

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 22 nd October 2019
Report Subject	Disabled Facilities Grant Policy
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Assets)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 places a mandatory duty on Local Authorities to provide disabled facilities grants. The grant is available for adapting or providing facilities for a disabled person in a dwelling.

As part of the Internal Audit review of the Disabled Facilities Grant service in June 2018, it was identified that the current policy required a review in order to make the process and detail clearer and easier to understand.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet support the revised policy.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT POLICY
1.01	<p>A Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) is a mandatory grant to help individuals living with a disability with the cost of adapting their homes to enable them to continue living at their residence with the maximum amount of independence.</p> <p>The administration of DFG is carried out within the Housing and Asset portfolio following a referral from an Occupational Therapist once the appropriate considerations have determined that the best option for the individual is to have an adaptation to the property they live in.</p>
1.02	<p>A DFG is available to owner occupiers and private tenants, for Local Authority tenants and for tenants in social housing, there are separate arrangements in place with their housing provider.</p>
1.03	<p>The maximum amount of grant available in Wales is £36,000 per allocation.</p>
1.04	<p>Where the application is for a child, or the applicant is in receipt of certain qualifying benefits, there is no means test and the cost of the adaptation up to the maximum grant will generally be awarded.</p>
1.05	<p>For other applications the amount of the grant will vary from zero to the maximum grant depending on the cost of the approved works and the financial circumstances of the applicant.</p> <p>A means test will be carried out to establish, based on the financial circumstances of the applicant, whether the applicant will be required to make a financial contribution to the adaptation costs.</p>
1.06	<p>As part of the 2016/17 internal audit scheduled programme an audit of the DFG service was undertaken with the following brief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance with relevant policies, procedures and regulations;• Administration of the DFG scheme;• Third party service level agreements and protocols; and• Performance monitoring
1.07	<p>The review identified that the previous Private Sector Housing Renewal and Improvement Policy, that included the Disabled Facilities Grant process, was out of date and had been due for review by 30 June 2015.</p>
1.08	<p>The previous policy did not align to current practices in operation within the service and was unclear as to processes and criteria that were required in order to qualify for this grant</p>
1.09	<p>Work has been ongoing to address and implement the recommendations contained within the report and to review service delivery in order to make improvements.</p>

1.10	A significant amount of work has also been carried out to ensure that our customers, and the professionals who support them, have all the relevant information at the earliest opportunity.
1.11	The revision of the policy does not alter the context, however it does provide a simple programme summary and eligibility criteria for each area as appendices.
1.12	This work is now reflected in the revised policy and appendices that are appended to this report.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a direct result of this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT										
3.01	No risks identified as a direct result of this report										
3.02	<p>Under the five delivery principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act the revised Disabled Facilities Grant Policy can have the following impacts:</p> <p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>Positive impact on longer term solutions to enable people living with disabilities to remain in their own home for longer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive - Enabling the grant will have a significant positive preventative impacts for people</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>Positive- The Grants policy and the wider best practice group that reviews and aligns best practice is a positive example of integration across sectors</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>Positive - As above</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>Positive - The policy has been through a consultation process and user/customer satisfaction will be built into processes to ensure user involvement in shaping improvements to service</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Positive impact on longer term solutions to enable people living with disabilities to remain in their own home for longer	Prevention	Positive - Enabling the grant will have a significant positive preventative impacts for people	Integration	Positive- The Grants policy and the wider best practice group that reviews and aligns best practice is a positive example of integration across sectors	Collaboration	Positive - As above	Involvement	Positive - The policy has been through a consultation process and user/customer satisfaction will be built into processes to ensure user involvement in shaping improvements to service
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Well-being Goals Impact	
Prosperous Wales	No Impact
Resilient Wales	No Impact
Healthier Wales	Positive - The Disabled Facilities Grants are there to support people living with disabilities to be in a position to live safely and more comfortably in their own home for longer. The revised policy sets out the process for disabled facilities grant in a clear and easy to understand way.
More equal Wales	Positive - By supporting people living with disabilities to live more comfortably and safely in their own homes will also contribute to enabling them to fulfil their potential no matter what their background
Cohesive Wales	No Impact
Vibrant Wales	No Impact
Globally responsible Wales	No Impact
<p>The revision of the Disabled Facilities Grants Policy, when implemented will contribute to the Council's Well-being objective of 'Caring Council' through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of appropriate interventions (i.e. support or adaptations) to assist people to remain in their homes wherever possible 	

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	Review and initial consultation with an Officer Working Group undertaken to review and revise the previous policy.
4.02	The Policy was presented to the Community and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee on the 18 September 2019, who were supportive of the revised policy.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Policy

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Jen Griffiths, Benefits Manager Telephone: 01352 702929 E-mail: jen.griffiths@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) – A statutory grant of up to £36,000 to help individuals living with a disability with the cost of adapting their homes to enable them to continue living at their residence with the maximum amount of independence.