

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Changes to Policy– Community Impact

To identify whether a policy review/change will impact on all sections of the local community equally and agree what action can be taken to better understand the impact and to reduce any inequalities.

### About the Policy

<b>Name of Policy</b>	Disabled Facilities Grant Policy 2016
<b>Name of Officer responsible for EIA</b>	Carol Hughes
<b>What is the purpose of the policy?</b>	The policy sets out how BMBC provides both mandatory and discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants for private sector residential (home) adaptations. The policy has been developed to ensure fair, equitable and consistent treatment for all disabled people who require the Council's assistance to adapt their home.

### About the Policy Review

<b>Why is the policy being reviewed / changing?</b>	Following an independent review of the Disabled Facilities Grant processes (DFGs) it was recognised that a broader policy was needed to assist Officers with the interpretation and implementation of legislation relating to the adaptation of the homes of disabled people.
<b>How is the policy changing / likely to change?</b>	<p>A fast track grants process for specific equipment has been proposed</p> <p>An increase in discretionary funding from the current £5k limit to £10k</p>
<b>What will this change mean for customers / the public?</b>	Eligible applicants, their families, and carers will benefit from a fast track grants process for some adaptations/equipment and therefore need is met more quickly.

	<p>In certain circumstances applicants will be able to consider home adaptation when previously cost was a barrier.</p> <p>Funding can be extended to cover heating / home insulation systems etc.</p>
<b>When will this be taking place (start and finish)?</b>	<p>It is anticipated if the policy is approved by Cabinet the policy will be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017</p>

## What We Already Know About the Equality Impact of the Policy

<p><b>Policy feedback:</b></p> <p>What do you already know about the equality impact of the policy? This could be from consultation, complaints / compliments, stakeholder feedback, staff anecdotal evidence etc.</p>	<p>This policy is only applicable to disabled adults and children.</p> <p>Introduction of fast track processes and increases in discretionary funding have been proposed to better manage the demand for adaptations with the rise in the discretionary funding limit increasing access to adaptations for some.</p>
<p><b>Data:</b></p> <p>What evidence is available about equality impact of the policy and what does it tell you? This could be service performance monitoring data, it could demographic data (as shown in <u>ward profiles</u>), etc.</p>	<p>Data has shown that 70% of DFG's were for adaptations to the homes of older people.</p> <p><u>Existing DFG Implementation Policy &amp; DFG Provision:</u></p> <p>The DFG team receive approx. 25 referrals a months and the majority of these are categorised as standard referrals and the average waiting time from referral to grant application is 14 months.</p>
<p><b>Previous EIA's:</b></p> <p>Has there already been an EIA on all or part of this policy before, or a related policy? If so, what were the main issues and actions it identified?</p>	<p>There has been no EIA on this policy (new) related policy - <u>Equipment &amp; Adaptations Guidelines</u></p> <p>Socio-Economic - Identified there is an issue with longer waiting times for adaption work to be completed for disabled people in private tenures than for tenants of Berneslai Homes properties and that affordability of adaptations for disabled people living in private tenures was identified as an issue due to the legislative requirements of DFG's and grant limits.</p>

## Assessment of Equality Impact

Protection from unlawful discrimination is provided by the Equality Act in relation to the following characteristics:

- disability
- age
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity, breastfeeding
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

An “equal” policy is one where those who **need** to use the policy the most **do** use the policy the most.

What do you know about the extent to which the above groups need to use your policy? What do you know about the extent to which they do use your policy? And is there a gap between the two? How will the policy change affect this?

Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants is only applicable to disabled people who meet the eligibility criteria for a grant, this is governed by legislation.

Others affected by the policy include – families, Formal & Informal Carers, Health and Social Care professionals/staff

Data shows that there is a higher take up of DFG’s by older people

The proposed policy change will provide greater flexibility in how grants are administered and potentially increase access to DFG’s for parents / carers of children with disabilities and younger people with disabilities.

An “equal” policy is one where people are equally likely to receive the desired outcomes (whether these outcomes are positive or negative for the employee).

What do you know about the outcomes your policy achieves for customers or the public? How will the policy change affect this?

