

Report Title: **Adaptations Investment**

Report of: **Director of Social Services**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key Decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 To agree an additional 1.3m investment to improve the number of adaptations to properties in both the council and private sector in 2006/07. This will enable a number of people with disabilities to remain in the home of their choice, improve all aspects of their daily living and support a return to an inclusive lifestyle.

2. Introduction by Executive Member

2.1 On-going work within the adaptations service has seen an improvement in performance over the last twelve months. In order to address significant waiting lists for adaptations additional investment is required to ensure continued improvement and timely service provision.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To agree additional capital investment of £1.3m for housing adaptations.

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Contact Officer: **Gary Jefferson, Service Manager Learning Disabilities**

4. Director of Finance Comments

- 4.1 The resources for adaptations in 2006/07 are £2.350m as set out in appendix 1 of this report. At this point, the assumptions for 2007-08 and 2008-09 is that £1.5m will be available from resources from the Decent Homes programme assuming that money is agreed through the round 6 bid process. This is unlikely to be known until June 2007. This will need to be considered through the business planning process.
- 4.2 In terms of the additional investment of £1.3m in this financial year, this can be funded from an anticipated increase in capital receipts. The Council has identified under performance in this area and the need to make short term investment and develop a further strategy to deal with the ongoing position.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 5.1 Under section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (CSDPA), the local authority has a duty to help disabled people with home adaptations when there is an assessed need for them. In addition, the housing authority has a separate duty under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to provide (subject to a means test) disabled facilities grants for home adaptations. The Departments of Health and Environment have given guidance about these duties in Local Authority Circular 90(7) and Circular 17/96. Delay in discharging these two duties has been the subject of numerous complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman who has made findings of maladministration where there has been unreasonable delay. The recommendations in this report aim to reduce delay and will therefore assist the Council in discharging its duties within a reasonable timeframe.
- 5.2 There are no procurement issues currently within the report. It should however be noted that where a procurement is to be undertaken by the Council using any additional budget, the Council must comply with all Constitutional and legal requirements in respect of the procurement or award of any contract and in respect of any future partnering or working arrangements it wishes to create or enter into. The Head of Legal Services should be consulted where such procurement is undertaken.
- 5.3 Any restructuring of the adaptations service should take place within the procedural framework provided by the Council's policies concerning organisational change.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 6.1 Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People; A Good Practice Guide November 2004.

7. Strategic Implications

- 7.1 Historically limited capital availability has resulted in a backlog of housing adaptations and long waiting lists for residents requiring this service.
- 7.2 The additional investment will promote independence and well being and is in line with the government White paper 'Our health, our care, our say', which aims to support people with disabilities of all ages to achieve maximum independence.

- 7.3 The additional investment is a key contributor to Homes for Haringey achieving 2* in April 2007.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The current budget for adaptations is £2.35m as set out in appendix 1 of this report. This budget is insufficient to fund the work that is anticipated to be required in the year. The investment of £1.3m can be funded from an anticipated increase in capital receipts in this financial year.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 As Above.

10. Equalities Implications

- 10.1 Improving our adaptations service is critical for many equalities strands; it will help people to continue to live as independently as possible in the community which is a key equalities performance measure where more people from black and minority ethnic groups and women are accessing these services and improve the number of disabled and older people helped to live at home.

11. Background

- 11.1 Last year Members agreed an additional resource of £320,000 this enabled over 300 people to benefit from adaptations to their homes. Many of these people would otherwise have had to remain on a waiting list as demand for services exceeds the available grant from the government. The future vision for adult social care is outlined in the White Paper: *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*. Its underpinning principle is that everyone has a positive contribution to make to society and should have a right to control their own lives. There is an emphasis on services that maintain individual independence and offer greater choice and control to people. Preventative services will be important, linking to the wider well-being agenda with a more flexible approach to creating care packages, using the wider resources of the community.
- 11.2 A business process re-design project was undertaken in occupational therapy and housing adaptations. It was realised that the end-to-end process from referral to completion of adaptation was fragmented and incorporates a number of teams across three directorates.
- 11.3 The key teams involved in the whole process were Occupational Therapy, Haringey Integrated Community Equipment Services (HICES), and the Grants Team based in Private Sector Housing Renewal, Housing Adaptations and Medical Assessment. Currently these teams sit across the three business units of Adult Social Services, Housing and Enforcement.

