

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Title of report	DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND LIGHTBULB PROJECT
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Alison Smith MBE 01530 835668 alison.smith@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services 01530 454832 john.richardson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	Cabinet to note the transfer of service delivery of the Council's Disabled Facilities Grants into the Lightbulb project pilot
Reason for Decision	To ensure Cabinet are aware of service delivery changes for Disabled Facility Grants
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities Value For Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	NWLDC will fund the administration of NWL Disabled Facilities Grants within the Lightbulb pilot from within existing revenue budgets
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Risk assessments will be completed as appropriate by the Pilot project team
Equalities Impact Screening	None discernible
Human Rights	None discernible
Transformational Government	Working in partnership within the Public Sector to generate improved resident outcomes and efficiency savings for the Public Sector is considered good practice.

Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team Blaby District Council
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET NOTES - THE TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATION OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS INTO THE LIGHTBULB PROJECT PILOT WITH BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Lightbulb project is a major transformational programme across the 7 District Councils and the County Council which will integrate a range of housing support services such as Disabled Facilities Grant's (DFG), minor adaptations, affordable warmth and handyperson services into a single service available to all. This new service will be easier to access, easier to use and will provide support around an individual's need, not an organisations processes. Further detail of the Lightbulb project is available at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 A governance structure has been created by the Lead Chief Executive from Blaby District Council (BDC), Sandra Whiles, and North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) has representation throughout the governance levels as follows:
- Project Board – Glyn Jones, Director of Housing
 - Steering Group – Clare Proudfoot, Street Action Team Manager
 - Pilot Steering Group – Minna Scott, Street Protection Team Leader
- 1.3 Updates are also regularly provided to Chief Executives' meetings, Unified Prevention Board, Health Leads meetings and various other groups.

2.0 NWLDC CONTEXT

- 2.1 DFG's were introduced in 1989 and are provided in Leicestershire by the District Councils. They provide financial help for disabled people who need an adaptation to their home. This includes people who own their own home, tenants and people living in houseboats and caravans.

- 2.2 NWLDC receives an annual government grant to deliver DFG's to residents in need. The grant, which used to be paid to Districts direct, is now paid to Upper Tier authorities, specifically Leicestershire County Council (LCC) in our area. For 2015/16 it was agreed that LCC would passport the grant in total back out to Districts. Some Districts, such as NWLDC, then add to the grant with their own General Fund monies to allow more grants to be administered.
- 2.3 DFG grants are generally classed as 'Majors' (up to £30,000 and can include house extensions) or 'Minors' which can include wet rooms, stair lifts, hand rails and so on.
- 2.4 At NWLDC, DFGs are administered within the Street Protection Team of Street Action, as part of the team's Private Sector Housing duties. Aids and Adaptations (A&A's) which are for Council stock are managed within the Housing service, but in some authorities these are managed together. For those Councils that do not have a housing stock, DFGs are dealt with by the transfer landlord e.g. in BDC and Harborough District Council.
- 2.5 NWLDC's DFG administrating officer has recently retired and it seemed appropriate to take this opportunity to discuss NWLDC's DFGs entering the pilot phase of the Lightbulb project. This would allow a real life test of the principles of joined up delivery from a different authority to BDC.

3.0 PRE PILOT SECTION 113 AGREEMENT WITH BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report, the Lightbulb pilot is due to commence on 13 July 2015, whereas the NWLDC administering officer retired on 26 June. It therefore seemed prudent and efficient to ask BDC to administer NWLDC's DFGs from 26 June, as opposed to recruiting some very short term agency cover.
- 3.2 BDC agreed to this request and CLT supported this approach, with NWLDC's Chief Executive exercising delegated authority to enter into an Officer Sharing Agreement (also known as a Section 113 agreement) which was completed and commenced on 2 July.
- 3.3 BDC have agreed to provide this interim support for no cost, other than staff mileage for site visits, up until 13 July 2015.

4.0 PILOT PHASE

- 4.1 It is then proposed that NWLDC formally enters into the Lightbulb pilot project with BDC, which will run until 31 March 2016.
- 4.2 NWLDC will fund the administration of DFGs within the pilot project at an annual cost of £13,467 per annum; pro rata for 2015/16 it will be approximately £9,600. This is based on an estimate of 50% of the retiring officer's time (i.e. 2 days of the 4 day a week post) this will be reviewed after 3 months.
- 4.3 The entering into the pilot phase will be enshrined in an agreement which contain appropriate protections for NWLDC, as well as specifying appropriate service levels to ensure residents continue to receive an excellent service.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A legal agreement is being drawn up by Legal Services between BDC and NWLDC. This will cover the outsourcing of the Council's DFG administration to BDC and establish regular monitoring of the arrangement. Should NWLDC not be happy with the level of service being received provision will be included for the Council to terminate the agreement early.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive has delegated authority to agree to NWLDC entering the pilot phase through an agreement and has received the support of CLT to proceed on this basis.
- 5.3 It is also important to note that at the end of the pilot, if it is successful, the model for delivery going forward will require member approval, this is likely to be a Countywide report which will be used by all Districts and may encompass other service areas too. A further report to Cabinet and/or Council (subject to which service areas are to form part of the ongoing Lightbulb project) will address the proposals after the pilot has completed.
- 5.4 Policy links between the administration of and criteria for DFGs and A&A for NWLDC tenants over major adaptations will be built into the pilot agreement, to ensure a consistent service is provided to all NWLDC residents.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The breakdown of funding, grants and expenditure for the last 3 years can be seen below;

