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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2012**

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### **COSP.10/12    DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS**

The Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel had, at its meeting on 24 November 2011, agreed the final report of the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) Task and Finish Group and referred it to the Executive for a formal response.

The Executive had, on 12 December 2012 (EX.166/11) considered the matter and resolved:

- “1. That the Executive had considered the final report of the Disabled Facilities Grants Task and Finish Group as attached to Report OS.33/11; and
2. That a further response to the recommendations contained within the final report would be provided at the next meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel.”

The Environment and Housing Portfolio Holder read out a full response to each of the recommendations contained within the Task and Finish Groups report:

“The recommendations of the group are listed below with an update of the position to date by each and further actions;

- 1. That the Council continue to lobby Government to ensure that an appropriate amount of funding is secured to satisfy DFG demand in Carlisle.**

#### ***Update***

Lobbying activity has been carried out in the last 2-3 years in conjunction with the other Cumbrian council's through the countywide DFG project co-ordinator Robert Cornwall successfully resulting in funding increases. The national DFG group that Robert is on has been re-established by central government and he has started to take a number of the key points regarding increasing demand and funding to the group.

#### ***Further actions to be taken***

- Following mapping and model development work from the Integrated DFG group communication with elected members and governing structures within Cumbrian district councils, the county council and health.

- Letter to the Housing Minister asking for a meeting regarding the work of the Integrate model group and funding issues.

**2. That the Executive give consideration to allocating some or all of the New Homes Bonus Grant to the DFG Budget.**

***Update***

Considerations for DFG capital funding are a part of the budget proposal 12/13 currently under consultation and will be considered by full Council on 7 February 2012

***Further actions to be taken***

- Actions resultant of consultation and budget setting
- 3. That a clear reporting procedure is developed between Riverside, Social Care and the Council so that the Council is fully aware of all DFG cases from referral to completion to comply with its statutory duty in the provision of major adaptations.**

***Update***

Meetings have taken place with Riverside and Adult Social Care to put the required system in place.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Regular monitoring of the DFG applications list
  - Regular meetings with both Riverside staff and Adult Social Care Occupational Therapists
- 4. That consideration be given to requesting that Riverside contribute the first £7,000 of all DFGs relating to their properties.**

***Update***

Meetings have been held with Riverside where this request has been made. They clarified their approach to their review and the paper which they hope to take to their board in mid January. They are looking to fund all smaller adaptations (Over bath showers, ramps and walk in showers) as well as the first £7,000 of higher cost adaptations to their properties. This approach is subject to approval from their board.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Confirming position on the future of funding DFG's by Riverside following their board meeting in mid January
- Regular monitoring and liaison with Riverside staff

**5. That the development of a Countywide procurement framework for adaptations is explored with other District Councils, Health and Social Care.**

***Update***

The first meeting of the working group took place on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The timetable for the development of an integrated delivery model for DFGs was agreed at this meeting.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Monthly meetings of this group have been set up
- Range of options for future delivery to be put forward by April/May 2012
- Preferred model selected – September 2012
- Preferred model implemented – April 2013

**6. That the option of developing a community based recycling organisation for adaptations is considered further.**

***Update***

This will be apart of the work undertaken by the integrated working group.

***Further actions to be taken***

- This will be apart of the work undertaken by the group in identifying the range of options for service delivery by April/May 2012

**7. That Carlisle City Council be prepared to pilot the DFG integrated model with Health and Social Care.**

***Update***

Simon Taylor from Carlisle City Council attended the meeting of the Integrated working pilot on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and we will be playing a key role in taking the work of the group forward.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Continued involvement in the work of the working group
- Review of DFG processes within Carlisle
- Adoption of agreed integrated DFG model

**8. That the Council has discussions with the GP Consortia to address the identified imbalance between acute care and prevention service**

**funding in recognition of the contribution that DFG's make to preventing hospital admissions.**

***Update***

The integrated working group has representation from the NHS Commissioners on it and as a part of the work of the group will be looking at how the DFG process interacts with Health. It is anticipated that the work of the group will look at the role that DFG's play in dealing with prevention of hospital admissions with the aim to develop an integrated funded model between health, social care and district councils.

***Further actions to be taken***

- This will be apart of the work undertaken by the group in identifying the range of options for service delivery by April/May 2012

**9. That the Executive give consideration within the budget process of the impact that committed grant carried forward has on the budget in the following year.**

***Update***

Considerations for DFG capital funding are a part of the budget proposal 12/13 currently under consultation will be considered by full Council on 7 February 2012.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Actions resultant of consultation and budget setting

**10. That Planning Officers should consider raising the issue of Lifetime Homes when considering and discussing planning applications.**

***Update***

This recommendation has been forwarded to Planning Section so officers can consider raising the issue of Lifetime Homes when considering and discussing planning applications.

***Further actions to be taken***

- Planning officers to enact the recommendation and monitor implementation as appropriate."

The Portfolio Holder added that a lot of work had been carried out since the completion of the Task and Finish Group report and most importantly closer working with partners had begun.

In considering the response Members raised the following questions and comments:

- Procurement was an important element in making the most of the DFGs funding and Members urged officers to move forward with the Countywide procurement framework for adaptations.
- Central Government announced additional funding for DFGs, was it known how much the City Council would receive or what formula would be used?

Mr Gerrard explained that it was his understanding that Carlisle would receive an additional £60,000 to £70,000, some of which would have to be spent in this financial year. He to provide further information to a future meeting of the Panel.

- The Panel thanked the Executive for their detailed response and asked that the response be made into an action plan that the Panel and the Executive could monitor.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Executive be thanked for their detailed response to the Disabled Facilities Grants Task and Finish Group recommendations;

2) That the actions set out in the Executive's response be made into an action plan for monitoring purposes;

3) That the Director of Community Engagement report back to the Panel on the additional Disabled Facilities Grants funding received from Central Government.