

REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	3rd OCTOBER 2019	CATEGORY:
REPORT FROM:	ALLISON THOMAS - STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – SERVICE DELIVERY	OPEN
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SUBJECT:	THE BETTER CARE FUND ALLOCATION	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL WARDS	TERMS OF REFERENCE: (See Notes)

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee notes and welcomes the Council's Better Care Fund (BCF) allocation of £792,375 for 2019/20 and the arrangements that are in place to manage the funds.
- 1.2 That the Committee notes the progress on the projects and programmes the Council put in place funded by BCF in 2018/19.
- 1.3 That the Committee endorses a review of the existing Private Sector Housing Renewals and Assistance Policy to enable new schemes and additional Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) peripheral services to be established. The revised document will be brought back to a future Committee.
- 1.4 That the Committee notes that a programme of planned expenditure against the 2019/20 BCF allocation will be brought to November Committee with the associated carry over into 2020/21 to enable new projects to be developed and existing projects to be reviewed and extended where required.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To inform the Committee of the Council's BCF allocation for 2019/20 and how the funds will be managed.
- 2.2 To update the Committee on the progress made in delivering projects and programmes funded from the previous year's BCF allocation.
- 2.3 To inform the Committee of the intention to revise the Private Sector Renewals Assistance Policy that will underpin the additional spend (in addition to mandatory DFGs) within the BCF. This includes the ongoing support of the Mental Health Services currently funded by the BCF and the developing Home from Home scheme

to alleviate pressures on NHS England and Adult Care by preventing hospital admissions and enabling people to leave hospital earlier by offering respite units with care provision whilst the patients housing issues are addressed.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 The links between health and housing are now widely recognised and it is acknowledged that housing conditions have a significant impact on the health outcomes of occupants.
- 3.2 The Council receives an annual allocation of BCF from the County Council that is used for the administration and provision of mandatory DFGs. The allocation for 2019/20 is £792,375. A report on the detail of the DFG scheme will be presented to Finance and Management Committee in October.
- 3.2 This funding allocation can also be used for other purposes as long as it aligns with the principles and purpose of the funding (i.e. promoting independence, keeping people living in their homes for longer and reducing admissions into hospital and Delayed Transfers of Care).
- 3.3 There is currently a significant underspend on BCF funding predicted for 2019/20 and this report, therefore, seeks approval to review the Housing Renewals and Assistance Policy to enable wider use of the funding.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 South Derbyshire has an aging population who are choosing to remain independently living in their own homes for longer.
- 4.2 In the soon to be published Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the District the population projections predict increases in population in people over 60 years old in South Derbyshire for the period up to 2028. In the 60-64 age group an approximate increase in population of 39% is projected and in the 80-84 age group an approximate increase of 69%.
- 4.3 The BCF allocation is capital funding from the County Council that can be used for a range of services that focus on promoting independence, preventing hospital admissions and reducing delayed transfers of care from hospital. The BCF also incorporates the funding for the provision of mandatory DFG's.
- 4.4 The current underspend has arisen from an accumulation of BCF capital during 2015/16 and 2016/17 where there was limited capacity to take forward projects. This underspend is now being addressed and although the balance is still a significant amount, new schemes have now been established and the Council is significantly ahead of other local authorities within the County in terms of the innovative use of the BCF to fund new schemes. In addition to DFG's that were approved last year the BCF is currently funding the following;
 - The South Derbyshire Mental Health Prevention Service
 - The Healthy Homes Programme
 - The Private Sector Housing Needs Research.

The new schemes have had really positive outcomes for residents who were facing crisis and will continue to be funded and expanded in the future. South Derbyshire

has had positive feedback from the County Council regarding the proposed use of the BCF to fund a range of new services and posts that will be brought back to the November Committee following approval at the Countywide BCF Programme Board in October. The Council is in a position to make a significant impact in terms of tackling fuel poverty and reducing health inequality across the District by using this resource to develop new schemes and expand on existing services and housing interventions across a number of service areas within the Council.

4.5 DFGs are mandatory grants available from the Council to provide adaptations or access to facilities in the homes of disabled people who meet the required qualification criteria in order to support them to live independently at home for as long as possible. The most common types of adaptations are stair lifts, ramps and level access showers, however works to a property can include:

- facilitating access to the property;
- making the property safe;
- accessing the home including bedroom, living room, toilet, bathing and washing facilities;
- access to prepare and cook food;
- providing or improving heating;
- accessing electrical sockets, lighting and heating controls; and
- facilitating access for care.

4.6 The Council must assess whether the works are deemed as 'necessary and appropriate' to meet the needs of the disabled person and if the works are 'reasonable and practicable' given the age and condition of the property.

