

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 10

meeting date: THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2019  
title: PROPOSE AN INCREASE TO THE DFG ALLOCATION FOR RIBBLE VALLEY ADAPTATION GRANTS  
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING  
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT – HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Committee that the budget of £80,000 for Ribble Valley Adaptations has been fully committed and to recommend that a further £50,000 is allocated to this year's spending allocation.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
  - Community Objectives – To address housing needs in the borough, by adapting people's homes to enable them to stay living independently.
  - Corporate Priorities – To be a well-managed Council.
  - Other Considerations – To ensure that the budget is monitored regularly and the full allocation of the Better Care Fund is committed.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2018 Members approved a discretionary disabled facilities grant policy which made available a discretionary Ribble Valley Adaptation grant. This grant is up to a maximum of £5,000 and is to fund one item or one adaptation and is not means tested.
- 2.2 At the March 2019 Health and Housing Committee it was approved that from the 2019/20 DFG budget, an initial allocation of £80,000 would be allocated to fund Ribble Valley Adaptations. DFG spend is monitored constantly and there is a monthly review meeting. At the review meeting in July it was identified that the commitment of spend on RVA's was close to grant maximum and therefore no further RVA applications have been taken until the position was reported to Committee.

### 3 ISSUES

- 3.1 To date there have been 15 RVA recommendations received by the Council from Occupational Therapists since the monitoring identified that the allocation for RVA's had been committed. Of the 15 recommendations, 3 have been highlighted as urgent cases.
- 3.2 The proposal is to increase the allocation of DFG funding for Ribble Valley Adaptation grants. The grant allocated for RVA's was £80,000 for 2019/20, therefore it is proposed that a further £50,000 is allocated to the fund.
- 3.3 The budget will continue to be closely monitored and should the high demand for RVA's continue then it may be the amount allocated may need to be reported to

Committee for a further review again. However, as mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants must remain the priority and as the number and value of recommendations is unknown, we will continue to keep Committee informed of the position.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Important the Council utilise the Better Care Fund allocation for Ribble Valley in 2019/20 and assist as many households as possible to remain living independently.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – All applicants are offered support to deal with the technical and legal requirements of the adaptation.
- Political – Ribble Valley Borough Council is keen to assist as many households as possible.
- Reputation – The Council has developed a good reputation for efficient delivery of adaptations.
- Equality & Diversity – Since the introduction of the new policy the number of households assisted has increased significantly. In 2017/18, 23 DFG grants were approved and in 2018/19, 73 households were assisted with grants.

#### 5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Approve the expenditure of a further £50,000 on Ribble Valley Adaptation grants. The total allocation for RVA's in 2019/20 will be £140,000.

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