

Record of Decisions

Housing Assistance Policy

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 21 November 2023.

Decision

1. That the Housing Assistance Policy 2023 - 2028 as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved; and
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Adult and Community and Customer Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities, to make any minor amendments to the Housing Assistance Policy 2023 - 2028.

Reason for the Decision

The Council was required by law to adopt and publish a Housing Assistance Policy detailing any assistance it wishes to offer which exceeds the mandatory disabled facilities grant that individuals can receive.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 4 December 2023 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Local Authorities administer the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). This funding was used to pay for housing adaptations to enable children and adults with care and support needs to stay in their own homes.

The Service has operated in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, and the grants are paid in accordance with legislation. The increasing costs of materials and labour have created challenges for the service in providing more complex adaptations within the DFG maximum statutory threshold of £30,000.

In addition, the Council has a general power to assist households with the improvement of living conditions using the powers set out in the Regulatory Reform Order 2002 (RRO). This allows for more flexibility in the use of the DFG. In order to, take advantage of these flexibilities, the Council must publish a policy to exercise those powers which then allows the Council to designate grants and other services.

The Housing Assistance Policy set out the mandatory and discretionary assistance that the council will offer including the conditions and eligibility criteria.

At the meeting Councillor Tranter proposed and Councillor Tyerman seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The options were:

- Approve the Housing Assistance Policy, thereby providing flexibility and support people to maintain their independence for longer and support better outcomes for safe, independent living.
- Do not approve the policy, if a new policy is not adopted the flexibilities within the Regulatory Reform Order 2002 would not possible and the authority would be at risk of not meeting the adaptation needs of disabled adults and children and older people in an efficient and effective way. Therefore this option was discounted.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None.

Published

24 November 2023

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet