

EXECUTIVE

DATE: 25TH APRIL 2005

SUBJECT: REFERENCE FROM DISABILITY ADVISORY AND ACCESS FORUM - REDUCTION OF THE SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET FOR EQUIPMENT INSTALLED UNDER A DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE (HEAD OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY)

CONTACT OFFICER: MATT HUSSEY 01582 546032

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL

STAFFING

EQUALITIES ✓

COMMUNITY SAFETY

FINANCIAL ✓

RISKS ✓

OTHER

CONSULTATIONS:

COUNCILLORS CONSULTED

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
CONSULTED**

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

LEAD EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S): COUNCILLOR J. DAVIES

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Executive is recommended to:-

- (i) Reconsider the Council's decision to reduce the servicing and maintenance budget for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant in consultation with the Disability Advisory and Access Forum.**

- (ii) **Note the Disability Advisory and Access Forum's disappointment in the Councils decision to reduce the servicing and maintenance budget for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant.**

REPORT

2. At its meeting held on 7th April 2005 the Disability Advisory and Access Forum considered an oral report by the Chair with regard to the reduction of the servicing and maintenance budget for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant.
3. Members of the Forum raised concern that that any reduction in budget for the servicing and maintenance for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant would have an adverse affect on disabled people in Luton and felt that the Councils' decision to reduce the budget was a backwards step.
4. The Executive should be aware that the servicing and maintenance for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant is not a statutory function, whilst the provision of a Disabled Facilities Grant remained a statutory function and continued to be a part of the Council's overall provision for grants which has a budget of £2.2 million for 2005/06.
5. The Disability Advisory and Access Forum resolved:
 - “(i) That the report be noted.
 - (ii) That the Executive be requested to reconsider the Councils decision to reduce the of the servicing and maintenance budget for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant in consultation with the Disability Advisory and Access Forum.
 - (iii) That the Executive be made aware of the Disability Advisory and Access Forum's disappointment in the Councils decision to reduce the of the servicing and maintenance budget for equipment installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no legal implications for this report as agreed by the Head of Legal Services on Wednesday 13th April, 2005.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7. The Disability Advisory and Access Forum believe that this decision will severely affect the ability of some disabled people to live independently in their own homes.

FINACIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. The 2004/5 budget for this maintenance was £40,000. There is no budget for 2005/6. Council approved the budget reduction as part of the 2005/6 budget. Should this decision be changed, an alternative reduction would be required to maintain the 2005/6 budget position.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

9. Clients may cease to service/maintain the equipment (which becomes their property) installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant. This may eventually lead to the equipment becoming dangerous or the life expectancy of the lift being reduced and the Council being asked to fund a further Disabled Facilities Grant sooner than it would otherwise have to.

OPTIONS

10. To accept the recommendations of the Disability Advisory and Access Forum.
11. To reject the recommendations of the Disability Advisory and Access Forum.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

12. Disability Advisory and Access Forum Minute No.17/05