



Report of the Directors of Environment and Neighbourhoods, Children's Services and Adult Social Services

Executive Board

Date: 11th February 2011

Subject: Housing Adaptations Strategy 2010 - 2013

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Housing adaptations provide solutions to housing needs that can lead to improvements in well-being, reduced risk, increased independence and prevention of need of higher levels of support or of admission to residential care for older and disabled people. However, local demand for the service is greater than that able to be satisfied by current available resources and demand is set to increase.
2. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide adaptations services which it currently delivers from three Directorates: Children & Young People's Social Care, Adult Social Care and Environment and Neighbourhoods. It is essential that a joint approach to delivery is achieved across these Directorates, where customer

experience is the prime focus, irrespective of the particular delivery arm of the Council.

3. Following a Scrutiny Board Inquiry which reported into Major Adaptations For Disabled Adults in June 2009, a wide range of partners have worked on the development of a strategy which, drawing upon an understanding of legal obligations, current and future demands and challenges, sets out an ambitious programme of action to enable an improved adaptations service to be delivered for all people living in Leeds.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 To report to and update Executive Board on the development and content of the Housing Adaptations Strategy 2010 -2013 and recent developments in service delivery and
- 1.2 Recommend formal approval of the Housing Adaptations Strategy 2010 – 2013, a copy of which has been separately circulated to Members of the Board. Arrangements are being made to make the document available on the internet.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 A Scrutiny Inquiry report “Major Adaptations for Disabled Adults” was published on 17 June 2009. One of the recommendations was that within 12 months all Directors with responsibility to meet the needs of disabled persons should produce a specific city wide Housing Adaptations Strategy and Delivery Plan, spanning a number of years, for both the public and private sectors. The strategy should take into consideration the fact that demographically the population is ageing and the other recommendations made by the scrutiny board as a result of the enquiry. This recommendation was accepted by Directors and approved by Executive Board on 26 August 2009.
- 2.2 The Adaptation Strategy Group (now the Project Board) chaired by the Chief Officer Adult Social Care, with senior managers from Children and Young People’s Services, the Strategic Landlord Group of Environment and Neighbourhoods, Housing and Environmental Action Service and Chief Executives from the ALMOs/ and BITMO have overseen the development of the strategy and related action plan.
- 2.3 Environment & Neighbourhoods Senior Leadership Team and Adult Social Care Directorate Management Team both approved the Adaptations Strategy on 2nd September 2010. The Adaptations Strategy has also been considered and agreed by Children and Young People’s Services and ALMO/BITMO Boards.
- 2.4 Scrutiny Panel (ASC) endorsed the Housing Adaptations Strategy on 15th December 2010

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 The main challenge facing the current adaptations service is that of increasing demand against the background of limited funding. For example, in Leeds the number of over 65's unable to manage at least one self care activity is predicted to increase by 9% by 2015, and by 17% by 2020. Many of these people will have needs that require adaptations to enable them to continue to live independently in their own homes. Approximately 70% - 80% of the current adaptations work within the city is for older people so this represents a significant projected increase in demand for services.
- 3.2 Leeds City Council is currently developing a reablement service to be rolled out city wide in April 2011, an approach to care which helps older and disabled people do things for themselves through access to early intervention and prevention services. An important aspect of this approach is the availability of assistive technology services, a large number of devices and technical products, ranging from "low tech" mobility devices to complex major adaptations of people's homes. As such, the Adaptations Strategy and delivery of service improvements identified in the action plan will play an important role in support of reablement in Leeds
- 3.3 The current level of capital investment to support major adaptations costing in excess of £1000 is approximately £15m per annum across all tenures, of which £7m relates to private sector assistance through Disabled Facilities Grants which are a mandatory entitlement. There is anticipated to be an increasing future demand for services over coming years which will have budgetary implications. The Strategy seeks to partially offset those pressures through improved value for money efficiency savings secured, for example, through pooled budgets and procurement of services, recycling of equipment and a wider choice of housing options.
- 3.4 The Strategy sets out current benchmarked performance on service delivery in Leeds, identifies 5 strategic priorities for future action and details how the strategy will be delivered through a detailed action plan which incorporates clearly identified objectives, actions and outcomes in order to achieve 3 primary aims, namely:
- Deliver a high quality service to respond to the adaptation needs of people in Leeds in a fair equitable and timely way within available resources
 - Ensure all agencies with responsibility for adaptations are working in a co-ordinated and transparent way, reducing duplication, achieving value for money, and sharing and managing financial and other risks
 - Engage with people who can benefit from adaptations as equal partners, promoting self management and personalization, in making decisions about cost effective ways to achieve independence and inclusion.
- 3.5 The Strategy supports the city's strategic priority of promoting independent living contained within the Leeds Housing Strategy and priorities within other strategies, including the Leeds Disabled People's Housing Strategy. The Strategy's Action Plan clearly identifies the objectives, actions and outcomes that need to be achieved under each of the following 5 Strategic Themes :
- Using Resources Well

