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| Council name | COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL |
| Name and date of Committee | CABINET – 9 JANUARY 2025 |
| Subject | DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT POLICY |
| Wards affected | All Wards |
| Accountable member | Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning email: Juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk |
| Accountable officer | Susan Hughes, Business Manager Support and Advice and Designated Safeguarding Lead email: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk |
| Report author | Paula Massey, Enabling Manager and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead email: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk |
| Summary/Purpose | <p>To seek Cabinet approval for the implementation of the updated Disabled Facilities Grant Policy.</p> <p>The Policy brings all Gloucestershire districts together to ensure equity for people with disabilities and enable a countywide statement of intent, (local delivery differences where appropriate) and is presented following template guidance from Foundations, the National Body for Disabled Facilities Grants in England.</p> |
| Annexes | Annex A - The Updated Policy Annex B – The Equalities Impact Assessment |
| Recommendation(s) | <p>That Cabinet resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve the updated Disabled Facilities Grant Policy, subject to availability of Disabled Facilities Grant funding from the Better Care fund annual allocation.2. Continue to delegate authority to approve Discretionary Disabled Facility Grant funding as per the Council's Constitution. |



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| | <p>Up to £2,500 - Service Manager/Lead Up to £10,000 - Head of Service/Business Manager Up to £50,000 – Assistant Director/Director Over £50,000 – Section 151 Officer and CEO</p> <p>3. Approve the key updates to the policy that:</p> <p>a) Mandatory Grants - where the applicant is an owner occupier, and the grant value is over £5,000 a local land charge up to £10,000 may apply for 10 years</p> <p>b) Discretionary Grants – a local land charge may apply dependent upon the nature and value of the DDFG as outlined in Appendix B – Types of Assistance.</p> |
| Corporate priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting Communities |
| Key Decision | NO |
| Exempt | NO |
| Consultees/Consultation | <p>The Council has a Statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants.</p> <p>This policy has been developed through consultation with Gloucestershire County Council, the NHS and all the six district councils in the County.</p> |



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Council has a Statutory Duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)
- 1.2** A DFG is a capital grant contributing to the cost of home adaptations, to enable eligible disabled people to continue living safely and independently.
- 1.3** The DFG is available to disabled people of all ages in all housing tenures, depending on eligibility.
- 1.4** All organisations involved in the delivery of DFGs meet through the DFG Forum, which comprises representatives from six Districts; Occupational Therapy Service (Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust on behalf of Adult Social Care); Integrated Commissioning Team from GCC and the ICB.
- 1.5** This updated Policy has come from work within the DFG Forum's ensure equity of provision across the county and sets out how the grant will be coordinated, enable innovation and flexibility in the use of the DDFG, allowing for local differences where applicable. It will result in a Gloucestershire County Statement of Intent that all districts will align to.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The legislative framework for DFGs is provided by the [Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996](#). The Act explicitly covers Mandatory DFGs (MDFGs), aiding disabled people, once the criteria of the adaptation being 'necessary and appropriate' and 'reasonable and practical' has been fulfilled.
- 2.2** An application for a DFG will go through a test of resources (Means Test) unless the applicant is a child or is an adult on certain benefits where a means test does not apply.
- 2.3** To promote greater discretion and flexibility beyond the mandatory requirements, the [Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2002](#), gave options to adopt discretionary policies with regard to housing interventions to promote independent living and wellbeing. The Policy follows the rules in the Regulatory Reform Order, setting out clearly what discretionary assistance is available, with relevant eligibility criteria.
- 2.4** The 2019 DFG Policy was approved by Cabinet on 2nd September 2019. However, to remain relevant it needs to evolve.



People's needs are changing. Demographic predictions indicate that over the next 20 years there will be a disproportionate growth in the older population. Within Cotswolds, the largest increase will be in those aged 85 and over (99%). [How is the population of Gloucestershire going to change over next 25 years? | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

- 2.5** Severely disabled children and their families can face a challenging situation in finding housing with insufficient accessible housing available across the district. The DFG is used to extend properties for these families and these building costs far exceed the mandatory £30,000 limit. This need is addressed within the Policy through discretionary top up grants.
- 2.6** The aims of this updated Policy are to provide financial assistance through MDFGs and DDFGs to:
- Improve and adapt homes.
 - Help disabled people to have an improved quality of life, live more confidently, remain healthier and safer in their own homes.
 - Reduce the requirement for domiciliary and residential care.
 - Enable disabled people to live more independently and with dignity in their own homes.
 - Contribute to a reduction in hospital admissions and facilitate quicker hospital discharges, which help to improve patient outcomes and reduce the burden on the NHS.
 - Receive equity of provision across the county of Gloucestershire.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1** The funding source is from the Annual Capital grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government through the Better Care Fund.
- 3.2** The DFG provides capital funding for the provision of home adaptations. It can only fund capital expenditure and is ring-fenced for Disabled Facilities Grants.
- 3.3** Chief Executives from all District Authorities agreed to pool funding at a county level to drive better health outcomes as set out in the Better Care Fund.
- 3.4** The amount provided to local authorities for DFG's has trebled nationally since 2012 and is not expected to decrease.



4. Our first obligation and priority are to deliver Mandatory DFG's. We will support the offer of DDFGs. However, we would not promote this discretionary assistance at the expense of the statutory mandatory function.
- 4.1 Gloucestershire has in place an agreement to pool budget for DFGs. This is managed by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) as a part of the Better Care Fund (BCF). This arrangement enables innovative use at a county level prior to funding allocation to each district.
- 4.2 Decisions on financial allocation are made in strict accordance with the agreed BCF spending plan between the County Council and the ICB. Any changes will be made through these agreed governance structures and published on Council websites.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 the Council has a duty to administer the DFG.
- 5.2 Under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, the Council is given discretionary powers on the use of the Grant.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There are no significant risks.
- 6.2 The policy details eligibility criteria, conditions, and procedures that apply to both MDFGs and DDFGs.
- 6.3 The policy is designed to be sufficiently flexible to allow consideration of any future changes to local strategic needs, government policy or legislation.
- 6.4 The policy is robust and allows for 'waiting lists' should funding not be available.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1 See Annex B for the full Equalities Impact Assessment report.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Contribute to tackling fuel poverty and climate change by improving energy efficiency of homes in the district, utilising DFG budget for the Warm and Well countywide programme.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS



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9.1 None

(END)