

## **Disabled Facilities Grants Budget 2016/17**

**Health and Wellbeing Board 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

Report Author	<b>Director of Community Services / Head of Housing</b>
Portfolio Holder	<b>Councillor Lin Fairbrass, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Deputy Leader.</b>
Status	<b>For Recommendation</b>
Classification:	<b>Unrestricted</b>
Key Decision	<b>No</b>
Reasons for Key	<b>N/A</b>

### **Executive Summary:**

*Thanet District Council has been allocated a significantly increased budget for DFGs this year which is greater than the council will need for individual grant applicants. The report contains details of grant expenditure to date, projections of likely expenditure by the end of the financial year and some suggestions for making use of the additional funding which will benefit disabled people living in or visiting the Thanet area.*

### **Recommendation(s):**

*The Thanet Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:*

- 1. Consider and support the proposals set out in this report.*

### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Financial and Value for Money</b>	Any projects to be funded from this allocation must fit the definition of capital expenditure and any ongoing costs as a result of the capital expenditure need to be identified and funded. Each TDC capital project is subject to submission, scoring and approval.
<b>Legal</b>	No direct legal implications arising from this report however on completion of the grant TDC will be legally obliged to adhere to the grant conditions outlined in Annex 1 to Annex 2.
<b>Corporate</b>	The proposals set out in this report will ensure that the council is able to meet its statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grant to residents in need of adaptations to their home. The proposals also make provision for additional services to support independent living and social inclusion for people with disabilities. No corporate risks have been identified as a result of this report.
<b>Equalities Act 2010 &amp; Public Sector Equality Duty</b>	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and

	<p>people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy &amp; maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage &amp; civil partnership.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The allocation of resources proposed by the report will enhance the opportunities of people with disabilities to live independently. They will also help to promote social inclusion for people with disabilities.</p> <p>A completed Customer Impact assessment is attached at Annex 3.</p>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,		Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	✓	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
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<b>CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant)✓</b>	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	✓

<b>CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant)✓</b>	
Delivering value for money	✓
Supporting the Workforce	
Promoting open communications	

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Every housing authority has a duty to offer disabled facilities grants (DFGs) to qualifying householders in their area. These grants are financed primarily from a capital grant awarded by central government. Each council receives an annual allocation of funding and many councils, including Thanet District Council (TDC), have traditionally top-up the allocation from their own resources if necessary. TDC has a particularly large number of elderly and disabled residents who might benefit from these grants and there was, until last year, a waiting list of people wanting to apply. In recognition of the high level of demand, the government awarded TDC the largest DFG budget in Kent.
- 1.2 Recently there have been changes to the funding mechanism. Several funding streams were combined into a single pot (the Better Care Fund) and all councils this year received an increased capital allocation for DFGs from the Better Care Fund (BCF). TDC's increase was particularly large and the analysis below shows our projection for the year's expenditure on individual DFGs and other commitments. This leaves a surplus which could be spent on projects that fall within the Better Care Fund Policy Framework
- 1.3 This report proposes how this additional funding in 2016/17 might be allocated. Further work is underway to review the DFG service beyond April 2017.

