

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member – Health And Social Care
Cabinet

DATE: 23 December 2009
14 January 2010

SUBJECT: Disabled Facilities Grants Programme

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Charlie Barker, Strategic Director - Social Care and Well-Being

CONTACT OFFICERS: Jim Ohren
Principal Manager (Housing Strategy)
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**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:	
To seek endorsement of the virement of £250k within the Health and Social Care Capital Programme in support of Disabled Facilities Grant obligations.	
REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:	
To ensure that adequate funding for Disabled Facilities Grants is in place to support increased spending commitments.	
RECOMMENDATION(S):	
That:	
(i) Cabinet Member – Health and Social Care notes this report, and	
(ii) Cabinet agrees to the virement of £250k from the Social Care SCP (C) 2008/09 – 2010/11 Capital Grant provision for 2009/10 in the Health and Social Care Capital Programme to the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.	
KEY DECISION:	No
FORWARD PLAN:	No
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	Following expiry of the call in period for the minutes of this meeting

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

The alternative course of action would be to not vire the funds. However, this would result in insufficient funding being in place to fund the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant which would, in turn, delay the approval of applications and lengthen waiting times.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework: None

Financial: There is no extra cost or consequences to the Council in making this virement as the Social Care SCP (C) Capital Grant for 2009/10 is currently uncommitted.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources:HMRI				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N				
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: N/A

Risk Assessment: N/A

Asset Management: N/A

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

FD 260 - The Finance and Information Services Director has been consulted and has no comments on this report.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		✓	
2	Creating Safe Communities	✓		
3	Jobs and Prosperity		✓	
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	✓		
5	Environmental Sustainability	✓		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	✓		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		✓	
8	Children and Young People	✓		

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

None

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the proposed virement of £250k from the Social Care SCP (C) 2008/09 – 2010/11 Capital Grant provision for 2009/10 in the Health and Social Care Capital Programme to the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a statutory grant, which must be paid in respect of cases that meet the qualifying criteria to enable improved access for the disabled applicants in and around their home. The Government helps to fund this through the provision of a direct grant. In Sefton's case this amounts to £1.157m for 2009/10.
- 2.2 Whilst the Government grant is distributed according to assumed need (as measured by numbers of disability benefit claimants within the Borough, for example) and taking into account the Council's annual bid, in practice does not match actual demand, and hence it is expected that the local authority will supplement the government funding from local capital resources i.e. the local housing capital pot. Sefton's budget for 2009/10 for DFGs is £2.690m
- 2.3 The DFG budget has been actively monitored during the year. Although currently spend is within budget, the trend of demand for grants is such that, without increased budgetary provision there will be an overspend on this budget line by the end of March 2010. This is forecast to be approximately £250k.
- 2.4 The rise in DFG approvals is due to a combination of reasons. One of these is the impact of improved grant administration processes resulting in grant approvals flowing through more quickly. In this respect the Council is a victim of its own success in implementing improved administration. However, there is a cost to success - the need to fund a 'rump' of expenditure flowing through the system. If other factors remained constant this would be a temporary phenomenon, and the flow of approvals would even out in future years. However, other factors are changing too. There is a rising demand due to demographics and the ageing population. Also, there is a need for the Council to increasingly jointly fund applications from RSL tenants. Furthermore, the removal of means testing for DFG applications involving children following a national review of the DFG legislation in 2005 has meant that there is increased pressure on resources from this category of applicant, and cases involving disabled children tend to be the more high value adaptations.
- 2.5 Consequently in this financial year (2009/10) and in future years it is anticipated that there will be a need to allocate significantly increased resources to this budget line. For this year, 2009/10, a currently unallocated resource exists in the Social Care SCP (C) Capital Grant. It would be an appropriate use of this resource to direct this capital grant towards funding DFGs. It is therefore proposed to vire £250k from this line in the Health and Social Care Capital Programme to the DFG line.
- 2.6 The DFG budget will continue to be actively monitored during the rest of the year, and future assumptions as to realistic budgetary provision will be built into the budget setting process for 2010/11 and beyond.