

# Health & Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel

27 January 2010

## Adaptations – progress report

### 1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The purpose of an adaptation is to modify disabling environments in order to restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families.
- 1.2 A report on adaptations was considered by the Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel at the 17 June 2009 meeting. The Panel resolved to continue to monitor the budget and performance and has requested that a progress report be provided.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on both minor and major adaptations for both the private sector and Plymouth Community Homes (note stock transferred from Plymouth City Council on 20 November 2009). Issues affecting Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are also highlighted.

### 2. Minor Adaptations

- 2.1 Tables 1 and 2 below show performance data for Quarters 1 and 2 of 2009/10 for minor adaptations (provision of equipment, facilities valued at less than £1000) for both the private sector (undertaken by Pluss) and Plymouth Community Homes (formerly Council) property - undertaken by the Capital Programmes team.

*Table 1. Minor Adaptations performance data*

|           | Pluss (private) | Council / PCH | Total |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|-------|
| Quarter 1 | 383             | 55            | 438   |
| Q2        | 367             | 44            | 411   |
| Q3        |                 |               |       |
| Q4        |                 |               |       |
| Total     | 750             | 99            | 849   |
| Target    |                 |               | 2347  |

*Table 2. Average timescales (Pluss work only)*

|                | Pluss (private) |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Quarter 1      | 1.1             |
| Q2             | 1.7             |
| Q3             |                 |
| Q4             |                 |
| Target 2009/10 | 0.7             |

### **3. Plymouth Community Homes Adaptations**

- 3.1 Table 3 below shows the latest available Plymouth Community Homes Adaptations budget, spend and commitment as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010. (Note that some figures are pre stock transfer.)

*Table 3. 2009/10 PCH Adaptations budget, spend and commitment:*

|   |                  | Up to transfer                                  | Transfer to Mar 10 |
|---|------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Budget           | £401,413 plus agreed over-ride. Actual £451,413 | £175,000           |
| 2 | Total Spend      | £502,043  | £5,941             |
| 3 | Total commitment |   | £110,822           |

- 3.2 Table 4 below shows some key performance indicators as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

*Table 4. PCH Adaptations Key Performance Indicators 2009/10.*

|   |                                 |            |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Completions – minor works       | 132        |
| 2 | Completions – major works       | 124        |
| 3 | Average Timescale – Minor works | 13.7 weeks |
| 4 | Average Timescale – Major works | 33.0 weeks |

Note - Average Timescales from date of referral to completion of works

- 3.3 There are 95 Minor works referrals on the waiting list and awaiting action (of which 94 are substantial cases and 1 critical). 67 are currently raised, i.e. works have been ordered. An additional 10 Minor works adaptations are to be raised on Year 1 of the PCH Kitchen and Bathroom budget (bungalow / sheltered housing).
- 3.4 There are 175 Major works referrals on the waiting list and awaiting action (of which 156 are substantial cases and 19 critical). 28 are currently raised, i.e. works have been ordered. An additional 33 major works

adaptations are to be raised on Year 1 of the PCH Kitchen and Bathroom budget (bungalow / sheltered housing).

#### **4. Disabled Facilities Grants (major adaptations)**

- 4.1 Since 1990, local housing authorities have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid (DFG's) to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes (N.B. this might include relocation if this best meets the need). DFG's are for major adaptations, generally building works or modifying a dwelling. This might include bathroom or kitchen adaptations, e.g. level access showers, modifying kitchen facilities but might also include provision of ground floor extensions, external ramps and lifts to gain access to the house or garden and internal stair-lifts.
- 4.2 The maximum DFG available per application for eligible works is £30,000. DFG's are primarily received by private sector owner occupiers and tenants but housing association tenants are also eligible to apply. Some housing associations meet some or all the costs of adaptations.
- 4.3 Historically, the funding available for DFG work has been insufficient to meet the need and there has been a growing waiting list. This has been exacerbated by growing demand as a result of demographic changes, particularly associated with an ageing population.
- 4.4 Table 5 below shows the latest 2009/10 budget, spend and commitment figures (as at 13 January 2010) for the DFG major adaptations programme.

