

# Item 4

**KEY DECISION**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**19TH OCTOBER 2006**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF  
HOUSING**

## **HOUSING PORTFOLIO**

### **DISABLED PERSONS ADAPTATIONS**

#### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, requires Social Service authorities who receive initial applications for either equipment or adaptations to arrange assistance for the provision of applicant needs if necessary, hence it is normal for other organisations, such as a local housing landlords, to receive recommendations for work to be undertaken in relation to its own stock.
- 1.2 In recent years demand for the DPA service has far outreached the available budget. Indeed during the 2006/07 Budget round an additional £303,000 was allocated.
- 1.3 However the agreed budget of £735,000 will be exhausted by the end of September, resulting in the build up of a further backlog of work, if additional funding is not secured.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That an additional £300,000 be made available from Housing Revenue Account balances in order to ensure that all applications for adaptations can be dealt with for the remaining months of 2006/07.

#### **3. DETAIL**

- 3.1 Durham County Council Occupational Therapy Service is responsible for the assessment of the needs of Sedgefield residents with physical disabilities and for providing them with advice, information and where necessary making arrangements for them to receive appropriate equipment or adaptations. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, requires Social Service authorities to arrange assistance, hence it is normal for other organisations, such as a local housing landlords, to receive recommendations for work to be undertaken in relation to its own stock.

3.2 During 2005/06, £432,000 was allocated from the Repairs and Maintenance Budget and whilst that was a significant sum it left the department facing a backlog of work to the value of £485,00 at the end of March 2006. To assist in dealing with this problem the DPA budget for 2006/07 was increased to £735,000. However the agreed budget of £735,000 will be exhausted by the end of September if additional funding is not secured, with the consequence that we would commence next year (2007/08) with a projected 'back log' of work to the value of £271,000.

3.3 The 2006/07 budget of £735,000 has been utilised as follows:-

Backlog - £69,300 per month April – October	£485,100
New requests for work £43,200 per month April – September	£271,200
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£756,300</b>

3.4 In order to address this situation, and permit the Department to continue to address the demand being received it is estimated following meetings with colleagues from Social Services that an additional budget sum of £300,000 is needed this year. That additional injection of monies would permit the Housing Department to deal with the estimated demand for the remainder of this year within the agreed timescales for service delivery.

3.5 A review of this service was undertaken and reported to Management Team in February this year, key recommendations from that review have subsequently been incorporated into the Housing Department Service Improvement Plan. The allocation of additional funding for 2006/07 will provide an opportunity to review the budgetary needs of this element of our service, without the negative impact of an operational backlog from 2007/08 onwards.

3.6 The increased budget this year, 2006/07 (£735,000) has allowed us to eliminate the backlog and deal with requests received since April 2006 within the agreed time scales for the work. The allocation of an additional sum of £300,000 will result in that position being maintained.

3.7 The HRA has a contingency sum of £414,400 for 2006/07 however at this stage of the financial year it has been assumed that the balance on the contingency sum, after accounting for the costs of the job evaluation exercise, will be fully utilised during the year. Therefore any additional funding would need to be allocated from HRA balances currently estimated to be £4.558m at the end of 2006/07.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 No consultation issues have been identified in the preparation of this report.

## 5. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATAIONS

### 5.1 Links to Corporate Objectives/Values

The contents of this report support the community outcome of promoting independent living.

### 5.2 Risk Management

There are no specific factors to take into account.

### 5.3 Health and Safety

No additional implications have been identified.

### 5.4 Equality and Diversity

There are no specific factors to take into account.

### 5.5 Legal and Constitutional

There are no specific factors to take into account.

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**Wards:** All Wards

**Key Decision Validation:** Expenditure over £100,000

**Background Papers:** Not applicable

### **Examination by Statutory Officers:**

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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