

## Private Sector Housing Grants Policy

### Amendment to the Policy

#### Decision under Delegated Powers

#### Officer Making the Decision

Alison Simmons - Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing

#### Recommendation

To approve an amendment as detailed below to the Private Sector Housing Grants Policy (Appendix 4).

#### Reason

To include a new discretionary disabled facility grant criteria Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grants.

#### Authority for Decision

In August 2017, Cabinet approved a new Private Sector Housing Grants Policy and resolved that the delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Private Sector Housing, to make amendments to the Policy.

#### Decision and Date

Signed: 

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing

#### Background

In August 2017, Cabinet approved a new Private Sector Housing Grants Policy that supports the Council's aim to assist the most vulnerable people living in the Private Sector.

This Policy was reviewed and updated in April and July 2020 and following this, a further amendment has been identified which will allow the introduction of a new discretionary disabled facility grant criteria Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grants.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) invited local authorities, registered providers, and their local partners to engage with the next stage of the COVID 19 Rough Sleeping response. The Next Steps

Accommodation Programme makes available the financial resources needed to support local authorities and their partners to do this work.

The overall objectives of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme are to reduce rough sleeping and to seek to ensure rough sleepers brought into emergency accommodation in response to COVID 19, do not return to sleeping rough. As COVID 19 remains a risk, it is essential that people, particularly those who are at increased risk of severe illness, are kept safe.

The Programme, comprised of the two distinct funding streams and aims to bring together a range of solutions, including both short term/interim accommodation and longer term move on options, and the support linked to this accommodation.

For the capital element of the bid the Council were asked to match fund. The bid submitted proposed the use of Better Care Fund Disabled Facility Grant to match fund the Council's bid for Next Steps Accommodation if successful.

The Council have been awarded Next Steps Accommodation Programme funding £586,487 for Charnwood with a requirement to match fund £400,000. The new grant criteria will provide the means to match fund and provide the proposed supported accommodation in accordance with the Council's bid.

The Lead Member has been consulted and has approved the amendments to the Private Sector Housing Grants Policy

### Comments from HR

Not applicable

### Financial Implications

The Council has a Better Care Fund Disability Facility Grant budget of £1,523,300 for 2020-2021 and has therefore adequate resources to finance the grants required for the match funding.

### Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
Increase in the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation and or people sleeping on the street	Very Likely (4)	Major (4)	High (16)	Approve changes to the Private Sector Housing Grants Policy and the use of Better Care Fund Disabled Facility Grant to match fund the Council's bid for Next Steps Accommodation

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers:

Private Sector Housing Grants Policy 2020.

## appendix 4

### Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grants

The inclusion of a new discretionary disabled facility grant criteria Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grants. The Council have been awarded Next Steps Accommodation Programme funding.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) invited local authorities, registered providers, and their local partners to engage with the next stage of the COVID 19 Rough Sleeping response. The Next Steps Accommodation Programme makes available the financial resources needed to support local authorities and their partners to do this work.

The overall objectives of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme is to reduce rough sleeping and to seek to ensure rough sleepers brought into emergency accommodation in response to COVID 19, do not return to sleeping rough. As COVID 19 remains a risk, it is essential that people, particularly those who are at increased risk of severe illness, are kept safe.

The Programme, comprised of the two distinct funding streams and aims to bring together a range of solutions, including both short term/interim accommodation and longer term move on options, and the support linked to this accommodation.

For the capital element of the bid the Council were asked to match fund. The bid submitted proposed the use of Better Care Fund Disabled Facility Grant to match fund the Council's bid for Next Steps Accommodation if successful.

To assist the Council in the delivery of the requirements of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme the need for a means test will temporarily be removed for these Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants.

### Eligible Works

The purposes for which a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant may be given are set out in section 23 (1) of the 1996 Act and fall into a number of categories and these will be used for the purpose of the Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grants to adapt units of accommodation and or the purchase of units that can be adapted:

- Facilitating access to and from the dwelling (which can include a qualifying houseboat, park home or, in the case of a flat, the building in which the flat is located) for example via a ramp or work to the threshold and associated doors.
- Facilitating access to a room used or usable as the principle family room.

- Facilitating access to a room used or usable for sleeping, or alternatively providing such a room for the disabled occupant, for example, a stairlift.
- Facilitating access to a room in which there is a WC, a bath or a shower (or both) and a wash basin, or providing a room in which there is such a facility. For example, a level access shower or over bath shower or a washing WC where self hygiene cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such facility.
- Facilities for the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant where appropriate, for example, lowering worktop or sockets.
- Making the dwelling safe, for example, through the provision of an enhanced alarm system for those with hearing difficulties, or where a disabled person has behavioural problems, minimising the risk of harm through appropriate adaptations.
- Improving any heating system within the dwelling, or providing a heating system to meet the needs of the disabled occupant, for example, the provision of heating to rooms used by the disabled occupant - the main living room, bedroom and bathroom.
- Facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat, for example, by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or providing additional means of control.
- Facilitating access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling in order to care for another person who normally resides there and is in need of such care, for example, to provide access to an area that the disabled occupant would not normally need access to, but which is used by a person to whom they are providing care.
- Facilitating access to the garden for a disabled occupant.

## Amount of Grant

The **maximum** Next Steps Accommodation Match Funding Grant available is **£75,000 per unit of accommodation**.

## Repayment Conditions

There are no repayment conditions. The units of accommodation will be available for a period of 30 years in accordance with the Next Steps Accommodation Programme terms and conditions.

