2012/13 was £220,111 compared to the capital provision of £313,408. The 2013/14 Capital Programme will be reported to Council on 30 July for approval. This will include a revision of the DFG allocation to £341,400, the carry forward of 2012/13 underspend and funding from Central Government.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: _____

Head of Community Services

Background Papers:-

None.

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