

## **HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

**10 SEPTEMBER 2018**

### **THE BETTER CARE FUND 2018/19 - UPDATE**

#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Members on the schemes being delivered from funding from the district's allocation of the Better Care Fund in 2018/19.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the Better Care Fund (BCF). It creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services and shifting resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the people, communities and health and care.
- 2.2 A specific element of the Better Care Fund is allocated for the delivery of our statutory duty to administer Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) across the district. In circumstances where the BCF allocation is in excess of that required to meet the demand for DFGs the local authority is empowered to use the remaining allocation for 'wider social care capital projects'.
- 2.3 Members will recall that a number of projects were identified that fit the definition of 'wider social care capital projects'. Each year the district is provided with a BCF allocation to meet its DFG obligations and any additional schemes. The allocations for the current year and previous two years are shown below.

2016-17	£803,805
2017-18	£874,962
2018-19	£946,838

#### **3.0 Governance Arrangements for the BCF**

- 3.1 The Better Care Fund Programme Board is chaired by the County Council and this Board has the responsibility for the operational governance of the Better Care Fund. The Terms of reference of the Board are:

*"The purpose of the Better Care Fund (BCF) Programme Board is to provide system leadership to ensure delivery of the BCF plan to improve outcomes for the people of Nottinghamshire. The Programme Board reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board, with the main focus being upon delivery assurance and proactive performance management of the agreed County-wide plan. The Programme Board will also be instrumental in creating the evidence base and sharing best practice for successful integration leading to best possible outcomes for the population of Nottinghamshire within available resources."*

- 3.2 All the district and borough councils in Nottinghamshire are represented on the Board. Each year the spending plans for the new financial year are agreed by the Board and are then recommended for approval by the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the BCF Programme Board does not only oversee the DFG element of the Better Care Fund but it is responsible for the wider BCF allocation that is used for primary, secondary and social care provision.
- 3.4 The funding allocated to each local authority is based on a complex formula taking into account various indices of need, disability, health care and population demographics. The allocations vary across the county and it is not always obvious how the allocations reflect the general makeup of the local populations.

#### **4.0 Delivery of Local Schemes**

- 4.1 The table below shows the District's 2018/19 BCF funding allocated for various schemes.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>2018/19 allocation</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Mandatory DFGs	£700,000	Demand has increased over the previous two years
Discretionary DFGs	£30,246	The range of options available have increased as part of the integrated living model and demand is slowly growing.
Warm Homes on prescription	£100,000	A considerable amount of work has taken place to engage with health professionals to build sustainable referral pathways. The development of other referral schemes has also increased and demand is now growing.
Handy Person Adaptation Scheme	£66,592	This is currently held by Nott's County Council (top-sliced from BCF)
Accessible Homes	£0.00	Although there is no budget for this financial year there is a carryover of £118,000 to deliver improved accessibility standards to up to 6 of the new build units in the HRA development programme, with a focus on bungalow provision.
Assistive Technology	£50,000	Assistive technology (lifelines) is used to support the Council's private sector lifeline programme managed by Newark & Sherwood Homes. The rental income from this goes into the general fund
<b>Total</b>	<b>£946,838</b>	

### Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants

- 4.2 The authority has a statutory duty to deliver the mandatory grants relating to applications for DFGs. There has been increasing demand for DFGs as the population ages and adult social care policy now seeks to provide more independence and facilitate wherever possible people remaining in their own homes if they can be adapted to meet the individual's needs. The total spend in 2017/18 was £200,000 more than the previous year.
- 4.3 In the past financial year 74 mandatory schemes were completed ranging from large complex adaptations, including the provision of additional space (often downstairs bathrooms or sleeping accommodation), to more straightforward schemes such as level access showers, or stair lifts.
- 4.4 It is not anticipated that demand will significantly reduce in the current year. There is a £700,000 budget for this work in 2018/19 and there is potential for this to be supplemented from the discretionary DFG budget if required.