- Collecting and Using Information Effectively
- Providing a Good Customer Experience
- Working Positively with Partners
- Creating Effective Governance Arrangements

3.6 Taking each of these 5 strategic themes, key priorities have been identified for action.

3.6.1 **Using Resources Well**

Key priorities

- a) The Council will take a cross tenure, city wide approach to the planning, commissioning and delivery of adaptations services so that available resources are managed and targeted to meet demand in an equitable way. (Action Points 1.1.1, 1.1.6)
- b) The Council will establish the cost benefits of adapting housing for disabled children young people, adults and understand the impact on other support services, so that Council resources can be directed appropriately. (Action point 1.1.2)
- c) The Council will match its adapted properties, and those of other landlords, to people requiring those facilities and recycle equipment so that best use is made of existing equipment and adaptations. (Action point 2.2.1)

3.6.2 **Collecting and Using Information Effectively**

Key priorities

- a) The Council will collect and use data on demand, delivery and outcomes for customers so that the adaptations service is subject to continuous review and improvement. (Action point 2.3.1)
- b) The Council will set performance targets related to the reasonable timescale for specific adaptations to be completed so that performance demonstrated is meaningful to all stakeholders, in particular customers. (Action point 2.1.1)
- c) The Council will benchmark its performance against other providers of adaptations so that it can inform and develop best practice. (Action point 2.1.2)

3.6.3 **Providing a Good Customer Experience**

Key priorities

- a) The Council will actively promote information advice and guidance about the benefits of suitable housing for disabled children, young people, adults and older people so that citizens of Leeds can be informed to plan ahead before they experience critical need. (Action point 3.2.1)
- b) The Council will develop a Personal Housing Plan approach to respond to requests for adaptation so that customers can consider all the possible options and agree an appropriate solution to their housing need with the Council (Action point 3.2.2)
- c) The Council will use opportunities to include adaptations funding in customer held budgets so that the choice and control of older and disabled people is increased. (Action point 3.5.1)

3.6.4 **Working Positively with Partners**

Key priorities

- a) The Council will work with RSLs and Home Improvement Agencies so that there is increased efficiency and equity (Action points 4.4.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.4)
- b) The Council will engage all stakeholders in workforce development so that service delivered is equitable, consistent with the Council's duties and powers and demonstrates best practice (Action points 4.2.2, 4.2.3)
- c) The Council will establish clear transition arrangements for customers moving across organisational boundaries, including from children to adult services and across tenures, so that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities and there are clear protocols for managing referrals between departments. (Action point 4.1.2)

3.6.5 **Creating Effective Governance Arrangements**

Key priorities

- a) The Council will identify a single strategic director with accountability for delivery of adaptations in the city so that governance arrangements are clearly defined. (Neil Evans - Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods – Action point 5.1.1)
- b) The Council will review the Terms of Reference of the Adaptations Operations Group and the Adaptations Strategic Group so that their respective roles in delivering the strategy are understood and implemented effectively. (Action points 5.1.2, 5.1.3)
- c) The Council will ensure the Adaptations Strategy is coordinated with the other key Council Strategies relating to housing and to social care so that there is consistency of approach and no duplication in actions. (Action point 5.2.1)