12. The Current Position

- 12.1 Occupational Therapy receives referrals for assessments from a variety of third party sources and in addition directly from service users. Once the assessment is completed there are four possible outcomes; advice and information, the issue of equipment through HICES, the request for a minor adaptation either through OT or housing adaptations, the request for a major adaptation either through housing adaptations or the grants team.
- 12.2 The Grants team is responsible for administering the DFG Grant. The grant is available to those in private sector properties who require a major adaptation; these are currently defined as adaptations costing more than 500. Occupational Therapy pass the requirement of the client to the grants and regeneration team in environmental services to await allocation to an officer, who will then carry out a financial assessment on the eligibility of the client.
- 12.3 Housing adaptations are responsible for all major and minor adaptations in council properties and a small number of minor adaptations in private properties which are subsequently re-charged to social services. The team is comprised of surveyors and operatives and a partnering contract is in place with an external contractor for some major adaptation works which the Homes for Haringey in house team are unable to undertake.
- 12.4 If Occupational Therapy have referred a client to housing adaptations for a major adaptation and it will cost more than £25,000 they are referred to the medical assessments team for re-housing. A suitable property will then be identified through the voids team and the housing officer of the tenant.

13. Service Improvements

- 13.1 Following the business process re-design project members in June 2006 Members agreed the setting up of a new adaptations service to provide an end to end service for users. The target is that from the time taken from first contact to completion of adaptation is 164 days. It was always the expectation that it will take some time to reach this target. However, in light of the financial restrictions detailed below this target is unlikely to be met.
- 13.2 The new service will provide a seamless and holistic service through first contact, assessment, prescription of need, delivery of equipment and through to allocation and management of the disabilities facilities grant. A new head of adaptations is in post and the service is recruiting to vacancies and reviewing and improving all working protocols.

14. Client Profile

- 14.1 Using the clients who had been assessed but who were awaiting an adaptation at April 2006. The analysis below was conducted:
- 4% of clients are aged 30 or under
 - 12% of clients are aged between 31 and 55
 - 84% of client are aged 55 and over

15. 2* Housing Key Lines of Enquiry

- 15.1 In order for Homes for Haringey to be awarded 2* the key lines of enquiry the following criteria have to be met. Currently Haringey has a clear process for assessing needs for aids and adaptations and the teams involved within the process are working closely together, and this will be further improved following the completion of the re-structure. In addition customer satisfaction surveys suggest that service users are happy with the quality and service they received from the occupational therapy and adaptations teams. But there is still a large scale problem with provision in a quick and timely manner. There have been improvements made as the result of additional funding in the last half of 2005/06 and a reduction in the time taken between referral to occupational therapy and assessment.
- 15.2 The problem is primarily around capital availability to build major adaptations and without additional investment the time taken to provide adaptations will increase overtime. The appendix 1 illustrates this.

16. Current Funding

- With the current funding available the overall backlog will be approximately 430 cases in April 2007, 500 cases in April 2008 and 575 cases in April 2009.
- The backlog in DFG cases will increase from around 250 in April 07 to 270 in April 08 and 300 in April 09.
- The backlog in Council properties will increase from approximately 180 in April 07 to 230 in April 08 and 280 in April 09.
- This represents a funding gap of £2.1m in 2006/07, £2.4m in 2007/08 and £2.75m in 2008/09.

These numbers will of course be dependent upon the types of works required to meet individual needs. For costing purposes we have assumed an average cost for all work.

17. Effect of £1.3m additional funding

- 17.1 Appendix 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the number of adaptations which can be completed with the additional funding. As a result of an additional 1.3m capital in 2006/07 the following position will result
- The overall backlog will be around 190 cases in April 2007, 260 cases in April 2008 and 330 cases in April 2009. Which is a reduction of 240 cases in each of the financial years
 - The backlog in DFG cases will reduce to around 190 in April 07 to 220 in April 08 and 240 in April 09.
 - The backlog in council properties will be 0 in April 07, 46 in April 08 and 92 in April 09.
 - This represents a funding gap of £0.9m in 2006/07, £1.3m in 2007/08 and £1.6m in 2008/09.

- Alternative options are being explored to reduce the demand for adaptations to ensure that from April 07 onwards the backlog does not once again build up. More information is given in section 'other issues'.

18. Timescales

18.1 Private Sector

	Waiting Time Currently	Waiting Time Post Investment
April 07	25 months	19 months
April 08	26 months	22 months
April 09	28 months	25 months

18.2 Council Properties

	Waiting Time Currently	Waiting Time Post Investment
April 07	7 months	0 months
April 08	9 months	2 months
April 09	11 months	4 months

18.3 The tables above illustrate how the current timescale performance and that with an additional 1.3m. The data shows that:

- In private sector properties waiting time will be reduced by 6 months in 200/07, 4 months in 07/08 and 3 months in 08/09.
- In council properties waiting time will be reduced by 7 months in 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09.