### Discretionary DFGs

- 4.5 Currently the maximum grant payable as a mandatory DFG is £30,000. A number of schemes each year require funding above this amount. These are normally large schemes for severely disabled clients that require extensive structural work to the property consisting for example: of extensions to the accommodation; or the installation of an internal vertical lift. A discretionary element of a maximum of £10,000 can be awarded for all grants exceeding the statutory maximum of £30,000. This provides a 'top-up' assistance to mandatory DFGs where the local authority takes the view that the amount of assistance available under DFG is insufficient to meet the needs of the disabled person and their family.
- 4.6 The mandatory DFG regime only allows work that is reasonable and appropriate to meet the client's needs to be grant funded. This can often result in adaptations being carried out to a property that is defective in other areas, such as poor insulation or in serious disrepair. This can result in a client having the adaptation completed to allow them to stay in their own home but in a home that in other ways does not meet their needs. Many DFG clients have limited mobility and therefore a cold damp house has a proportionally adverse impact on their health and wellbeing than a more able bodied mobile occupant. An Essential Works Grant in support of DFG clients is used to ensure that where a DFG is awarded the overall condition of the property is suitable for occupation by that client. The take up of these grants has been limited, although they were only introduced two years ago.

### Handy Person Adaptations Schemes

- 4.7 The Handy Person Adaptation Service (HPAS) aims to provide the help and support people need to keep safe and secure in their home with low cost but high quality essential adaptations and small practical jobs.

- 4.8 The Service is available to Nottinghamshire residents aged 60 or over, or to those under this age with a disability, and all work is carried out by professional traders who have been approved by NCC's Trading Standards officers. The jobs undertaken reduce the risk of falls or help vulnerable residents remain living independently and range from fitting hand rails and half steps to changing light bulbs, fitting door locks and putting up shelves and can include key safes if referred by a health professional. Often very small jobs such as fixing loose carpets or installing a hand rail can prevent a fall and avoid a lot of unnecessary distress as well as high costs to health and social care services.
- 4.9 The budget for this service is passed directly to the county council as they are responsible for delivering this service. The allocation is calculated as a % split across all the districts and boroughs.
- 4.10 The delivery of the Handy person scheme has recently been subject to a procurement exercise. The Council 's housing management company, Newark and Sherwood Homes Ltd, have recently been successful in obtaining one of the contracts to deliver the installations, repairs and adaptations in both Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood.

#### Warm Homes on Prescription

- 4.11 Local authorities in Nottinghamshire, led by Newark & Sherwood District Council who host the Programme Manager, are working together with health partners, to deliver the Warm Homes on prescription project
- 4.12 GP Practices and Integrated Care Teams have been identified in each district/borough council and are contacting 'high risk' patients with long term conditions made worse by cold living conditions, particularly COPD and other respiratory diseases and those at risk of heart attack, stroke and falls.
- 4.13 Home visits are being undertaken to assess the energy efficiency of the home and whether the patient can afford to keep the house at a healthy temperature. A range of actions are then taken to achieve affordable warmth on behalf of the householder, including commissioning heating and insulation works and income maximisation (benefits checks and fuel switching) which will allow the resident to remain independent in their own homes.
- 4.14 A considerable amount of work has taken place to engage with health professionals to build sustainable referral pathways. The development of other referral schemes has also increased and demand is now growing.

#### Assisted Technology

- 4.15 The Council has operated a private sector lifeline facility for a number of years, managed by Newark & Sherwood Homes. This is where an assistive technology service (mainly provision of lifeline units) is offered to residents across the District outside of the HRA. This is an expanding service and each resident is charged for rental and monitoring, generating an income to both the HRA (NSH) and the GF.

- 4.16 Through the introduction of BCF and to meet its priorities, annual bids have been made into the programme to increase the capacity of this service, for which there is a growing demand.
- 4.17 The Council and Company meet to monitor this service, which has the potential for wider diversification to meet the health and wellbeing agenda and generate increased income.
- 4.18 There is a desire within the Better Care Fund Programme Board to initiate a project that examines the range of assistive technology schemes across the county with the aim of looking at trying to provide some uniformity of provision across the county.

