



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

Date of Meeting	9 th October 2018
Report Title	Disabled Adaptations
Report Number	HSCP.18.084
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Consultation Checklist Completed	Yes
Directions Required	No
Appendices	<i>a. Terms of Reference Disabled Adaptations Group</i> <i>b. Disabled Adaptations Policy</i>

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to advise the IJB of the various arrangements that currently exist in relation to Disabled Adaptations and to seek approval for the development of new arrangements going forward which will provide the IJB with greater assurance in relation to their role in managing this delegated function.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the IJB note the current situation with regards to managing Disabled Adaptations in the various tenures and their responsibilities for this delegated function; and



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- 2.2. It is further recommended that a Task and Finish Group is established to negotiate new arrangements that provide the IJB with greater assurance in relation to the management of Disabled Adaptations enabling these to continue to be delivered utilising the necessary expertise and meeting desired outcomes. The Task and Finish Group will also oversee the transition from the current arrangements to the new ones, reviewing processes and procedures and identifying options for efficiencies.

3. Summary of Key Information

- 3.1. Undertaking adaptations to properties enables vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes, improving their health and wellbeing outcomes and reducing the demand for core services. Adaptations carried out vary from minor ones of low monetary value, for example, hand or grab rails, to major ones such as the installation of level access showers, ramped accesses, stairlifts and extension to properties. There is variation in the budget available, the process to be followed, the staff undertaking the processes and what work is done depending on the type of property where the disabled adaptation is undertaken. The funding mechanism for adaptations is dependent on tenure.
- 3.2. Under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 disabled adaptations are a delegated function of the Integration Joint Board. As such, the IJB is responsible for the planning of these and for their performance and must ensure appropriate resources are available. The IJB should also take decisions in relation to these and obtain assurance of the monitoring, management and delivery.
- 3.3. Regardless of the type of tenure, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership have a statutory duty to assess the needs of individuals in relation to disabled adaptations. These assessments are undertaken by Occupational Therapy Services (OTS) of Bon Accord Care (BAC).
- 3.4. Disabled adaptations can be undertaken in 3 types of properties: -
- Housing Revenue Account Funded (Council) Owned Properties
 - Registered Social Landlord Owned Properties
 - Privately Owned Properties

Adaptations in Housing Revenue Account Funded Properties

- 3.5. Council owned properties account for 22% of the total housing stock in Aberdeen City and the spend in this type of property accounts for 56.5% of



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the total budget allocation. This disproportionate balance is understandable as the majority of the most vulnerable client group tend to live in council housing and they are in most need of the full cost support that is provided for council house tenants.

- 3.6.** Currently there is an annual budget of £1 million to fund both major and minor adaptations in council houses. This budget has been static for a number of years and the actual spend over the last 3 years is as follows: -

2015/16 £967K,
2016/17 £1.1m,
2017/18 £1.09m

Any overspend on this budget in the past has been managed by the Capital Board who manage the ACC Housing Capital Budget as a whole.

- 3.7.** The Housing Revenue Account funds adaptations in council housing stock. This means that Council House Tenants pay for these via their rent and as such, the money is ring-fenced for the benefit of council house tenants only. Such adaptations are an investment which could benefit future council house tenants. When a tenant presents with an adaptation need, before the decision to undertake the adaptations is taken, BAC OTS staff normally consider the option of re-housing the tenant to a more suitable property that either does not require the adaptation or is already adapted to suit their need. The decision to go ahead with the adaptation is made purely and simply on whether the individual has an assessed need and is a council tenant or not.
- 3.8.** Work in council housing is undertaken by a dedicated contractor. As with all housing capital funded projects ACC Building Services have first refusal on all projects. Both minor and major adaptations are undertaken and extensions to properties may be considered if appropriate. All adaptations are undertaken by a designated team within Building Services. Building Services carry out a customer satisfaction survey on the work undertaken and ACC Housing Asset staff issue an Adaptation Questionnaire which quality assures the application process and whether the adaptation has enabled the desired outcome. There is a statutory obligation to report on disabled adaptations to the Housing Regulator and the Scottish Government. Housing staff currently undertake this reporting via their own systems.
- 3.9.** The Housing Assets Team have the responsibility for council housing stock and until now have had the responsibility of managing both the budget and the day to day process. With the responsibilities being delegated to the IJB as of April 2016, however, they have indicated that the arrangement of them



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continuing to fulfil this role cannot continue indefinitely and they no longer have the capacity to do this. They are seeking alternative arrangements to be put in place by the Partnership.