4.7 The grant is means tested for adults to determine if they can contribute towards the cost of the works, however applications for disabled children under the age of 19 are exempt from this test. The maximum grant available under current legislation is £30,000.

4.8 The mandatory DFG is governed by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 which clearly states how grants are to be administered by the local authority. In 2002 the Regulatory Reform Order for Housing Assistance (RRO) was brought in to give local authorities more freedom to spend outside the scope of the mandatory DFG and to address other housing issues through grant delivery. This scope was extended further in 2008 to use the DFG allocation for wider purposes. The BCF was introduced in 2013 and the DFG is now incorporated into this single pooled budget that supports health and social care services to work more closely in local areas.

4.9 It is intended to develop a range of projects and programmes for consideration by the next meeting of this Committee.

4.10 The BCF and its associated projects will be monitored by a newly established internal working group chaired by the Strategic Director (Service Delivery) with representation from Housing Services, Cultural and Community Services, Environmental Health and Strategic Housing.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The BCF balance is listed in the following table and outlines expenditure incurred against all approved projects as at 31st March 2019. Additional funding through BCF has been received during 2019/20 totalling £792,375 and it is assumed that further

funding for DFGs is likely to be received later in the year from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

	2016.17 £	2017.18 £	2018.19 £
Funding			
B/fwd Balance	85,112	468,957	792,552
BCF Grant	615,337	674,829	734,320
DCLG Funding	0	71,885	88,434
Second Homes Funding	124,000	0	0
	824,449	1,215,671	1,615,306
Projects			
Disabled Facility Grants and other Works	- 355,492	-423,119	-416,446
Discretionary Top-up Grants for under 18's	0	0	0
Healthy Homes Project	0	0	0
DFG Associated Preventative Works	0	0	0
Establishing a Hospital to Home Scheme	0	0	0
Dedicated Mental Health Worker	0	0	-13,407
Additional Technical Officer	0	0	-31,936
Integrated Adaptations of New Build Social Housing	0	0	0
Countrywide Stock Modelling Report	0	0	-2,500
	- 355,492	-423,119	-464,289
C/fwd Balance	468,957	792,552	1,151,017

The balance of funding to be spent during 2019/20 stands at £1,943,392. Although it is likely that DFGs and other projects that are underway will spend a proportion of this in year, it is extremely unlikely that the full balance will be utilised and therefore a significant carry forward will be required.

6.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

- 6.1 The employment implications of the allocation of BCF funds will be outlined at the future Committee when the programme of proposed projects is presented for consideration.

Legal Implications

- 6.2 The creation of any new scheme or service provision will be subject to approval by the BCF Board and future ratification by this Committee. Legal services will be consulted and will advise, as appropriate on any legal implications associated with the establishment of new services.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 6.3 The proposals contained within this report will have a direct positive links to the following actions contained in the Corporate Plan;

- Place – to facilitate and deliver a range of integrated housing and community infrastructure
- People – to enable people to live independently

Risk Impact

- 6.3 The Council is required to provide assurances to Derbyshire County Council (DCC) through the approval of quarterly assurance plans at BCF Board. There is a risk that the significant amount of accrued underspend may be revoked and redistributed under s75 of the NHS Act 2006 if the Council failed to spend the allocation or provided the required assurances that the funding will be spent.
- 6.4 In mitigation the Council meets regularly with DCC to update it on progress on the delivery of projects and programmes funded by the BCF and there has been no indication given, to date, to officers that DCC intends to request a return of this fund given the outcomes that the Council is delivering.

7.0 Community Impact

Social Value Impact

- 7.1 The approval of the above the recommendations and associated schemes established from this and subsequent reports will have a direct impact on the Council's priority for Healthier Communities within the Sustainable Communities Strategy 2009 – 2029. Any schemes developed alongside the mandatory DFGs will be shaped to ensure they reduce health inequalities for people living in poor condition homes in the private sector and improve health outcomes for tenants and owner occupiers across the district.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 There are widely recognised links between poor housing and ill health. It is likely that the new posts and schemes that will be brought for consideration by the next Housing and Community Services Committee will bring positive health impacts and prevent the need for costly crisis intervention and acute care.
- 8.2 The Clinical Commissioning Group and Adult Social Care are now engaged with Housing Services and Strategic Housing to establish new ways of working that will have a positive impact on older people, people living with long term health conditions and vulnerable groups across the District.
- 8.3 Approval of the recommendations contained in this report will enable officers to seek approval to utilise the BCF allocation more effectively and innovatively to ensure prevention services and new schemes that offer housing interventions are promoted to improve health outcomes for those living in unfit or unsuitable housing conditions.

8.0 Background Papers

