



**Policy, Finance and
Development**

22 July 2014

Matter for Decision

Title: **Disabilities Facilities Grant (DFG)**

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1 Introduction

This report is to provide Members with an update on the Disability Facility Grants (DFG's) demand for the 2014/15 financial year and the level of funding required.

2 Recommendations

Members are asked to approve the additional capital funding of £257,000 be made available to meet demand which has been recommended from Service Delivery Committee of 8 July 2014

3 Information

The provisions of DFG's are mandatory once a need has been identified and provide adaptations to disabling environments so that the occupier can remain living independently at home. There is a significant return on investment from these grants because they can delay the need for residential care.

Typically the funding will provide accessible hygienic bathing facilities such as a level access shower or a stair lift so that the disabled person can access their bedroom.

The Disability Facilities Grant service is currently under review to find ways of reducing costs and making the process more efficient and transparent for the customer. Strict financial controls are applied to each application; in particular, additional work is closely monitored and challenged if there are concerns. Proposed adaptations are discussed with the Occupational Service to ensure that the recommendation is value for money in the long term.

The maximum grant is £30,000 however the average grant is approximately £7,000. If funding is not made available then the needs of the persons with disability must be met by Social Services.

The Private Sector Renewals Policy has been reviewed and if approved will introduce means testing for all work above the £30,000 legal threshold. This will mainly impact on DFGs for children which tend to be more expensive.

DFGs are funded through Government Grants which have previously been supplemented by contributions from the Council.

Table 1 Current and Historical Budget

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Government Grant	£166,490	£138,717	£143,000
Carry forward (slippage)	£139,488	£111,582	£4,920
OWBC contribution	£144,022	£161,283	£0
Total DFG Budget	£450,000	£411,582	£147,920

Last year an additional fund of £161,283 was provided to clear a backlog of cases.

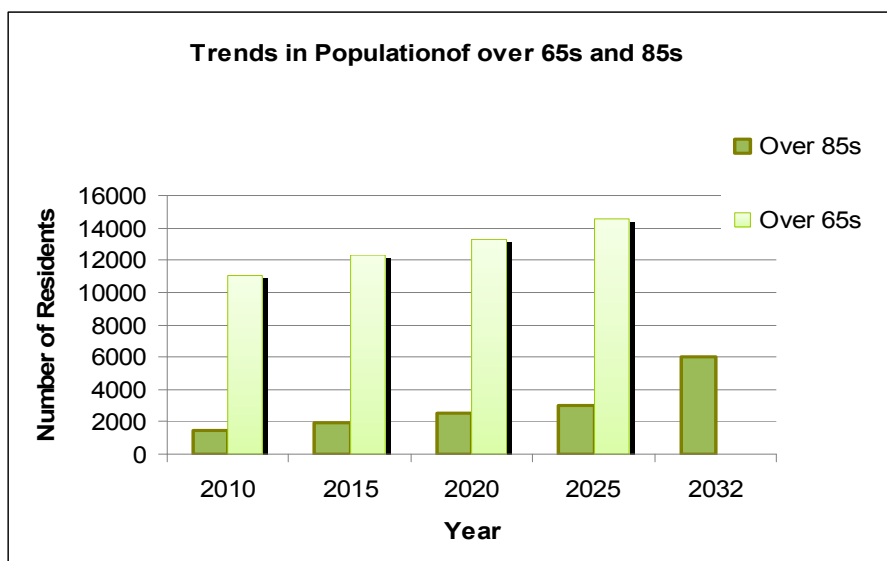
Table 2 Grants Completed 2013/4

Adaptation	Number
Level Access Shower	55
Stair Lift	17
Ramp	3
Cancelled	8
Total	83

Predicted Demand

Demand for DFGs is expected to increase due to an ageing population. Figure 1 shows the number of residents over 65 and 85 has been increasing and is predicted to increase further in the future The Occupational Therapist will look at all options to meet the needs of the disabled person and often minor works such as fitting grab rails will be sufficient.

Figure 1 Trend of Residents over 65 and 85.



Advances in medical technology have lead to extended life expectancy for people with severe disabilities reaching adulthood. These children often need significant adaptations to allow them to remain at home being cared for by their families safely.

Current Demand

The table below sets out the total position of demand for 2014/15

Figure 2 Total Demand

Unpaid approvals carried forward to 14/15	£147,494	Committed spend (21 Cases)
Referrals received waiting for approval	£161,000	23 cases X £7000=£161,000
Approximate number of new referrals expected to be completed and paid 14/15	£98,000	2 new referrals per month up to December 2014 (7 months =14 new referrals @ £7,000) (Based on previous years activity)
Total Demand	£406,494	
Additional budget required to meet current and predicted demand for 2014/5	£257,000	Current demand less current budget

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Implications	
Financial (PL)	The £257,000 funding can be accommodated by available capital funding but the exact stream of funding to be used will be determined by the Chief Financial Officer when considering the totality of the capital programme.
Risk (APM)	CR6 Regulatory Governance. The Council is expected to determine the housing needs of its residents and to set a housing renewal policy in response to priorities within its private sector. CR4 Reputation. The risk of failing to deliver, or to deliver slowly, the statutory duty to provide mandatory DFGs.
Equalities (KG)	An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.
Legal (KG)	DFG's are mandatory grants and once need is established the grants are required for improving the quality of life of a disabled person, particularly in their home.