- 3.10. BAC are the delivery arm for older people's services including Occupational Therapy. The IJB therefore already places a trust in the decisions made by this service. We are currently in the process of negotiating a revised Service Level Agreement with BAC for their contract beyond April 2019. One option could be that we delegate the responsibility for the management of this function to BAC OTS. This would link assessment to implementation and expenditure.
- 3.11. The IJB still require assurance that the work is being carried out and that the budget is being managed. The Housing Asset Team would still retain an interest in Disabled Adaptation work as they have a responsibility for maintaining the housing asset. They would require information on any adaptation undertaken in order that they can update their database and allocate a "remaining life" indicator. Their focus is on the property whereas the IJB's focus is on the individual need and how best to meet these. Assurance is normally provided by the contractor so this should not be impacted by the proposals in this report.
- 3.12. It is proposed that a Disabled Adaptations Group (DAG) be created. The Disabled Adaptations Group would consist of relevant stakeholders from the Partnership (representing the IJB), from BAC OTS, from Housing Assets and from Finance and their role would be to monitor the various adaptation approvals and the budget expenditure and report back to the IJB via the normal budget monitoring process, giving them the assurance, they require in respect of their delegated function. Please see Appendix a for the terms of reference for this group which includes membership and frequency of meetings.

Adaptations in Registered Social Landlord Owned Properties

- 3.13. Registered Social Landlord (RSL) owned properties account for 7% of the total housing stock in Aberdeen City and the spend in this type of property accounts for 4% of the total budget spend although this is probably due to the restricted budget, which is around £70,000 per RSL per annum. This funding is allocated to RSLs directly from Scottish Government. The IJB has no control over the allocation of funds or of the work undertaken.
- 3.14. The allocation of funds to the RSL sector has consistently fallen below the cost of works required to meet assessed needs. There remains a statutory



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duty to provide an adaptation based on an assessed need which means that an RSL tenant could apply to the IJB to fund this if funding is not available from the RSL budget.

- 3.15.** It is proposed that the RSLs are invited to attend the Disabled Adaptations Group to advise of the level of need, number of adaptations and funding commitments and pressures. This would enable the DAG to have the whole picture and adopt a partnership approach to addressing any shortfall in need due to the restricted funding and ensure that adaptations are being awarded consistently relative to need and regardless of tenure.

Adaptations in Privately Owned Properties

- 3.16.** Privately owned properties including those in the private rented sector account for 71% of the total housing stock in Aberdeen City and spend on this type of property accounts for 39.5% of the total budget available. The IJB received a report on this type of funded adaptations in October 2017. The annual budget for adaptations in privately owned properties is currently £770,000. Whilst the budget needs to be available in the first place in order for grants to be approved, the actual expenditure of it is reliant on owners of properties instructing and completing the work. As reported in October 2017, there were overspends in 2015/16 and 2016/17 and a further overspend was projected for 2017/18. An additional £250,000 was approved to accommodate this projection and enable grants to continue to be approved. The total value of grants approved in 2017/18 was £985,768.
- 3.17.** Major adaptations in privately owned properties are undertaken through a grant scheme. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 legislation requires local authorities to publish a Statement of Services, referred to as 'Scheme of Assistance' which details the assistance that the local authorities will provide to homeowners living within their boundaries. All applicants for a Disabled Adaptation Grant qualify for 80% of eligible costs, and those applicants who are in receipt of certain defined benefits qualify for 100% of eligible costs. Certain adaptations are mandatory, whilst other adaptations are at the discretion of the local authority.
- 3.18.** Aberdeen City Council originally drafted and published a Scheme of Assistance Policy in 2006 which is based on the relevant sections of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and underpins and supports this process. The grant awarded is a contribution towards total the cost of the adaptation. The Scheme of Assistance Policy originally contained two parts, one concerning disabled adaptations and one concerning the repair and



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maintenance of private housing. It is proposed that this document is now split and that the section concerning Disabled Adaptations becomes an Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Policy. This is attached at Appendix b.

