

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i></p>	<p>Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities</p> <p>Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives</p> <p>Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy</p> <p>The proposal is to deliver a stronger service for home adaptations to more residents, to enhance quality of life, health and wellbeing. The proposal allows for continued use of local builders to carry out these works.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>The proposals were developed in partnership with Hertfordshire District and Borough Councils and Hertfordshire County Council. Initial findings from ongoing consultation as part of the project development are:</p> <p>Feedback from service users (people who are currently going through the process and former applicants) is being gathered to inform the design process. A key aim of the HIA proposal is to simplify the process to make it easier to navigate and it is important, therefore, to be aware of where customers experience difficulties. Although the investigation is still in its very early stages, feedback so far indicate that customers find poor communication between parts of the service (even where individual professionals are seen as being helpful), a lack of understanding of the whole household's needs, unreasonable delays, and an adversarial approach to agreeing what is able to be done. They also feel that they are not sufficiently advised of what they are eligible for, there is a lack of choice and involvement during the process, and that the application process itself is not clear. The new service is being designed to establish a new way of working that will address these concerns, and evidence from other areas of the country who have adopted an integrated approach report considerable improvement in positive customer feedback.</p> <p>The above findings relate to Hertfordshire so are not</p>

	specific to East Herts.
Legal:	The proposal seeks to continue to meet statutory obligations for Disabled Facilities Grants under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 2004, and to better meet joint obligations under the Care Act 2014.
Financial:	<p>See Corporate Business Scrutiny report. The Council's Finance team has worked closely with colleagues in the other participating districts and the County Council to pull together and scrutinise the financial case for the shared HIA. The overall business case is predicated on East Herts using current revenue and capital resources allocated for the processing and payment of DFGs as the Council's contribution to the HIA.</p> <p>It will be imperative to review the funding arrangement on a regular basis.</p>
Human Resource:	See Corporate Business Scrutiny report. There are TUPE and re-location implications for at least one member of staff. The agency is most likely to be located at the Hertfordshire County Council offices in Stevenage, with touch-down bases in the District/Borough offices. There are other staff affected whose duties currently include DFG functions but to a lesser percentage than would trigger TUPE. HR officers have been involved during the review.
Risk Management:	The overall project group has considered the risks of the project and risk log is regularly reviewed.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The DFG service contributes directly to the health and wellbeing of affected residents. Improvements in service through the proposal aim to address needs of residents with disabilities.