#### Accessible Homes

- 4.19 Further to a successful bid into the BCF programme for £118,000 to deliver improved accessibility standards to up to 6 of our new build units in phase 1 of the HRA Development Programme, in consultation with Newark and Sherwood Homes Ltd (who are project managing the council's build programme) we have now identified 10 properties:
- California Road, Farndon 1 bungalow
  - Wolfit Avenue., Balderton 5 bungalows
  - Adj 67 Greenwood Crescent, Boughton 1 bungalow
  - Adj 31 Trinity Road, Southwell 1 bungalow
  - 102 Haywood Oaks Lane, Blidworth 2 ground floor flats
- 4.20 Newark and Sherwood Homes Ltd. are currently undertaking a value engineering exercise with Woodheads (the building contractor) to finalise the cost details with the intention to deliver level access/low access showers to each unit and level entry access where appropriate. The completion for these works is September 2018.
- 4.21 There is further opportunity through the BCF to deliver improved accessibility to future new build units being delivered through the HRA development programme, by Registered Providers and private developers.

#### **5.0 Schemes for Future Years**

- 5.1 An increase in spend on mandatory DFGs and the ongoing commitment to schemes such as the Warm Homes on Prescription does limit the opportunity to start to develop new schemes, particularly as we have had no indication yet of what (if any) will be the allocation figure for 2019-20. It has taken some considerable effort to build interest and engage the public to take up the grant available from some of the schemes so it is important that funding remains in place to support them.
- 5.2 It should be noted that the BCF monies are only available for capital schemes.

#### **6.0 Future Developments**

- 6.1 The government has announced a review of Disabled Facilities Grants. The Department of Health and Social Care has appointed the University of West of England to carry out an independent review of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) in England. The University will be working with Foundations, the Building Research Establishment, Ferret Information System

and an experienced Occupational Therapist to look at both the operation of the grant and the wider delivery of home adaptations to support the independence of disabled people living in their own homes.

- 6.2 Despite increases to the annual DFG budget, demand for adaptations has always outstripped supply and this is set to continue as the population ages. The review will seek to ensure that home adaptation policy remains fit for purpose and that funds are being allocated as effectively as possible.
- 6.3 Topics to be explored include:
- How the DFG is used currently – who gets what and how it's delivered;
  - How the DFG could change in the future – focussing on the means test, the £30,000 upper limit, the allocation formula and methods of delivery;
  - The link between adaptations and health and social care services, including timely discharge from hospital;
  - The changing aids and adaptations market – considering new innovations and technology, market development and supporting people who are not eligible for a DFG; and
  - The impact of Section 36 of the Equality Act 2010 on adaptations to communal areas.
- 6.4 It is anticipated that the review will report back later this year with evidence-based recommendations on how the grant could operate in the future.
- 6.5 In addition to the above reviews, the Better Care Fund Programme Board have a work stream to examine whether there are opportunities to pool housing and social care themes to provide an integrated model of practical housing support and independent living. This is a model that has been adopted in Leicestershire and has had an impact on the provision of local services at a district level as the aim has been to provide community based hubs to provide housing support integrated with health and social care teams.
- 6.6 Although in its early stages in Nottinghamshire, the development of this model will need to be carefully analysed to ensure that it does deliver benefits and that the impact on our own ability to continue to deliver local services are not damaged.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:**

- (a) the Committee support the schemes for 2018/19; and,**
- (b) the Committee identifies whether there are any future schemes that Members would like to be considered for future funding from the Better Care Fund**

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

**To provide information for members on the Better Care Fund.**

#### Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty, Business Manager – Environmental Health & Licensing on 01636 655467.

Leanne Monger  
Interim Director (Health & Wellbeing Lead)