4.0 Progress To Date

- 4.1 Work has already begun and progress made on key priorities identified in the strategy and action plan.
- a) Strategic Leadership for adaptations within Leeds has been agreed. Whilst the Directors of Children's Services and Adult Social Services retain legal duties and obligations to meet the needs of people who may require community care services, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods has agreed to take responsibility for strategic leadership to ensure the delivery of the Adaptations Strategy and action plan.
 - b) New governance arrangements have been put in place to oversee progress with the strategy.
 - c) Performance reporting across tenures has been established which incorporates service delivery targets.
 - c) Work plans are being finalised for other key service improvements identified in the strategy action plan.
 - d) A particular focus on Value for Money considerations has already identified significant savings. A more detailed report on Value For Money (VFM) presented to Scrutiny Board in September 2010 provides fuller details on savings made so far and the potential further savings to be achieved over time. Early indications for recently introduced new initiatives suggest additional savings in the order of £0.5m per annum, relating to the use of recycled, reconditioned stairlifts and revised bathing needs specifications.
 - e) Where traditional contracts exist, schedules of works with fixed costs for standard installations have seen a reduction in unit costs. Where public-sector partnering contracts exist, costs have been driven down by negotiation and efficiency savings, often operating on an 'open book' arrangement. These revised procedures have been influential in achieving service plan targets of a speeded-up delivery service, while maintaining quality installations and a high level of customer satisfaction.
 - f) Work will continue to seek further savings through the potential for joint procurement, continuously reviewing product and installation costs and eligible works. This increased value for money has resulted in the average cost of a disabled facilities grant reducing from £7,900 to £6,200 over the last 2 years, enabling 20% more applicants to be assisted more promptly over the last year for the same cost, whilst maintaining high customer satisfaction with the adaptations provided.

5.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 5.1 Improved Governance arrangements outlined within the Strategy and through the recent establishment of a Project Board will ensure effective working across the range of partners within the adaptations agenda. Greater emphasis will be placed on targeting resources and improving efficiencies.
- 5.2 The adaptations service involves internal partnerships within the Council and the Council working with many external partner organisations across the city, with some

parallel systems and some areas where duplication occurs. There is scope for pooling of budgets and further streamlining of the process and best practice can be shared between organisations to improve the level of service received by customers.

6.0 **Legal And Resource Implications**

6.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility and duty to provide assistance with adaptations for disabled people, which it meets within currently available resources, either through the direct provision of works of adaptations in public sector homes, or through financial assistance to private home owners to assist in meeting the cost of adaptation works. Increasingly, disabled people, including disabled children with high support needs or complex medical conditions, are enjoying longer life expectancy and this will impact on the future demand for adaptations as well as other support services, and the mandatory obligations placed on the Council.

6.2 In July 2010 Executive Board approved the expenditure of £1m for ALMOs to assist in addressing the increasing demand that they have for adaptations to disabled customers' homes. This will supplement the current £7.1m that is being spent on adaptations in council housing this year. The Council entered into a contract with Care and Repair (Leeds) in January 2011 to undertake these additional adaptations in council properties. Care and Repair are the local Home Improvement Agency and will use local small and medium property maintenance contractors to undertake the works, thereby providing local employment. The works that Care and Repair will undertake will mainly be bathing facilities such as wet floor showers or over bath showers, but will also include ramps, adapted kitchens and extensions.

7.0 **Recommendations**

7.1 **Executive Board is recommended to approve the Adaptations Strategy 2010 – 2013 and instruct officers to report back in due course on progress with the delivery of the related action plan.**

8.0 **Background Papers:**

Adaptations Strategy 2010 - 2013

8.1 **References:**

Better outcomes, lower costs (ODI / University of Bristol 2007)

This sets out evidence that adaptations and equipment can reduce the cost of people being submitted to residential care or hospital and the risk of falls and connected health complications.

<http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk/research/research-reports.php>

Putting People First 2007

This is six pages in length being a statement of the government's commitment to independent living for all adults. The protocol is a collaborative approach between

central and local government, the sector's professional leadership, providers and the regulator and lays out the expectations for reform in adult social care.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118

Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People: A good practice guide

June 2006, CLG.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/deliveringhousingadaptations>

Adapting for a Lifetime (Jan 2010): The key role of home improvement agencies in adaptations delivery.

Produced by Foundations, the national body for Home Improvement Agencies explaining the challenges facing future provision of adaptations and how these can be addressed by working in partnership with Home Improvement Agencies.

<http://www-foundations.uk.com/page.php?currentpageref=360>

October 2010 Request to waive contract procedures rule 13

To enter into a contract with Care and Repair (Leeds) to provide £1m of major adaptation works report