

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET HOUSING PANEL REPORT – 2 MARCH 2021
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (HOUSING & COMMUNITY)

AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the new Aids and Adaptations Policy (Appendix A). The aim of the Policy is to set out the scope and criteria that will be applied when assessing aids and adaptations requests for Council housing.
- 1.2 The Aids and Adaptation Policy sets out the Council's approach to comply with the relevant legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations, supports the needs of disabled tenants in providing adaptations, subject to the provision of available funding.
- 1.3 The Policy also promotes the delivery of high-quality disabled adaptations service where there are clear channels of communication and established joint working practices with partners.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For CHP to approve the Aids and Adaptations Policy (Appendix A).

3 Explanation

- 3.1 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (the council) is committed to providing a high-quality aids and adaptations service that enables disabled council tenants to live safely and more independently within our homes.
- 3.2 The council provides funding each year for the provision of aids and adaptations to enable tenants to remain in their home for as long as it is safe and reasonable to do so. For council tenants this comes from the property services capital budget. The Disabled Facilities Grant (government funded) is administered by a different service within the council (private sector housing) in line with the councils Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy.
- 3.3 The council will take all reasonable measures to provide a fair and accessible aids and adaptations service that makes best use of existing adapted properties and works closely with other external agencies.
- 3.4 The Aids and Adaptations Policy specifically refers to aids and adaptations carried out to disabled council tenants living in properties owned by the council.

Implications

4 Legal Implication(s)

- 4.1 The Equalities Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with the protected characteristics that are specified in section 4 of the act. Disability is one of the specified protected characteristics.

- 4.2 The Council will make a positive difference to our communities and to the people we employ, provide services to, and do business with, and aims to provide services which meet the needs of customers, employees and other people and groups, including people with protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.3 The Council will ensure that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the core strands of equality.
- 4.4 The Council will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. Staff and others with whom we work, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).

5 Financial Implication(s)

- 5.1 The council provides an annual revenue and capital budget for major and minor aids and adaptations identified within the annual Business Plan, which will be used as efficiently as possible to provide a fair and accessible service to tenants. The Aids & Adaptations Policy does not alter this approach.

6 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 The council is committed to providing services that enable disabled council tenants to live safely and independently within our homes. By not providing a high quality aids and adaptations service there is a risk of reputational damage of the council not complying with this commitment and its duties as a local authority.

7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 There are no security or terrorism implications with the recommendations in this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

- 8.1 The contract for carrying out aids and adaptations will be procure / re-procured in accordance with relevant procurement legislation / standing orders.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 9.1 The proposals in this report will not impact on greenhouse gas emissions or have any other negative impacts in respect of the environment.

10 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 10.1 The provision of an aids and adaptations service will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of many of our tenants each year and improve their quality of life through the range of adaptations carried out.

11 Communication and Engagement

- 11.1 The provision of an aids and adaptations service supports the Allocations team who advertise which properties have an adaptation so that households who require a property with an adaptation to suit their needs can bid on those properties and those applicants will be prioritised for that property.

12 Link to Corporate Priorities

12.1 The Aids & Adaptations Policy supports the council's commitment to providing high quality services that enable independent living and is in line with our duties as a local authority.

13 Equality and Diversity

13.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) completed on 17 December 2020 found no adverse impact and a positive impact on people with disabilities, but the outcome of the formal assessment will be finalised at the next Equalities Steering Group meeting.

Name of author	Paul Horsley
Title	Asset Manager
Date	10 February 2021

Appendix A: Aids and Adaptations Policy 2021-24.