*Table 5: 2009/10 DFG budget, spend and commitment:*

|   |                                 |            |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Total Available Budget          | £1,457,628 |
| 2 | Total Spend                     | £1,068,765 |
| 3 | Registered State Landlord spend | £161,164   |
| 4 | Total commitment                | £1,450,543 |
| 5 | Amount still to commit          | £7,085     |

N.B. The Registered State Landlord spend relates to DFG applications submitted by Housing Association tenants

- 4.4 Table 6 below shows some key performance indicators (as at 13 January 2010).

*Table 6. DFG Key Performance Indicators 2009/10.*

|   |                                 |          |
|---|---------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Grants approved                 | 188      |
| 2 | Grants completed                | 131      |
| 3 | Average Timescale - Critical    | 16 weeks |
| 4 | Average Timescale – Substantial | 63 weeks |
| 5 | Average Timescale - All         | 33 weeks |
| 6 | Waiting list nos.               | 181      |
| 7 | Waiting list – Critical cases   | 0        |

- 4.5 The annual target for DFG completions is 130. 131 had been completed as at 13 January 2010 which already exceeds this figure.
- 4.6 The average timescale (33 weeks) relates to the average length of time from referral to approval for all DFG's as at the end of Quarter 3. The annual target from referral to approval is 30 weeks. The average wait for a major adaptation from referral to DFG approval was 34.4 weeks in 2008/09 and 34.6 weeks in 2007/08. Within the resources available, the aim is to address critical cases as soon as possible. Whilst the overall average is marginally better than previous years, due to the scale of the waiting list it has not proved possible to address substantial cases within the target timeframe.
- 4.7 Every effort has been taken during 2009/10 to maximize the funds available for DFG's. The original estimate for the 2009/10 DFG budget was £1,267,600. This was comprised of £588,000 Local Authority DFG award; £392,000 from the Council's Private Sector Renewal Grant (PSRG) allocation (intended for improvements to private sector housing); an injection of £300,000 from Adult Social Care in recognition of 'invest to save' principles and the future impact on 'care packages' if people are not enabled to stay independent at home through an adaptation; less £12,400 slippage. Up to a further £190,000 has been identified by Adult Social Care during the year bringing the total available budget for the year up to £1,457,628.
- 4.8 The council receives a Local Authority DFG award each year from Government. We received £588,000 for 2009/10 which at 65% of our 'calculated need' (based on disability claimant numbers and estimated as £906,000) was the lowest percentage in the South West region. GOSW has recognized that we have been receiving less than our calculated need and for 2009/10 we received a 23% increase on the previous year, the highest annual percentage increase across the South West.
- 4.9 We have yet to hear how much the South West region has been awarded or what Plymouth's DFG award for 2010/11 will be (now likely to be in January / February which is very late). Via the LOGASnet returns, we have

made a 'bid' for £1,173,000 but it seems highly unlikely that we will receive this amount or anything close to it.

- 4.10 Whilst we don't know our Local Authority DFG award, we do know that our PSRG funding for 2010/11 will be cut by at least 13% (equivalent to a reduction of £200,000) which will impact on the amount that can be used for DFG's. There is also a tension between investment in private sector housing to improve decency and investing in major adaptations – effectively 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'.
- 4.11 Corporate Management Team considered the DFG's situation at a meeting on 12 January 2010. Whilst the resourcing difficulties were recognized, the reality is that the Council's capital budget is such that there is extremely limited if any scope to allocate additional funds for DFG's. Whilst 'invest to save' principles are recognized, there can be no certainty that Adult Social Care will be able to continue to provide funding for DFG's next year. The council's Local Authority DFG award together with a contribution from PSRG funding will remain the mainstay of DFG funding in 2010/11. However, it was agreed that the council should contact Government Office South West and the Regional Housing Board to point out in the strongest terms that Plymouth is not receiving sufficient funding to meet its calculated need and to seek a fairer allocation of the South West region's overall award. Additionally, it was considered that every effort should be made to ensure that available funding is put to maximum use in seeking full value for money. Additionally, further consideration will be given to the carrying forward of any unspent Private Sector Housing funding from 2009/10 into 2010/11 for use on DFG's.