



Policy and Resources Committee - 7 June 2010

Private Sector (Housing) Renewal Capital Allocation for 2010/11

Summary

The Council has been advised that it will receive a Capital Grant of £299,000 for Private Sector (Housing) Renewal during 2010-11. This report seeks Members' approval to use these funds to meet the mandatory requirements under the Housing Construction and Regeneration Act for Disabled Facilities Grants.

Attachment(s)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting of this Committee on 22 January 2010 it was agreed to set the capital funding for mandatory grants at £300,000 and to set up a case review panel for 2010-11 (minute 367 refers). This decision was based on the predicted grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the impact on the Council's capital budget.
- 1.2 The Council has now been advised by DCLG of a capital grant for Disabled Facilities of £167,000. We have also been notified that we will receive an additional grant of £299,000 for 'Private Sector Renewal' (formerly known as 'Decent Homes')

2. Government Capital Grant

- 2.1 The additional funding provided by the DCLG is based on representation made by officers to the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) and the Regional Housing Board. This is based on the number of properties that fail to meet the relevant housing standard and that are occupied by vulnerable people. As the majority of the allocation for 2009-10 was used for disabled facilities this has had an impact on the number of properties brought up to the standard and therefore on our performance during that year.
- 2.2 The capital grant entitled 'Private Sector Renewal' is intended for improving the standards in the housing stock. The Council is monitored quarterly on its performance in improving the number of properties that are 'non decent' and that are occupied by vulnerable people and we are required to submit performance returns to GOEM. This funding is expected to contribute to improving performance in this area.
- 2.3 The conditions in relation to the 'Disabled Facilities Grant' funding are specific and any unspent monies must be returned. The level of applications received means that funds are always fully committed.

3. Allocation Options

- 3.1 As a result of the additional 'Private Sector Renewal' funding Members' approval is sought to allocate the £299,000 capital grant from DCLG to be used for Private Sector Housing Grants.
- 3.2 If a proportion of the £299,000 is allocated to discretionary grants this would allow us to assist some urgent cases where the property contains a category 1 hazard, which

would also increase the performance in terms of properties brought up to standard. However it would result in a shortfall in the total required for mandatory grant and some applicants may need to be deferred to 2011-12.

3.3 Members will recall that the capital set aside for Private Sector Housing Grants was reduced from £510,000 to £250,000 in 2008-09 then adjusted to the current level of £300,000 in February 2010 (minute 367).

3.4 If Members are minded to agree the allocation of funding to 'Private Sector Housing Grants' then there are a number of options to be considered:

1) Use the full £299,000 for only mandatory grants for disabled facilities.

2) Allocate £249,000 to be spent on mandatory grants for disabled facilities and £50,000 to be used to support urgent discretionary repairs where a property contains a Category 1 Hazard under the Housing Act 2004 and there is a significant risk to the occupier(s).

3) Use the full £299,000 solely for discretionary grants and private sector renewal.

3.5 If it is agreed to allocate £299,000 or £249,000 for mandatory grants this would negate the need to set a 'case review panel'. A case review panel was the suggested mechanism for prioritising the reduced funding.

3.6 Provision of funds to private sector renewal and disabled facilities will improve access to services for vulnerable groups and in particular disabled home occupiers.

4. Implications

4.1 If the Council continues to use all of the 'Private Sector Renewal' funding on disabled facilities this could impact on future funding provision. Private Sector Renewal is delivered in a number of ways including education and information, partnerships, enforcement and grants. The Council's grants policy only gives grants to the most vulnerable people for more urgent works. We currently have a list of people who are in urgent need of assistance but do not have funding at this time to assist.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is recommended to:-

1) Identify the preferred option from those in Section 3.4 for the funding of Private Sector Housing Grants for 2010-11;

2) Defer setting up the case review panel until 2011.

Implications:		
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy		
Good Quality of Life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High Quality Service Delivery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Partnership Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Community Leadership <input type="checkbox"/>
Effective Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities <input type="checkbox"/>
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage <input type="checkbox"/>	
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 1.2 and 2.3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	There is provision within existing budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - 514 inherent risk score - 4 residual risk score - 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities and Human Rights	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph 4.5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal	Power: Housing Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002	
	Other considerations:	
Background Papers:		
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Date: 7 May 2010		
CFO		MO
		CX

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 21)