- Eligible disabled people living in Barnsley, their families and carers will benefit from a fast track grant process for some adaptations / equipment as there assessed need (s) will be met more quickly.
- Increasing the discretionary funding limit will make adaptations more affordable /accessible.
- A greater number of disabled and vulnerable people will be able to benefit from DFG services
- Promote greater independence & safety within the home for disabled people
- Enable disabled people to remain living in their own homes for longer.
- Enable disabled parents to care for their children
- Support for the family unit and provide help for carers
- Reduce social isolation
- Support hospital discharge
- Support the health & wellbeing of disabled people

## Appendix 2

Which of the following groups have you identified a potential inequality for? What is the current level of inequality or impact and what is it likely to be after the policy change? Please indicate the degree of potential inequality. (H – high, M – medium, L- low, N – none)			
Group	Now	After	Details of impact and/or inequality
Men	N	N	
Women	N	N	
Disabled people	L	L	Socio-economic – disabled people living in private tenures who are eligible for DFGs will experience reduced waiting times for some adaptations and access to adaptations (affordability) in some circumstances will be increased.
BME people	N	N	
LGP people	N	N	
Trans people	N	N	
Young People	N	N	
Older people	N	N	
Faith groups	N	N	
Pregnancy / maternity	N	N	
Other: Eg carers, homeless, military, low incomes	N	N	

## Next Steps

### To improve you knowledge about the equality impact . . .

Actions could include: community engagement with affected groups, analysis of performance data, improve equality monitoring, stakeholder focus group etc.

Action taken so far:	Lead Officer	Completion date
Review of Service Delivery & processes	C. Hughes	March 2016
Grant Data	S. Vellensworth	October 2016
Action we will take:	Lead Officer	Completion date
Increase opportunities to obtain & improve the quality of Customer Feedback	C. Hughes	September 2017
Introduce a Case Worker role within DFG team to provide additional support to vulnerable applicants	C. Hughes	April 2017

### To improve or mitigate the equality impact . . .

Actions could include: altering the policy to protect affected group, limiting scope of policy change, reviewing actual impact in future, phasing-in changes over period of time etc.

Action taken so far:	Lead Officer	Completion date
Revisions made within the policy to take account of access to and affordability of grants / adaptations	Carol Hughes	Completed
Action we will take:	Lead Officer	Completion date
Ensure review of the implications on delivery of the policy of an aging population and the increasing needs of carers / families with a disabled child	Carol Hughes	Annual review of DFG data from date of policy implementation
Continue to report against pre- determined PI and evaluate service activity to support continuous service improvement	Carol Hughes	Quarterly reporting
Develop an annual review process for Customer Feedback to identify any trends and any equality issues arising from these.	Carol Hughes / Case Worker	September 2016

## Appendix 2

## The Public Sector Equality Duty

**As a result of this EIA how have you demonstrated due regard to the need to:**

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation?	<p>By implementing a local DFG policy.</p> <p>By taking account of the individual needs of DFG applicants and by removing or minimising some of the reported barriers to access and affordability issues associated with DFG funded home adaptations.</p> <p>Case Worker support available for DFG applicants.</p>
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?	Provision of DFG Information
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?	DFG Service involvement in Service User Forums and Focus Groups.

## Reporting and Publishing

Please summarise the main findings and next steps identified in this EIA.

The outcomes of this EIA must be summarised in the cabinet report or delegated decision report which approves the proposed policy changes. You could also include the EIA as an appendix to the report or reference it as a background paper.

You must also record how you will inform all stakeholders of the outcome of this EIA. In practice this is usually best achieved when reporting the policy change itself.

<b>Summary of equality impact</b>	It has been highlighted that some disabled people particularly those in private tenures and the parents/carers of disabled children do experienced issues associated with affordability and access to home adaptations as a result of high demand for DFG services and the legislative requirements governing DFG's.
<b>Summary of next steps</b>	<p>Obtain approval from Cabinet to implement the Disabled Facilities Policy 2016.</p> <p>Establish Case Worker role for DFG's to provide additional support for DFG applicants</p> <p>Increase opportunities to obtain and improve Customer Feedback</p> <p>Continue to report on and evaluate DFG activity</p> <p>Develop an annual review process for DFG Customer Feedback, identify (and act on) trends and any equality issues.</p>
<b>How stakeholders will be informed</b>	<p>Disabled Facilities Grant Service published Information on Policy changes</p> <p>Policy information cascade to Service User Forums / Focus Groups</p>
<b>How Cabinet will be informed</b>	Performance Reports