

Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee

Scope for Scrutiny Review of Disabled Facility Grants 2021

1. Sub Group Membership:

Previously:

- Cllr L Beech
- Cllr A Chaudhry
- Cllr R Grosvenor
- Cllr S McGarry

2. Background / Context:

At the meeting of the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee held on 24th March 2021, Committee Members agreed to progress a review of Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs). A sub-group of the Committee has been made up of the councillors named above to lead the review on behalf of the Committee.

This review is a follow up on the previous review into DFGs presented to Cabinet in April 2020. The recommendations arising from the review were as follows:

- To set targets for each stage of the process;
- To adopt the Audit recommendation to implement new procedures;
- For the Corporate Plan Target to be reviewed 55 days for urgent & 150 days for non-urgent cases;
- The Environmental Health Manager to provide quarterly performance updates for urgent and non-urgent cases to the Audit (Value for Money) Scrutiny Committee;
- To undertake a follow up of the DFG Scrutiny review within 12 months.

The recommendations as approved by Cabinet were as follows:

- To adopt the Audit recommendation to implement new procedures;
- A summary quarterly and a detailed 6 monthly report be provided by the Environmental Health Manager to the Scrutiny (Audit and Value for Money Council Services) Committee;

- To undertake a follow up of the DFG Scrutiny review following the review in December 2020.

3. What is the purpose of the Review?

To identify areas of the DFG service that may need improving.

4. What are the core questions the review is seeking to answer?

The core themes of this review are as follows:

1. Performance of the DFG Service

- a. What is the end to end process, including all stages, of the DFG process?
 - i. Are there any outside influences that can potentially impact the delivery of the process? E.g. Do we work with any other organisations, and how much of the delivery time is reliant on the input of these other organisations? If there are more than one, is there a significant difference between partner's delivery timelines?
 - ii. What are the eligibility criteria and funding thresholds? Have these changed?
 - iii. Are Occupational Therapists in-house, contracted etc?
- b. What is the background to the in-sourcing of the service?
 - i. Are there any legacy or ongoing impacts on performance?
- c. Are there any barriers to performance / service delivery?
 - i. Are there issues around social and / or private landlords granting their permission for adaptations? How many permissions are granted or refused?
- d. How are resources utilised? Is there sufficient capacity?
 - i. How many FTE members of staff does the Council have working on DFGs, and how does this compare to other local authorities?
 - ii. What is the budget?
 - iii. Are there any resource pressures and / or opportunities that could be investigated?

2. Service Improvement

- a. Have there been or are there any planned improvements to the DFG process? What are the anticipated timescales?

- b. Has the total number of days from start to finish, for each application, reduced over the last five years?
 - i. How many applications have been received in each of these years?
 - ii. What has been the impact of Covid-19 on the performance? Has this affected the number of applications?
- c. Are there any other potential further service improvements that could be achieved?
 - a. What

3. Key Measures

- a. How good is the service compared to the Council's agreed metrics?
 - a. What are the key measures the Council is measuring for example relating to cost / quality / time / satisfaction, etc?
 - b. What does success look like?
- b. How does performance compare to other local authorities?
 - a. Consider relative performance against statistical and geographical neighbours.
 - b. Are there any networks in place that facilitate benchmarking, exchange of best practice etc?
- c. Are there any additional key measures that could be agreed that would aid service performance and improvement?
 - a. If so, what are these key measures?

5. Scrutiny approach

The activities to be carried out in order to complete the review may include desktop studies, benchmarking with partners and discussion with relevant Council representatives.

6. In scope

All aspects of the Council's DFG service.

7. Out of scope

Aspects not related to the Council's DFG service.

8. What is the timescale?

The subgroup intends to complete the review within the financial year.

9. What evidence / data do you need?

- Operational data
- Financial data
- Current planned improvements
- Other datasets as identified during the course of the review

10. Resources

Who will be interviewed?

- Relevant Council representatives as identified during the course of the review

Are any partner agencies involved?

- None identified at outset of review