



## Wyre Forest District Council

### Record of a Council Decision delegated to be made by an Officer

This includes a record of an Executive Decision made by an officer under Regulation 13, Part 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

<b>Item decided: Allocation of Regional Initiatives Fund and Disabled Facilities Grant across schemes / projects</b>	
<b>Officer who has taken the decision</b>	Kate Bailey, Head of Strategic Growth, in consultation with the Head of Resources and s151 officer and Cabinet Member for Housing, Health Wellbeing and Democratic Services
<b>Date of the decision</b>	29/03/2023
<b>Reason for the decision/alternatives considered</b>	This decision follows the report to Cabinet (agreed on 24/03/2020) for the new Housing Assistance Policy which allocates grant across a range of projects and the delegated decision on how to allocate those grants.
<b>Date and source of Delegated Decision (if appropriate)</b>	Housing Assistance Policy report 24/03/2020
<b>Council/Cabinet member consulted – if applicable</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing, Health Wellbeing and Democratic Services
<b>Any interest declared by the Consultee or officer</b>	N/A

## **Regional Initiatives Capital Funding / DFG (Better Care Fund) Proposals 2023/24**

### **Regional Initiatives Capital Funding**

The Government Regional Initiatives Capital fund for private sector initiatives towards decent homes has been delegated to the relevant Cabinet Member and Head of Service for determination of which projects are to be allocated the funds. As at 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 the remaining uncommitted fund is approximately £175k.

This funding will be spent on;

- a) Security improvements such as the gating schemes to provide gates to entries
- b) Energy Performance related works in private rented properties; this would allow up to 75% of the costs of an energy efficiency improvement measure on a tenanted (private rented) where the property already meets a Band E on EPC. This would be up to a total value of £5k per property. Grant funding will be for 100% of costs for works up to £1,000, Grants will be prioritised to landlords accepting tenants referred by the council.
- c) Empty properties loans to assist bringing appropriate properties back into use when tied into nomination rights to the council and affordable rents

### **Better Care Fund 2023/24**

In addition, the Council receives Government funding through the Better Care Fund for works in relation to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). This funding is for the purposes of DFGs and other schemes as outlined by the Council's Housing Assistance Policy 2021. This memo seeks agreement on allocation of the Better Care Fund including for DFGs.

In 2023/24 the capital grant from the Government is £1.459m. In addition, the Council had an estimated carry forward of £850k (included committed funding) from previous years allocations giving an overall total of around £2.3m.

The hierarchy of spend will be firstly on the capital cost of DFGs, either through the council's Agency or directly, to fulfil statutory requirements but funding (if available) can be considered for the following:

Grant	Maximum amount per household/item	Overall allocation
Staffing costs - to work on projects to achieve more DFGs and to support associated projects.	£50k	£50k
Occupational Therapy assessments - to enable faster processing of cases than currently achieved via a contribution to officer(s) who will spend a proportion of their time working on WF cases and advising Trusted Assessors.		Up to £60k

Dementia dwelling grants to provide equipment and aids/adaptations	Up to £750	£20k
Top up of mandatory DFGs when works costs are above the £30k limit for a DFG.	Up to £20k additional grant where required for cases that meet eligibility criteria for the work and remaining at the property is still the best option	£100k
Minor adaptations (CHG) To supplement adaptation work already being undertaken in house by The Community Housing Group to prevent the need for relatively minor cases that go above their £2k threshold to go through the complete DFG process including communal schemes	Up to £5k	£30k
Hospital Discharge funding to support prevention to admission or early discharge from hospital	Up to £5k	£40k
Housing options advice and support work where people need to consider moving home as their best long term option (via Millbrook Healthcare).	£20k	£20k
Financial assistance for costs associated with moving to a more suitable home	Up to £3k	£20k
Financial Assistance for purchasing / building / improving properties (in conjunction with a Registered Provider) to meet identified adapted property needs.	Up to £30k	£100k
Funding for minor adaptations and ceiling track hoists delivered by the County Council.	Up to £5k	£20k
Funding for non-means tested discretionary DFGs	Up to £10k	£100k

Provision of Energy Efficiency Measures in the form of an interest free loan (charge on the property) for those not eligible for the Government Funded Schemes or need additional support to achieve a full scope of works	Up to £35k	up to £400k
Funding for the provision of disabled adapted flats within any new Temporary Accommodation provision or social housing to ensure the property has accessible facilities	Up to £40k per unit of accommodation	(£640k set aside to date for two schemes).
Funding Home Repair financial assistance to help people who cannot afford to undertake essential repairs on their own properties	Up to £10k with option for additional where meets strategic housing objectives, e.g. secures accommodation for the individual for long term and no alternative.	£90k.
Funding for the Home Improvement Agency or Council occurred due to legislative, policy or information technology charges e.g. upgrades to case manager system, training etc	No set amount	Up to 10k
Armed Forces Covenant Grant. To cover any means test contribution identified for a veteran application for a disabled facilities grant.	£30k	Up to £60k

Mechanisms for processing any grants and loans are to be in accordance with the Housing Assistance Policy 2020. Individual approvals are to be carried out by the Head of Strategic Growth, Principal EHO (Housing and Water Management) or Housing Manager.