



Report to: Strategy, Performance & Finance
 Decision Date: 14 August 2025
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock
 Director Lead: Matt Finch, Director - Communities & Environment
 Lead Officer: Jenny Walker, Business Manager – Public Protection

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Request to consider the principle of using unallocated Disabled Facilities Grant Funding to support neighbouring authorities.
Purpose of Report	This report seeks approval for the principle of using unallocated Disabled Facilities Grant Funding to support specific requests received from other authorities who are unable to fund an adaptation through their allocation.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance consider the principle of providing additional disabled facilities grant funding from our unallocated budget to another local authority where a formal request has been made.
Alternative Options Considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reject the request • Request a change in the suggested process
Reason for Recommendation	To enable more grant applications to be completed across the county utilising unallocated government funding to help reduce a postcode lottery.
Decision Taken	As per the recommendations.

1.0 Background

1.1 Disabled Facilities Grants are a mandatory grant, which all district and borough councils must provide. The current mandatory grant maximum is £30k, which is likely to increase in the coming years. MHLCG allocate capital funding to all local authorities through a long-standing calculation. This grant is now an element of the Better Care Fund allocation. All funding is provided to NCC and is passported to district and boroughs.

- 1.2 For a number of years, NSDC has received in excess of £1 million in disabled facilities grant funding each year. Whilst we continue to see an increase in the number of grants that are delivered each year, we have not spent all of the grant allocation and there remains an unallocated budget of £2.534m, which is ringfenced for Disabled Facilities Grants only.
- 1.3 Each year we complete returns to MHLCG on our DFG spend and we provide quarterly updates to NCC. This includes the unallocated DFG budget.
- 1.4 In recent years, the costs of grant works have increased and as a result the £30k grant maximum is no longer appropriate for many cases. In addition, NCC a no longer providing any top ups for DFG applications, which has added to the issue of sufficient funding for grant cases. As a county we have a discretionary policy in place that allows a top up in addition to the maximum grant. The discretionary increase varies across the county due to budget restrictions. The majority of the councils have also included an exceptional circumstances policy to provide further funding should Portfolio Holder approval be given.
- 1.5 As a result of an outdated funding calculation, which has been raised with MHLCG on several occasions, there is now a clear postcode lottery across the county which has been raised as a concern with the Chief Executives Group. As a result, the CEOs tasked the Strategic Adaptations Group to develop a way of reducing this lottery and seeking a practical method that allows for unallocated monies to be shared across the county.
- 1.6 No one council is able to move unallocated budgets to a centralised pot, in order to ensure that should they need the funding, they should have access to it. The group has considered a process where a local authority who is unable to deliver on a grant can request support from authorities that have unallocated funds.
- 1.7 A suggested process has been developed that has been considered by all councils as a potential way of using unallocated funds to support other authorities. This is supported by the CEOs but it is accepted that each council must satisfy their own approval process to ensure this decision can be completed.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The draft process has been developed and is provided in **Appendix 1**. The intention is for a council requesting financial support to follow this process and to submit the request to all councils for consideration.
- 2.2 Where a local authority has unallocated funds and a request is made should approval for the principle be given, it is proposed that approval would be given by the Portfolio Holder for Housing in consultation with the Director of Communities and Environment. This would mirror the current process used for NSDC grants that exceed both the mandatory and discretionary grant limits and are assessed under the exceptional circumstances clause of the policy.

3.0 **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

3.1 **Financial Implications (FIN25-26/4371)**

3.1.1 The table below show the funding held by the Council as at 31 March 2025:

	Balance as at 31 March 2025
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	1,614,982
Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants	208,714
Warm Homes on prescription	188,774
Unallocated	296,029
Total	2,325,358

3.1.2 Notification has been received for the 2025/26 allocation of £1,438,466. While the specific project distribution is yet to be determined, this amount is expected to cover the current estimated annual expenditure. Consequently, the current balance of £2.325m should be sufficient to accommodate any formal funding requests.

3.2 **Legal Implications (LEG2425/7873)**

3.2.1 The Portfolio Holder is the appropriate decision maker to consider the content of this report in consultation with the relevant Director and s151 Officer. Legal advice has been provided to the Lead Officer in relation to the use of unallocated DFG funds.

3.2.2 For future requests, the decision should be taken in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Director of Communities and Environment in accordance with paragraph 2.2.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972. Any documents that contain confidential information or personal information about individuals should not be included in this list.