

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 April 2016

Report Title: Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant Budget 2016/17

Report By: Andrew Palmer
Assistant Director (Housing and Built Environment)

Purpose of Report

This report sets out the increased DFG budget allocation through the Better Care Fund for 2016/17 and options for its delivery.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. That the DFG allocation for 2016/17 is noted**
- 2. That an additional revenue resource, funded through the DFG allocation, is agreed to deliver the increased spend.**

Reasons for Recommendations

Nationally DFG allocations through the Better Care Fund have increased by an average of 80% for 2016/17. In Hastings the Better Care Fund is administered through East Sussex County Council and subsequently allocated to District and Boroughs. The allocation in Hastings for 2016/17 is £ 1,407,313 this represents an 83% increase on 2015/16. ESSC Adult Social Care are confident the need for adaptations in Hastings is such that the full budget can be spent; in order to administer this increased level of grant activity however an additional resource is required within the Housing Renewal Team.

Better Care Fund

1. From April 2015 funding for DFGs ceased being paid directly to local housing authorities from DCLG and instead DFG funding forms part of the wider Better Care Fund paid to health and social care authorities. In 2015/16 DFG funding was ring-fenced within the Better Care Fund and the same is true for 2016/17.
2. At the last comprehensive spending review it was announced that there was to be £ 1.5 billion uplift to the Better Care Fund by 2019-20. Indeed nationally the DFG allocations through the Better Care Fund have been increased on average of 80% into 2016/17. In 2016/17 the DFG allocation to Hastings Borough Council is **£ 1,407,313** (this is compared to £ 766,643 in 2015/16). This is the tenth highest allocation to a second tier authority (91st of all 327 authorities in the country).

Financial Implications

3. The DFG allocation for 2015/16 for Hastings Borough Council was £ 766,643; of this allocation £ 30,000 was allocated to the staffing budget to deliver the grants. Of the remaining £ 736,643 as at 14 March 2016 this has been spent in full with a further £ 232,000 of committed spend rolling into 2016/17.
4. It should be noted that in previous years the DFG capital budget was part funded through central funding and Hastings Borough Council capital reserves. Since 2014 no Council funding has been required to top up the DFG budget.

DFG Demand

5. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Operations Manager for Occupational Therapy Services at ESSC regarding the general need for adaptations in relation to an increased budget for 2016/17. There is presently a waiting list of clients who are waiting assessment by an Occupational Therapist; many of these will require adaptations to their home. East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care are presently changing their work practices in order to clear this waiting list and are therefore confident that the need for the increased budget exists.
6. In order to be able to administer the increased financial allocation and increased level of referrals for adaptations from ESSC it is proposed an additional £ 30,000 (in addition to the previously agreed £ 30,000) of the DFG allocation be used to fund an additional surveyor to administer the DFG's for 2016/17.
7. The additional surveyor will be provided by seconding an existing member of staff from within the wider Housing Renewal Team.

Wards Affected

All

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	No
Anti-Poverty	No

Additional Information

None

Officer to Contact

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