Year	Government Grant	NWLDC Contribution	Total Grants Paid	Total Amount Spent
2012/13	£292,715	£149,330	67	£482,264
2013/14	£228,717	£149,330	66	£314,143
2014/15	£237,304	£149,330	73	£378,030

- 6.2 It has been agreed that BDC will receive DFG monies at set intervals and BDC shall distribute the government grant initially. If demand begins to exceed those resources the NWLDC top up grant will then be released along with any DFG underspend from 2014/15. All NWLDC monies will only be used for NWLDC residents.
- 6.3 It is the intent of the Lightbulb project to lead to future efficiencies and a long term reduction in NWLDC's contribution to DFG's. This however, is a long term aspiration and the pilot will assess if this is achievable. There is also a risk that improved service delivery and awareness of DFG's may increase demand and lead to potential waiting lists.

- 6.4 Performance reports for the DFG service will be fed through the quarterly performance Cabinet reports and the Head of Service will receive monthly monitoring updates.
- 6.5 The payment to BDC for delivering the service will be met from the funding from the retiring Technical Officer post.

7.0 COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1 The Lightbulb project will take the lead responsibility for the communication on all elements within the pilot project. A communications sub group is being established and NWLDC will be asked for a representative.
- 7.2 In the shorter term NWLDC's Street Action Team will develop information that will re-direct resident enquiries to BDC and also any enquiries from builders/contractors who may be undertaking works. A detailed handover process with BDC will also be undertaken.
- 7.3 NWLDC's website, Customer Services Team and internal officers will also be updated and provided with the relevant information in order to ensure a seamless transition of service.

The Leicestershire LightBulb Project

Purpose of Report

To set out the background to the LightBulb Project, a county-wide transformational project seeking to deliver housing based support services differently.

Background

District Councils, as housing authorities, are responsible for enabling and delivering a range of services which have an impact on the health, wellbeing and independence of people. This includes such services as Disabled Facilities Grants, energy efficiency and affordable warmth services and, in some Districts, Handy Person Services

Over the past few years Districts have worked together to improve services and access external funding opportunities for things such as end-end times for Disabled Facilities Grants and affordable warmth programmes

The Housing Services Partnership (HSP) was set up in 2012 to bring together senior housing staff from the districts along with commissioners from Public Health, adult and children's social services, registered housing providers and voluntary sector organisations such as the CAB and the Bridge. The purpose of the HSP is to strengthen joint working around housing services so that there is more of a place based approach to responding to commissioning and policy changes and issues which affect housing and how services support vulnerable people.

In 2013 the HSP worked with the Chartered Institute of Housing to identify the District's Housing Offer to Health (HOTH) locally. This was accepted by the county Health and Wellbeing Board and led to three practical housing based change projects. These projects are:

- **Housing Pathway to support Hospital Discharge** – *to identify and deliver housing solutions to prevent delayed hospital discharge. Two pilot housing projects are in place funded by health partners to demonstrate how housing can reduce delays in getting people back to stable accommodation once they are medically fit to be discharged*
- **Establishing First Contact in GP surgeries** – *to reduce demand on Primary Care by effectively signposting to multiple agencies for practical interventions using one referral for. First Contact is now being delivered through 44 of the County's GPs surgeries and 85% of practices have received training in the First Contact system. This is a good platform from which to develop social prescribing models of care*
- **LightBulb** – *to provide practical primary housing based prevention support to improve services for vulnerable people and reduce emergency admissions and delayed hospital discharge. Without such housing based support in place many of the benefits of integration health and social care services will be diluted if a persons home isn't suitable for them to live safely and independently*

In late 2013 the Government introduced the Better Care Fund (BCF) as a tool to drive integration between health and social care to reduce costs to the health system and improve outcomes for people. The BCF is a redirection of money, primarily from health, into a shared budget held by the County Council and is not new money. From 2015/6 the capital allocations to District Councils to support the delivery of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants become part of the BCF. For 2015/16 upper tier authorities are required to passport this capital back to District Councils on the basis of a national set allocation formula. It is not clear whether this passporting will be required to be continued beyond 2015/16 even though the mandatory statutory requirement on District Councils to deliver DFGs will remain. It is therefore vital that the HWBB and commissioners in health understand the role and contribution of district housing services such as DFGs to delivering health and social care transformation and better outcomes for people at lower cost to the whole system.