## 2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 In March 2016, the council approved a budget of £1.277m for DFGs in the capital programme for 2016/17, based on the anticipated level of allocation from the BCF and on projections last autumn of the likely level of expenditure on DFGs in the year. TDC's actual expenditure on DFGs last year was approx. £1.5m, slightly higher than the anticipated level. Analysis of DFG activity in the first quarter of this year suggests that approx. £1.6m is likely to be spent by the end of 2016/17.
- 2.2 The actual allocation TDC received from the BCF, which was announced very late in the year, was £2.342m, representing an increase of £1.065m over the expected level. Deducting the £1.6m likely to be spent on individual DFGs leaving approximately £742,000.
- 2.3 Thanet District Council received the funds from Kent County Council in August 2016.
- 2.4 Kent County Council (KCC) previously received a further direct government grant, the Social Care Capital Grant (SCCG), which totalled £2.1m across the county in 2015/16. This grant funding has now been discontinued. The announcement of the discontinuation of this grant coincided with announcements about the overall increases in the DFG element of BCF funding. KCC has proposed that district and borough councils across Kent top slice a corresponding sum from DFG allocations so that the services previously funded by KCC with the SCCG can continue.
- 2.5 KCC has calculated, based upon the respective level of grant funding to each district and borough council, that TDC's contribution to the £2.1m funding gap should be £375,000. Councils across Kent have considered this proposal and largely agreed. KCC will use this allocation to fund the following services:
- Fund installation of Ceiling Track Hoists (CTH) and associated works.
  - Top up DFG projects when over £30,000, and in cases of extreme hardship to support paying the notional loan determined by the local council.
  - Minor adaptations under £1000, which until now have not attracted a DFG e.g. galvanised rails, provision of shallow steps, external ramps, widening doorways, threshold ramps.
  - Emergency provision of e.g. a shower loo cubicle or stair lift to support end of life scenarios, as DFG application takes too long and support required is immediate.
- 2.6 TDC recognises the importance of these KCC services and is committed to their continuation during 2016/17. As a result TDC has agreed to reimburse KCC for actual incurred expenditure on these services within the Thanet district, up to the amount requested by KCC- a maximum of £375,000.
- 2.7 Deducting this leaves an unallocated amount of approximately £367,000.
- 2.8 The grant determination letter from the CLG, dated 18 April 2016 made it clear that the DFG element of the BCF must be passported to local housing authorities who hold the statutory duty to provide DFGs. The letter also provided scope for funding to be used to support 'wider strategic projects', but has left the exact nature of this to local determination. Funding proposals for wider strategic projects would need to be considered as part of the broader BCF planning process and agreed between the relevant local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Group and approved by NHS England.
- 2.9 It is proposed that when allocating any funds to 'wider strategic projects' that the strategic priorities of Thanet District Council are taken into consideration. These are:

- A clean and welcoming environment
- Supporting neighbourhoods
- Promoting inward investment and job creation

2.10 This funding stream will also support the Kent Joint Health & Well Being Strategy's priorities and objectives 1 & 3:

- Every child has the best start in life.
- The quality of life for people with long term conditions is enhanced and they have access to good quality care and support.

It will also support NHS England's outcome of "Enhancing quality of life for people with long-term conditions."

2.11 Potential strategic initiatives that could be supported using the unallocated funding of £367,000 to support the broad aims of improving disabled access might comprise:

- Public realm improvements to enhance access for people with disabilities.
- Improvements to buildings and open spaces including public beaches.
- Grant and/or loan funding to improve access to buildings or events.
- Incentivising lifetime home standards.
- Inward investment and job creation.

2.12 In order to build resilience into the scheme, it is proposed that priority will be given to allocating capital expenditure in such a way that might generate subsequent revenue for reinvestment in local services.

2.13 The table below shows a summary of the potential programme of expenditure.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Amount (£000s)</b>
Open space access	Improvements to access arrangements and DDA compliance and enhanced access to public beaches for people with disabilities.	50
Building and new housing	Improvements to access arrangements and DDA compliance and encouraging new homes to lifetime homes standards.	90
Reinvestment projects	Capital investment to generate a revenue income for reinvestment into local services and strategic priorities	200
Other strategic initiatives	Other initiatives or events enabling improvements in line with broader strategic projects	26
<b>Total</b>		<b>367</b>

### **3.0 Next Steps**

3.1 The Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) is asked to consider these proposals in the context of the BCF planning process. The proposals will enable TDC to meet its statutory duties to provide DFGs, support KCC to continue to provide related and top-up services during 2016/17 and enable spending on further strategic projects.

3.2 The Director of Community Services will allocate funds under the scheme of delegation.

### **4.0 Recommendations**

4.1 The HWB is asked to support TDC's proposals to allocate the DFG for 2016/2017.

Contact Officer:	Bob Porter, Head of Housing
Reporting to:	Rob Kenyon, Director of Community Services

### Annex List

Annex 1	Grant determination Letter
Annex 2	Copy of grant conditions
Annex 3	Customer Impact Assessment

### Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

### Corporate Consultation

<b>Finance</b>	Tim Willis, Director of Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer
<b>Legal</b>	Dawn Cole, Senior Legal Officer