



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DELEGATED POWERS DECISION NOTICE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 SECTION 9E

1 DETAILS OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER TAKING THE DECISION

Councillor Nick Pace, Executive Member (Housing and Community)

2 TITLE OF REPORT

Disabled Facilities Grant Funding and Use Of Better Care Fund

3 DECISION TAKEN

Agreement to this council using unspent Better Care Fund allocation to employ a Housing Options Navigator and enter into a pilot joint initiative with Hertfordshire County Council for the provision of a dedicated specialist support to advise and support older and disabled people about their housing options.

Agreement that other suitable uses of the fund are investigated and options reported back to members for consideration.

4 IF URGENT, REASONS FOR URGENCY

Not applicable

5 DETAILS OF OTHER EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S) CONSULTED

The recommendations of the report presented to Cabinet Housing Panel on 2 March 2021 were unanimously agreed by members.

Name Councillor Nick Pace

Signature _____

Date this decision was taken 18 March 2021

Date of circulation/publication of this decision 18 March 2021

6 EXPLANATION/BACKGROUND

6.1. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government which seeks to join-up health and care services, so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing, and live independently in their communities for as long as possible

6.2 The council receives an allocation of the BCF via Hertfordshire County Council – to fund its Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) programme in the Private Sector. Any adaptations to the council's own housing stock must be funded via the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

- 6.3 In recent years the amount received from government has been in excess of the expenditure required to meet the statutory duties to provide DFGs and there will a significant underspend in the Council allocated budget at the end of this financial year.
- 6.4 The specific projects and other considerations set out are in line with the vision, aims and objectives of the council's Older Person's Housing Strategy (2017 – 2022). Our vision is that 'Older people in Welwyn Hatfield have a range of affordable, good quality housing options, advice and support services to choose from, that will promote independence, health and well-being and contributes to improving the overall quality of life'.
- 6.5 A further aim is to improve the information and advice available to help older people make informed choices about their housing options, when to move and how to facilitate a move.

7 Legal Implications:

- 7.1 Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, subject to certain eligibility criteria being met, the council has a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants.
- 7.2 The Integration and Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2017-2019 and the DFG determination letter from the DCLG 2017/18 DFG can be used for wider social care capital projects on the basis that the statutory requirement to provide DFG's can be met.
- 7.3 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 confers a general power of competence on local authorities to do anything that individuals may do.

8 Financial Implications:

- 8.1 The amount of money received from the fund has been higher than the capital funding previously provided by central government to support DFGs and this coupled with a reduction in demand has meant that a surplus of this fund has built up.

9 Risk Implications:

- 9.1 The administering of DFG's is a statutory function and there must be sufficient funds to cover the demand for DFGs in the Private Sector. This the use of funds in line with the recommendations will still ensure that there will be than sufficient funds to meet the demand for DFGs even if there is an increase in demand. This is based on the trend in demand over the last three years with a tolerance for increased demand.

If we do not utilise the money this could lead to reputational risk that the council is perceived to not making best use of its resources; approval of the recommendations in this report will help mitigate this risk.

Other Implications

- 9.2 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)

There are no arising security and terrorism implications.

- 9.3 Procurement Implication(s)

Any procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the councils Contract Procedure Rules

9.4 Climate Change Implication(s)

Any projects or changes to policy will refer to, and be in accordance with the Corporate Climate Change and Fuel Poverty Strategies

9.5 Human Resources Implication(s)

There is a Human Resources implication. There will need to be the formulation of a Job Role and Role Profile. The post will be employed by Welwyn Hatfield Council, but Hertfordshire County Council will be involved in the development of the role profile and be part of the recruitment process.

9.6 Health and Wellbeing Implication(s)

There will be a significant impact on the health and wellbeing for residents of the borough who are considered vulnerable.

9.7 Communication and Engagement Implication(s)

It is important to communicate and engage in a sensitive way with residents who will be affected by construction works. There will be a communication plan linked to the modernisation programme in the block. We will also communicate proactively about the completed projects and the positive impact that this work will have on to residents' lives.

10 Alternative options considered and reasons for their rejection (if any):

None

11 Background Papers Used to Inform the Decision

[Report](#) presented to Cabinet Housing Panel on 2 March 2021.

12 Details of any members or officers who have declared an interest in this matter and nature of any such interest and any dispensations granted

12.1 No Declarations

13 Additional confidential or exempt information considered

13.1 No

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