

Strategic Housing Panel

Disabled Facilities Grants

Item 9

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Clements
LEAD OFFICER: Fergus McMorrow
REPORT AUTHOR: Laurie Priebe

Summary and Recommendation:

This report seeks approval of a policy framework recommended in paragraph 3 for determining the circumstances in which the Council reclaims (or not) the amount of a Disabled Facilities Grant where the amount exceeds £5000 and the grant recipient is an owner occupier.

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 8 October 2008 the Panel agreed the principle of placing and applying a charge on the property where the amount of a Disabled Facilities Grant exceeds £5000 and the grant recipient is an owner occupier. This agreement was subject to the adoption of a policy framework for determining whether or not to require repayment having regard to recipient's circumstances and for appeals.

2. Key issues

The local authority should have regard to the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he to be required to repay all or any of the grant on subsequent disposal of the property. The authority should also consider whether the disposal is to enable him to take up employment or to change the location of his employment. It must additionally be considered whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the grant recipient or of a disabled member of his household who lives in the property. Finally, regard must be had to whether the disposal would enable the grant recipient to give or receive care services.

3. Policy Framework

It is recommended that a panel be established comprising the elected member holding the housing portfolio, another elected member, the Housing Services Manager and the Housing Renewal Manager. The panel is to be tasked with determining appeals against decisions to reclaim the amount of a Disabled Facilities Grant where that exceeds £5000 and the recipient is an owner occupier and it is proposed to dispose of the property within 10 years of receipt of the grant.