

BETTER CARE FUND 2015/16

PROCESS FOR PAYMENT OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

Introduction

This discussion document sets out a proposal for the payment of Disabled Facilities Grants to District Councils in 2015/16.

Background

Disabled Facilities grants (DFGs) are grants provided by local authorities to help meet the cost of adapting a property for the needs of a disabled person.

In recent years DFG funding has been paid to District Councils directly from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), however from 2015/16 this funding will be incorporated into the Better Care Fund (BCF) and paid to Leicestershire County Council.

As a result of this change in practice, it has become necessary to arrange a new mechanism for payment DFG funding to district councils from 2015/16.

DFG Allocations

The DFG funding allocation for Leicestershire totals £1.7m for 2015/16. Individual district allocations are detailed in the table below:

District	Allocation £'000
Blaby District Council	256
Charnwood Borough Council	425
Harborough District Council	199
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	250
Melton Borough Council	133
North West Leicestershire District Council	298
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	177
	1,738

Guidance from NHS England stipulates that DFG funding will have to be allocated to District Councils in order for them to meet their statutory duties.

Process

In the absence of guidance from the DCLG for payment of DFG's in 2015/16, the following process is proposed:

- District Council's will issue an invoice to the County Council for their DFG allocation as detailed above.
- The invoice shall not be dated before 1st April 2015.
- Invoice to be marked for the attention of Richard George and sent to the following address:

- Leicestershire County Council, PO Box 507, Sale, Cheshire M33 0EJ.
- The County Council will pay the invoice within its normal 30 day payment policy.
- For the purposes of audit, District Council's shall maintain appropriate financial records to record expenditure and at the end of the financial year complete a certificate of expenditure. (The format of the certificate has yet to be designed, but is likely to be 'light touch').
- In the event of an underspend the district council must notify the LCC Assistant Finance Business Partner at the earliest opportunity. Underspends shall be returned to the County Council for re-investment in the Better Care Fund.
- No additional Better Care Fund funding will be paid if a district council overspends against its DFG allocation.

Other Issues

This process for payment of DFG allocations will be for 2015/16 only. The situation will be reviewed for 2016/17 taking into account of any changes through the integration of housing adaptations services across Leicestershire (Light Bulb Project).

The statutory responsibility for the provision of DFGs will remain with district councils.

Recommendations

Section 151 Officers are requested to:

- Note the contents of this report and provide comments on this proposal

Officer to Contact:

Richard George
Assistant Finance Business Partner
Leicestershire County Council
Telephone: 0116 3058318
E-mail: richard.george@leics.gov.uk