- 3.19.** No upper or lower limit on the grant funding for each adaptation is imposed. If the cost of meeting the assessed need is in excess of £500, and grant funding is available, the homeowner applies to the Council for a Disabled Adaptation Grant and thereafter organises the adaptation works to be carried out. The grant must be paid within one year of it being awarded, and whilst homeowners are usually keen to have the adaptation work carried out as soon as possible, the availability of contractors will dictate when the works are actually carried out. This means that grants awarded towards the end of a financial year are usually paid during the next financial year. The monitoring role of the DAG will ensure that spend is monitored on an ongoing basis and should additional funding be required in-year, this can be escalated via normal internal procedures.
- 3.20.** Colleagues in the Private Sector Housing Unit of ACC administer the processing of Disabled Adaptations Grant applications and have confirmed that they are happy to continue doing so. It is proposed that this process is also monitored via the Disabled Adaptations Group.
- 3.21.** Minor adaptation works in private properties (up to the value of £500) are instructed by BAC OTS based on assessment of need. Currently, private home owners are asked to contribute 50% towards the cost of the adaptation (subject to financial assessment). The full cost of the works is met by Bon Accord Care at the point of order. When the work is completed, Bon Accord Care instruct Aberdeen City Council to raise an invoice to the private tenant for their contribution. The balance of the cost is reclaimed from ACC to the total value of £70,000 per year.

4. Implications for IJB

- 4.1. Equalities** – none. This report seeks to bring as much equality as possible to the various tenures within the legislative and governance parameters.
- 4.2. Fairer Scotland** – none
- 4.3. Financial** – overspends in the HRA and Private Property budgets will have to be managed within normal financial management arrangements.



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- 4.4. Workforce** – There may be workforce implications depending on the discussions with ACC colleagues in relation to the transfer of duties. This may involve a rewording of the SLA with BAC which can be achieved within the timescale for the completion of that. Existing staff will need to commit to DAG meetings.
- 4.5. Legal** – we have a statutory obligation to assess need, provide aids and adaptations, and provide information in the form of Annual Returns to the Scottish Government and the Housing Regulator.
- 4.6. Other** – none

5. Links to ACHSCP Strategic Plan

5.1 This report links directly to the delivery of the following strategic priorities: -

- Support and improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of our local population.
- Promote and support self-management and independence for individuals for as long as reasonably possible.

6. Management of Risk

6.1. Identified risks(s)

There is a risk that the IJB does not fulfil its role in relation to decision making in respect of Disabled Adaptations.

There is also a risk that the IJB fails to meet its statutory obligations in relation to assessing and meeting need for Disabled Adaptations.

6.2. Link to risks on strategic or operational risk register:

This report links directly to the following three risks from the Strategic Risk Register: -

Risk 4 -There is a risk that relationship arrangements between the IJB and its partner organisations (Aberdeen City Council & NHS Grampian) are not managed to maximise the full potentials of integrated & collaborative working. This risk



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covers the arrangements between partner organisations in areas such as governance; corporate service; and performance.

Risk 5 - There is a risk that the IJB, and the services that it directs and has operational oversight, of fail to meet performance standards or outcomes as set by regulatory bodies.

Risk 6 - There is a risk of reputational damage to the IJB and its partner organisations resulting from complexity of function, delegation and delivery of services across health and social care.

6.3. How might the content of this report impact or mitigate these risks:

The creation of a Disabled Adaptations Group and the monitoring of the budget via normal financial management processes will enable the IJB to have an awareness of what is being managed on their behalf in relation to Disabled Adaptations and be able to take decisions in relation to these.

Approvals	
	Sandra Ross (Chief Officer)
	Alex Stephen (Chief Finance Officer)