

SCRUTINY BOARD (ADULT SOCIAL CARE)

INQUIRY INTO ADAPTATIONS

TERMS OF REFERENCE (1st Draft)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting in June 2008, Members of the Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) identified 'Adaptations' as a potential area for a more detailed inquiry. The Board was subsequently advised that a previous scrutiny inquiry on adaptations had been undertaken and published in October 2002. A copy of a previous scrutiny inquiry report was provided to all members of the Board.
- 1.2 At its meeting in September 2008, the Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) considered a report which outlined the current arrangements for the delivery of adaptations in Leeds. The Scrutiny Board recognised and acknowledged that progress had been made in this regard since the previous scrutiny inquiry in 2003; however, the Scrutiny Board was keen to ensure that the Council was providing good customer service and receiving value for money as part of the delivery of adaptations to the homes of disabled people and their families.

2.0 Scope of the inquiry

- 2.1 The purpose of the inquiry is to make an assessment of the overall adaptations process to both public and private sector dwellings (cross-tenure) and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
- The overall time to complete the adaptations process from the initial point of contact with the Council to practical completion of the adaptation, with particular reference to high risk cases and families with complex needs.
 - Specific and identifiable stages within the overall adaptations process.
 - The determination of risk within the adaptations process and how low level needs are addressed.
 - Delivery of consistently high levels of customer service throughout the process, including the availability of customer advice/ guidance and the collection/ use of customer feedback.
 - Current safeguards in place to ensure the Council receives 'value for money' in the delivery of adaptations, including the re-use of aids and equipment.

3.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member

- 3.1 *In line with Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule the views of the relevant Director(s) and Executive Member(s) have been sought and have been incorporated where appropriate into these Terms of Reference. Full details are available on request from the Scrutiny Support Unit. **[NB this will be done as part of the process for approving the terms of reference.]***

4.0 Structure of the Inquiry

- 4.1 As part of this inquiry, a range of approaches to evidence gathering are available, including one or more of the following:
- A working group of the Scrutiny Board to consider some evidence and question key witnesses;

- Full meetings of the Scrutiny Board to consider some evidence and question key witnesses;
 - Discussions with key stakeholders;
 - Visits to selected establishments and/or organisations, as appropriate (for example, other local authorities demonstrating higher and/or improving levels of performance and/or identified as delivering best practice).
- 4.2 The inquiry will conclude with the publication of a report, or statement, and recommendations by the Scrutiny Board that will be submitted to the appropriate forum.

5.0 Timetable for the inquiry

- 5.1 It is initially planned that the Inquiry will take place over three sessions with a view to issuing a final report or statement toward the end of January 2008.
- 5.2 It is important to recognise that the length of the inquiry may be subject to change.

6.0 Submission of evidence

- 6.1 The following formal evidence gathering sessions are scheduled:

Session one – 6 October 2008

During the first session of the inquiry the working group will examine:

- The progress / service developments arising from the action plan in response to an ombudsman investigation and report relating to an adaptation to a Council house.
- How the level of risk is determined within the adaptations process.
- Low level needs are addressed in the short, medium and longer-term.

Towards the end of the session, consideration will be given to any further and/or specific information required as part of the inquiry.

Session two – 4 November 2008

During the second session of the inquiry the working group will examine:

- Any additional information identified during the previous session.
- The time taken to complete cross-tenure adaptations across various organisation, with a particular focus on high risk cases.
- Meeting the needs of families with complex needs .

Towards the end of the session, consideration will be given to any further and/or specific information required as part of the inquiry.

Session three – 16 December 2008

During the third session of the inquiry the working group will examine:

- Any additional information identified during the previous session.
- The levels of customer service throughout the adaptations process, including the:
 - Availability of customer advice and guidance; and,

- Collection and use of customer feedback.
- Current practice in terms of re-using surplus aids and equipment cross-tenure.
- Opportunities to improve the current safeguards in place to ensure the Council receives 'value for money' in the delivery of adaptations.

Subject to any additional information being identified, consideration will be given to the initial content and recommendations of a draft report or statement.

Please note that the nature and dates for any visits are to be confirmed and will be in addition to the evidence gathering sessions identified above.

7.0 Witnesses

7.1 The following witnesses have been identified as initial contributors to the inquiry:

- Appropriate Executive Board Members
- Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Director of Adult Social Services
- Representatives from Aire Valley Homes Leeds
- Representatives from East North East Homes Leeds
- Representatives from West North West Homes Leeds
- Representatives from Belle Isle Tennant Management Organisation
- Leeds Adaptations Agency
- Internal Audit
- Chief Procurement Officer
- Contractors of the Council

8.0 Post inquiry report monitoring arrangements

8.1 Following the completion of this inquiry and publication of the final report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored. The Scrutiny Board will determine those arrangements at the end of the inquiry.

8.2 The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored.

9.0 Measures of success

9.1 It is important to consider how the Scrutiny Board will deem if their inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.

9.2 The Board will look to publish practical recommendations.