

PROVISION OF LIFT AT MORESBY PARKS OFFICES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Deputy Leader Councillor A Holliday
LEAD OFFICER: Mrs S Bamforth, Head of Finance and Business Development
REPORT AUTHOR: Mr C A Lloyd, Business Development Manager

Summary and Recommendation:

This Report advises Executive of considerations made in respect of a disabled persons lift at Moresby Parks Offices, and seeks an approval to undertake installation. It notes that a contribution is being sought from the Council sub-tenant Copeland Homes, and that Council policies exist to ensure disabled persons are treated fairly and equally to others. Funding of £25,000 to be made from reserve Fund standing at £109,411 as at 08 May 2007.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Copeland Borough Council accommodation at Moresby is principally located on the ground floor, comprising toilets, reception offices and meeting room, and with a suite of 5 Management offices located on the first floor.
- 1.2. Copeland Homes arrangements are similar but with meeting room accommodation located on the first floor.
- 1.3. The Disability Discrimination Act requires employers to take account of use of premises by disabled persons and to ensure that they are treated equally to others and access to from and within buildings is not restricted or prejudiced.
- 1.4. The DDA is not prescriptive but guides employers to seek solutions through a variety of means. These will include the design of the buildings, the way in which buildings are managed, security, use of mechanical aids, signage, dealing with access for visitors, even numbers of disabled staff employed or employment policies related to employers business activities.
- 1.5. The ground floor of this building is fully accessible to the disabled, but the first floor is not.
- 1.6. The Council is committed to demonstrating leadership by implementing the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act. In this respect it has a policy for making all buildings used for provision of Council services fully accessible to all people, having a full range of disabilities, including for

example sight, hearing, learning difficulties. The Council has also promoted and adopted its own Equality and Diversity policy. The inclusion of this lift will complete and accord with this process.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1. At the time of the upgrading of the offices at Moresby a small budget was set aside for a stair lift to enable disabled persons to access the first floor.
- 2.2. Following detailed consultation with the Council Access Officer and the Disability Forum, views were expressed that a stair lift would be inappropriate due to the length and layout of the staircase and extent of use of the stairway by staff (both Copeland and Copeland Homes).
- 2.3. An alternative to a stair lift would be a vertical lift, either a platform lift or an enclosed lift.
- 2.4. As this is an existing building there are limitations as to where practically this could be located. There is insufficient space in the reception/stairwell, or the corridor behind.
- 2.5. There is space behind the corridor in a redundant passage. This is within the Copeland Homes leased area, but it could conveniently provide access for both organisations through reception with limited alteration work required.
- 2.6. The cost for a platform type lift is estimated at approx, £33,000. There is a balance of funding remaining of approx. £8,000. Additional budget of £25,000 would be required. The proposal, if approved, would need to be confirmed in detail.
- 2.7. Continuing approaches have been made to Copeland Homes for agreement to construct this lift on their leased portion of the building, and for a contribution. In April 2007 Copeland Homes confirmed that it had no objection to the proposed lift location, but no confirmation has yet been received in respect of a contribution to the cost. The Council will further pursue the issue of a contribution.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1. The question of management of the Copeland BC area of the building is considered.
- 3.2. The principles of the DDA are that building occupiers should ensure that disabled persons are not discriminated against, so that persons having

any type of disability should be provided with the same level of access to parts of the building as persons who are not disabled

3.3. Questions that have been considered:

- Is it acceptable for provision of disabled access to be limited to the ground floor only?
- Is it necessary to provide unlimited visitor and staff access the first floor?
- Will the non provision of a lift discriminate against potential to recruit a disabled person to such a role?
- Will any of the five management offices be used for meetings?
- There is at least one room suitable for meetings on the ground floor – is this sufficient?
- Would this lift, if provided, actually be used by disabled persons?

3.4. What are views of others:

- The Access Officer has considered the arguments both for and against provision of a lift and whilst being relatively neutral on the matter, would prefer to see a lift installed.
- The representative of the Disability Forum is keen to see a lift installed.
- Head of L &ES would also support the proposed lift as meetings are held on the first floor of the building and provision of a lift would 'future-proof' use of the space. However, since Copeland Homes would be the major beneficiary of the installation his view is they should be asked to provide the differential in costs between the Council's residual budget and the £33,000 needed.
- The author notes that other options have been considered including that through a combination of management procedures the provision of a lift could be avoided for the foreseeable future without contravening the DDA, although on balance this is not preferred.
- Copeland Homes, has confirmed agreement to the location (in their leased area) but not yet confirmed funding support.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 There are compelling reasons for installing a lift in the building. Executive is recommended to support the installation of a disabled person lift as proposed, at an estimated cost of £33,000, with a £25,000 contribution from the Reserve Fund. If approved details will be worked up in consultation with the Disability Forum and a contribution from Copeland homes will be sought.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 Budgetary provision of £25,000 required, to be funded from the Reserve Fund.
- 5.2 Construction to be funded from budgetary provision. Design and Supervision will be from internal resources, workload permitting.
- 5.3 Approach to Copeland Homes to be continued with potential for contribution.
- 5.4 Provision of this lift will enable CBC to actively recruit a manager from a full range of applicants including those with disabilities

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 There are no project and risk management issues at this stage.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1.1 Complies with legislation (DDA), community objectives, equality and diversity, reducing social exclusion.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Ground and first floor Moresby offices.

Appendix B – correspondence.

List of Background Documents: Project files, correspondence

List of Consultees: Portfolio Holder, Corporate Team, Access officer, Property Officer, Cllr A Bradshaw, Cllr P Connolly.

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	No issues
Impact on Sustainability	No issues
Impact on Rural Proofing	No issues
Health and Safety Implications	No issues
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Proposal is in line with Council objectives.
Children and Young Persons	No issues

Implications	
Human Rights Act Implications	No issues

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision No.