

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET FOR ADULT CARE

3 August 2010

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – ADULT CARE

**FUTURE MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR STAIR-LIFTS,
HOISTS AND VERTICAL LIFTS**

ADULT CARE

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to undertake formal consultation regarding proposed changes to provision of financial support for the provision of maintenance of stair-lifts, hoists and vertical lifts. .

2. Information and Analysis

Background

A review of the way the Council helps people to maintain stair-lifts and other lifting equipment (hoists and vertical lifts) has been undertaken to inform service development and ensure the most effective use of resources in line with national and local policy objectives. The review covered the arrangements for future stairlift and lifting equipment installations as well as maintenance of lifting equipment which has previously been installed in peoples own homes which is no longer covered by a manufacturers' guarantee and is maintained and serviced by the County Council.

Our Health, Our Choice Our Say (2006) sets out national social care policy and the vision for more personalised and flexible support is outlined in the *Putting People First* Concordat. *Making Care Personal: Your Choice Your Life* national policy sets out the vision and values underpinning Adult Care services for the future.

Lifting equipment makes an important contribution to the independence, choice and control people have. During the financial year 2009-10 the council spent £806,000 on maintaining lifting equipment. Changing the way this money is spent will assist the Council to make better use of resources and contribute to the efficiencies programme for 2010-14, which currently requires Adult Care to achieve nearly £20m of efficiency savings.

Current arrangements

As a result of new contract arrangements introduced from 1st July all new recipients of stair-lifts get a standard twelve month guarantee. After this people will have the option to purchase extended warranties of up to five years at the time of installation from the stair-lift company. The cost of an additional 12 months will be £122.

In addition there are approximately 2500 individual residents who have over 2800 pieces of equipment in their homes. People are currently eligible to have the equipment maintained and repaired either by the Council directly or by a contractor funded by the Council. People receive this service without any charge.

The current range of equipment maintained is as follows:

- 2328 households with stair-lifts
- 170 households with vertical lifts
- 307 households with hoists

The cost of maintaining the equipment installed is currently £806,000 and is rising year on year.

In proposing future arrangements we have considered the scope to change the arrangements for existing users as well as new users to achieve an equitable position as well as achieving efficiency savings in the medium term as well as capping the year on year rise in expenditure.

Proposed Future arrangements

It is recommended that Cabinet approves consultation on the following proposals:-

- For all installations from 1st July onwards individuals will be advised that they should take advantage of the 5 year extended warranty on offer.
- That the Council will offer a maintenance agreement for equipment installed before 1st July on the same basis as those offered an extended warranty (approximately £122 per annum).
- Some people may not have the means to pay for the maintenance service and consultation will seek to establish an appropriate hardship test.

The consultation on stairlifts will be integrated into the wider consultation on co-funding, FACS eligibility and disabled facilities grants. The proposals for this consultation are set out in the report on 'Sustainability for the Provision of Personalised Adult Social Care and Personal Budgets'. This is an extensive programme of consultation involving service users, their families and the voluntary sector.

3. Financial Considerations

The cost to the Council during 2009/10 for the provision of maintenance of stair lifts, hoists and vertical lifts was £806,000.

The level of saving as a result of these new arrangements will increase over time. The amount of savings will depend on decisions made following the results of the consultation process.

4. Legal Considerations

The Director of Legal Services has advised that when considering this report Members should have due regard to protecting and providing the welfare and interests of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

6 .Background Papers

None

7. Key Decision

Yes

8. Call-in

No.

9. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/S

That Cabinet approves a formal consultation about the proposals outlined in the report for the future maintenance arrangements for stair-lifts, hoists and vertical lifts. A further report on the outcome of the consultation will be brought back to Cabinet for a final decision.

Bill Robertson
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