

**SUBJECT: AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY**

**DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT**

**REPORT AUTHOR: AMY LARDER – INTERIM MAINTENANCE MANAGER**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report is to seek approval for the implementation of a new Aids and Adaptations policy and to advise on the key areas within the policy.

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Information and guidance on our Aids and Adaptations service and to seek approval for the introduction of the Aids and Adaptations Policy to provide clarity for the service providers and users.
- 2.2 The policy identifies regulatory requirements, who is eligible to use the service, and types of adaptations that can be provided through the service. It identifies the approvals process and timescales for approved works.
- 2.3 The key aims of the policy are to enable the provision of a high quality and cost-effective adaptations service. It will assist those in need of adaptations to make informed choices about their housing options, raise awareness of the service and identify our approach in handling requests for adaptations.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The City of Lincoln Council offers tenants permanent and temporary adaptations to their homes to ensure their homes remain suitable for their individual needs. We work with partners and agencies, including Lincolnshire County Council to provide adaptations to our housing stock.
- 3.2 Within the last financial year 2022/2023 we received 221 referrals for adaptation to properties. 95 of those referrals were for major adaptations to our properties including wet room installations.
- 3.3 We are committed to ensuring council tenants and their immediate family who have a disability can as far as possible continue to live safely and independently and able to carry out day to day activities.

## **4. Policy Details**

- 4.1 The policy provides clarity, information, and awareness of the availability of the aids and adaptations service.

The policy identifies the regulatory requirements as well as the legal framework and who is considered within the policy.

4.2 Requests for aids and adaptations will normally only be considered, if the person(s) is named in the tenancy, their dependant, or a permanent member of the household.

#### 4.3 **Minor Adaptations**

Involve small scale, non-structural alterations, or additions to a property some examples may include:

- Lever operated taps.
- Handrails
- Grab-Rails
- Mixer showers
- Additional external Lighting
- Concrete half steps to front or rear doors.

#### 4.4 **Major Adaptations**

Involve larger works and will involve structural alterations including:

- Ramps
- Stairlifts
- Low level access showers and over bath showers
- Property alterations for example to widen doors.
- Extensions to the family Home
- Vehicle hard standing and dropped curbs.

#### 4.5 **Referral Process**

Tenants and members of their household can apply for adaptations for themselves but there must be proven need. Referrals can also be received through a hospital referral from an occupational therapist or from Lincolnshire County Council Occupational Therapy as well as disability specific key workers.

#### 4.6 **Approvals**

The policy clearly identifies the considerations that we will be taken prior to approval of works commencing, including the likely availability of more appropriate property, tenants or members needs that demonstrate a need to remain in existing accommodation well as considering PEEPS and evacuation processes.

#### 4.7 **Funding**

We have a set Aids and Adaptations budget per year currently at £511,880, this may mean that it is necessary on occasion to prioritise referrals received that could lead to waiting lists for some cases.

We will not fund adaptations where a right to buy application exists, there is a transfer application in place or where there is a breach of tenancy and proceedings against the tenant(s) have commenced.

Funding for applications where a more suitable property has been identified will also not be funded. Non fixed equipment such as specialist furniture or hoists are also not funded.

We will endeavour to fund adaptations up to the value of £10,000. On occasions works may need to be declined or prioritised on a need's basis due to budget constraints. Where the value of works is more than £10,000 then this value must be approved by the Assistant Director of Asset Management.

We will meet the costs of all routine repairs and maintenance to any equipment we supply through the policy.

#### **4.8 Performance**

The policy details the performance measures that will be recorded. This includes:

- The number of adaptations Installed.
- Number and type of adaptations rejected and why.
- Percentage of minor and major adaptations completed within target

#### **4.9 Communication of the Policy**

Briefings of the policy will take place within Maintenance and Investment teams as well as customer services and tenancy services to ensure all officers are aware of the policy and its contents. The policy will be available on our website for customers, and we will also look to produce further information videos that will be available online and accessed through QR codes on business cards highlighting the process for customers wishing to use the service.

### **5. Strategic Priorities**

#### **5.1 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality**

The provision of the policy reduces all kinds of inequality allowing tenants and household members to continue to live safely and independently, allowing them to still carry out essential day to day activities.

#### **5.2 Let's deliver quality housing**

The provision of this policy enables us to provide housing that meets the varied needs of our residents, improves housing standards for all and allows tenants and household members to have a sense of belonging allowing them where possible to continue to live safely and independently to carry out day to day activities.

### **6. Organisational Impacts**

#### **6.1 Finance (Including Whole Life Costs where Applicable)**

No finance implications are expected because of the introduction of this policy. The policy does identify that works more than £10,000 must be approved by the Assistant Director of Asset Management for Funding from the Contingency Reserve of the Housing Investment Programme.

## 6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

All works required where not undertaken in house will be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and ultimately, Public Contract Regulations 2015.

## 6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The principles of equality, diversity and Inclusion are integral in the Business planning and delivery of the aids and adaptations service. The Aids and adaptations service is committed to delivering its service in a way that meets the diverse needs of local communities and will achieve this by treating people fairly and taking the nine protected characteristics of the equality Act 2010 into consideration in all aspects of the Aids and Adaptations Policy, including access to the service.

## 6.4 Human Resources

N/A

## 6.5 Land, Property and Accommodation

N/A

## 6.6 Significant Community Impact &/or Environmental Impact

*Please see the Council's [Environmental Policy \(sharepoint.com\)](#) for further guidance*

## 6.7 Corporate Health and Safety Implications

The policy identifies that we will meet all applicable statutory requirements that are provided to meet the health and safety of occupants in their homes.

## **7. Risk Implications**

### **7.1 (i) Options Explored**

### **7.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

It is not considered that there are any risks identified with the implementation of this policy.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 To agree and implement the policy for Aids and Adaptations to provide clarity of the Aids and Adaptations service provision and Processes for officers and service users, and to communicate the policy as identified in section 4.9 of this report.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** 2

**List of Background Papers:** None

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