18.4 In order to reduce the pressure in 2008 and 2009, a long-term adaptations strategy needs to be developed in order to prevent the increase year on year of the backlog in both private and council properties. Options to explore are;

- Promotion of equity release for private properties
- Means testing for Homes for Haringey tenants as well as those in private sector accommodation
- Extension of re-housing of both owner occupiers and council tenant

18.5 Currently discussions are being held with Registered Social Landlords in relation to preferred partners using RCGF (Recycled Capital Grant Fund) to fund adaptations over 500 and pay for ones below from their other resources. In addition there is a suggestion that smaller RSL's pay for adaptations below 500 and for adaptations exceeding that value they can apply to the Council. This will reduce the future demand on the Disabled Facilities Grant.

19. Other Issues

19.1 Funds under housing capital programme for private sector decent homes for vulnerable people are primarily targeted at energy efficiency and thermal comfort and therefore do not apply to adaptations.

- 19.2 Given we are 5 months into 06/07 additional resources will have to be employed in order to process the additional 220 adaptations resulting from the £1.3m. It is also assumed that £100K capital will be used to manage the additional work programme; this has been built into the calculations shown above.
- 19.4 For 2007/08, it has been assumed that the Round 6 ALMO Bid will be successful and that the 2 stars will be achieved in the April 2007 Inspection. However, it is at this stage unclear when funds will actually be available. This issue will impact upon the availability of £1,500,000 for council property adaptations in 2008 and 2009 which is currently unsecured.

20. Conclusion

- 20.1 If no additional funding is allocated to the adaptation service the overall backlog will increase from approximately 430 cases in 06/07 to 575 in 08/09.
- 20.2 With an investment of £1.3m in 2006/07 the backlog will be reduced to approximately 190 in 06/07 and 330 in 08/09.
- 20.3 In the long-term a strategy will be formulated in order to prevent the increase in the backlog in 07/08 and 08/09.

Appendix 1

Current Funding

	2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
		£000s		£000s		£000s
Backlog b/f						
DFG (old backlog)	221	1,100	99	492	0	0
DFG (new)			150	718	276	1,319
Council Housing (old backlog)	123	612	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)			184	881	230	1,100
	344	1,712	433	2,091	506	2,419
Annual Requirement						
Private Sector	150	718	150	718	150	718
Council Housing	350	1,675	350	1,675	350	1,675
Associated Repairs		100		100		100
DFG charge from revenue		192		191		191
Council charge from revenue		44		44		44
	500	2,729	500	2,728	500	2,728
Budget Available						
DFG		480		480		480
DFG top up		320		320		320
Associated repairs		100		100		100
Council Housing		1,450		1,500		1,500
		2,350		2,400		2,400
expenditure						
DFG (old backlog)	122	608	99	492	0	0
DFG (new)	0	0	24	117	127	609
DFG charge from revenue		192		191		191
Associated Repairs		100		100		100
Council Housing (old backlog)	123	612	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)	166	794	304	1,456	304	1,456
Council charge from revenue		44		44		44
	411	2,350	427	2,400	431	2,400
backlog c/f						
DFG (old backlog)	99	492	0	0	0	0
DFG (new)	150	718	276	1,319	299	1,428
Council Housing (old backlog)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)	184	881	230	1,100	276	1,319
	433	2,091	506	2,419	575	2,747

Appendix 2

Additional 1.3m

	2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
		£000s		£000s		£000s
Backlog b/f						
DFG (old backlog)	221	1,100	42	211	0	0
DFG (new)			150	718	216	1,038
Council Housing (old backlog)	123	612	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)			0	0	46	219
	344	1,712	192	929	253	1,257
Annual Requirement						
Private Sector	150	718	150	718	150	718
Council Housing	350	1,675	350	1,675	350	1,675
Associated Repairs		100		100		100
DFG charge from revenue		230		191		191
Council charge from revenue		44		44		44
	500	2,767	500	2,728	500	2,727,500
Budget Available						
DFG		480		480		480
DFG top up		320		320		320
Associated repairs		100		100		100
Council Housing		1,450		1,500		1,500
Additional funding - staff		100				
Additional funding - council		881		0		0
Additional funding - DFG		319		0		0
		3,650		2,400		2,400
expenditure						
DFG (old backlog)	179	889	42	211	0	0
DFG (new)	0	0	84	398	127	609
DFG charge from revenue		230		191		191
Associated Repairs		100		100		100
Additional funding - staff		100				
Council Housing (old backlog)	123	612	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)	350	1,675	304	1,456	304	1,456
Council charge from revenue		44		44		44
	652	3,650	430	2,400	431	2,400
backlog c/f						
DFG (old backlog)	42	211	0	0	0	0
DFG (new)	150	718	216	1,038	239	1,147
Council Housing (old backlog)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Housing (new)	0	0	46	219	92	438
	192	929	262	1,257	331	1,585