The BCF is designed to drive service innovation and change which will reduce emergency admissions to hospital. Unlike many other BCF submissions, the Leicestershire plan clearly recognises the role of housing services as a secondary prevention service and incorporates the HOTH in its focus.

The Lightbulb Project

Officers from District Councils, the County Council and Foundations (the national umbrella organisation for Home Improvement Agencies) have developed the vision and outline proposals for the Lightbulb Project. This work has been led through Blaby as their CE holds the role as strategic lead on health, housing and wellbeing for the seven Leicestershire District Councils.

The vision for Lightbulb is to integrate practical housing support into a single service that is available to all, easier to access, easier to use and will provide support shaped around an individual's need not an organisation's processes.

In essence the Light Bulb Project will redesign housing support so that it can manage, design, deliver, and commission holistic housing support that will support people to stay independently and safely at home and provide savings to the wider health and social care economy. This transformation will focus on the achievement of three key changes to the frontline offer which is currently spread across several agencies with different access routes, thresholds and hand offs between services.

- **A single point of contact or referral;**
- **A single, broader assessment process and case management service;**
- **A broader offer of housing support and advice** with access to handy person services, cost effective recycled furniture, affordable warmth advice and practical support including housing based assessment services and minor and major adaptations.

To deliver Lightbulb will require major change and commitment across all eight Leicestershire authorities and the support of health commissioners to ensure that financial resources are available to meet increased housing demands (and costs to housing authorities) which will then reduce demands and costs to the health system. There is sign up from all Districts and the County Council to the Lightbulb concept and a commitment to further partnership work to develop the business case, governance arrangements and change management.

Current Position

Funding: The LightBulb Project has secured £1m of DCLG Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) funding based on a business case developed in partnership across Leicestershire's public sector. In addition it has secured funding from the LCC Adults and Communities budget (£125k from October in 2015/16 and £250k annually from 16/17) and £100k from the BCF. This money will be held by Blaby as the lead project authority

Programme Management: A Programme Manager and Service Manager have been appointed on two year contracts. These posts are hosted by Blaby DC.

In addition Business Analysis, Programme Support , Finance, Procurement, HR and Communication resources are being allocated from across Blaby DC and LCC so that by May a dedicated team will be in place to deliver against the bid's timetable.

The draft project plan and risk register will be developed by the Programme Manager and considered by the Board

Governance: Terms of reference for a LightBulb Programme Board and Year One Steering Group have been agreed and the first Board meeting will be held in late March. The Board will be chaired by the Director of Integration, a shared post between LCC and the two county Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Board will consider and seek to agree a memorandum of Understanding for year one

Terms of reference for a Members Advisory Group will be developed. This group will bring together lead members from all eight partner councils with a brief for housing services and health in order for them to steer, challenge and champion the delivery of the LightBulb project

Customer Insight: External resources are being procured to seek to ensure that the needs of people who already use and those we would wish to access housing support become an established voice in the development of the project. By April the project will have reviewed the existing customer insight and start generating fresh insight to assist in the pilot design and evaluation process

Business Analysis: The project will identify key questions and design principles to form the basis for an "as is" end to end business analysis that will seek to identify savings, efficiencies and improvements on existing services. This will assist in the pilot design and evaluation process

Staff Input: An engagement plan will be developed shortly to ensure that the design of the pilot takes on board the input of front line staff

Pilot Design: A small group is working on the pilot scope, scale, cross section and work flows prior to testing and challenge by a wider group and consultants

Aim of Year One of LightBulb - 2015/16

In year one we need to further make the case for LightBulb and enable the necessary change to make the LightBulb service a reality.

This requires that by April 2016 we :

- design, implement and evaluate a pilot service
- have established an ongoing evaluation method to track return on investment to health
- have identified the metrics by which LightBulb will be judged a success to key stakeholders including all eight local authorities and the health economy
- provided assurance to partners that the financial, legal; and HR logistics are in place to allow the establishment of LightBulb via a pooled budget across public sector partners in Leicestershire
- provided assurance to partners that there is a fair allocation of resources to match the commitment of partners.
- secured the support of health partners to funding a proportion of the costs of LightBulb

Conclusion

The LightBulb Project is our opportunity to fundamentally redesign a complicated system which, in many cases, is over complicated, bureaucratic and doesn't always serve disabled or older people well.

If we can do this we will be directing money from high end health and social care interventions towards targeted prevention targeted which will help vulnerable and at risk people to stay living independently at home at less costs to the total Leicestershire pound and less distress to local people.