

Agenda Item No: 6

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DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER

11 March 2015

REPORT OF THE ACTING STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR ADULT CARE

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TOWARDS ADAPTATION TO HOME – MR H

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval for additional costs of £44,050 to provide a major adaptation to the home of a disabled service user – Mr H.

2. Information and Analysis

Mr H lives with his wife and 12 year old son in an owner-occupied house which needs to be adapted for Mr H. Mr H is unable to work because of his disabilities and his wife has given up work to provide care for him. Their only income is from benefits and they have little/no savings. They would be unable to meet the costs of adapting their home to meet Mr H's complex needs. They have completed an initial test of resources for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) which has indicated that they will not need to contribute towards this grant. This grant is administered by South Derbyshire District Council the cost of the adaptations will exceed the grant limit of £30,000. Additional funding is therefore needed to enable these adaptations to be completed.

Twelve years ago, Mr H sustained a severe brain injury in a motorbike accident. He now has multiple and complex disabilities. There was no compensation following the accident. Mr H needs assistance from carers with all aspects of his daily life. He needs to use a hoist for all transfers and a wheelchair for all mobility. He needs support from 1 or 2 carers with all daily activities. His injury has resulted in cognitive impairment affecting his verbal communication, memory, concentration and his ability to process new information. Mr H can become frustrated and upset which can lead to challenging behaviour. As his needs are very complex, he is supported by a package of care paid for by Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

When Mr H was discharged from hospital his home was adapted to meet his needs at that time. He has been using a through floor lift to access his first floor bedroom and wet floor shower room. This lift is now old and regularly requires costly repairs. These repairs are currently being completed by Derbyshire County Council. Mr and Mrs H have completed a disability related expenditure assessment and as a result of this they are now exempt from paying for maintenance for both the hoist and vertical lift.

The lift is only used very occasionally as Mr and Mrs H do not trust the lift as it breaks down so regularly. The last time the lift was used was to enable Mr H to attend his son's parents evening at school. On returning home the lift would not work and Mr H was stuck downstairs for approximately 4 hours before engineers could repair it. Mr H is largely restricted to a first-floor existence, unable to be with his family at meal times etc. If Mr H were to remain on the ground floor he would not have access to his hoist or any washing/showering facilities. He would also need to have his specialist bed placed in the main/only living room, which would provide no privacy for his personal care activities to be completed.

Over the past 12 years, Mr H's situation has altered and now the lift is too small to accommodate his current wheelchair. Mr H is 6ft 4" tall and needs to have a large electric wheelchair which is able to tilt in space. He is unable to operate the wheelchair himself. The controls need to be operated by his carer. The first floor bathroom is also no longer suitable for Mr H as he is unable to sit on the toilet or use the wash basin. On discharge from hospital, Mr H was unable to use the toilet and needed to use a tilt-in space shower

chair/commode. He has received physiotherapy continuously since his accident and he has gained good sitting balance. Mr H would now be able to sit on the toilet rather than using a pad when lying in bed. Mr H would also like to be able to access the wash basin with his carer at his side supporting him to complete as much of his personal care as he is able to, for example brushing teeth and washing hands with support. There is insufficient space for a carer to be positioned next to Mr H in the bathroom to assist.

Initially the option of replacing the lift with a new, larger lift was explored along with adapting the layout of the shower room. This option is not feasible as there is no space internally for a larger lift to be located and planning permission will not be granted for a 2-storey extension to house the larger lift owing to the proximity of the neighbouring property.

Plans have been created for a ground floor extension consisting of a bedroom and shower room for Mr H. This extension needs to be larger than usual due to the size of Mr H's wheelchair and necessity of a 2m turning circle. In addition, enough space is required for 2 carers and his physiotherapist to assist him with rehabilitation. A tracking hoist will also be needed to enable Mr H to transfer and access all of the facilities in the bathroom.

The building of the extension is complicated by the fact that there is a drain running along the rear of the property which will need to be moved or altered to allow the extension to be built. The building works will also be more expensive as the only access to the rear of the property, where the extension needs to be built, is through the house. Because of this, builders will not be able to use machinery to dig the foundations and they will need to manually transport the waste and materials through the house.

3. Financial Considerations

The total cost is likely to be approximately £70,500. This includes building works of £65,000 and cost of tracking hoist of £5,500.

The DFG limit is £30,000.

£44,050 (£40,500 plus £7,050 contingency) is therefore requested to enable these essential adaptations to be completed.

These figures are approximate as confirmation of funding is needed before tenders can be requested.

This contribution would be subject to a legal charge being placed on the property for 10 years on a claw-back basis, reducing by 10% each year.

4. Legal Considerations

The Council has a statutory duty under section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 to arrange adaptations to the home of a disabled person in circumstances such as these. It is possible for this duty to be fully discharged by the provision of a DFG. However, if the DFG funding is insufficient to fully meet the assessed needs of the disabled person then the duty of the Council under the 1970 Act remains. The Council is therefore under a legal obligation to make up the difference between the value of the DFG and the full costs of the adaptation as set out in this report.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: - prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, and transport considerations. This info looks like it should go in the body of the report.

6. Key Decision

No.

7. Call-in

No

- 8.** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

9. Background Papers *(this is not required if the report is exempt)*

Assessment information available from professional assessments

10. OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That approval be given for additional funding to enable the adaptation to be made to the home of Mr H as detailed in this report.

**Mary McElvaney
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MATLOCK**