

CABINET

Capital Programme for Private Sector Housing 8 July 2008

Report of Corporate Director (Community Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To seek the approval of Cabinet for the allocation of the Regional Housing Board funding between the Winning Back Morecambe's West End, Poulton Renewal Area and Disabled Facilities Grants.			
Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision	Referral from Cabinet Member
Date Included in Forward Plan	23 May 2008		
This report is public			

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR DAVID KERR

- (1) That Cabinet approve Option 3 and the Disabled Facilities Grant funding from the capital allocation of the Regional Housing Board, and that the Capital Programme be updated accordingly.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Regional Housing Board's allocation is usually received by the Authority in late December / early January of the preceding year. This year's allocation was only received in April 2008. Consequently, it was not included in the Council's Capital Programme which was presented to Cabinet earlier in the year.
- 1.2 It was anticipated that this year's allocation would be approximately £1,800,000. Unfortunately, this has been reduced to £1,281,000. The North West's allocation from the Single Housing Allocation has been reduced from £127m to £92m for 2008/09. The Government's thinking behind this decision is that more funding will be allocated to the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme to deliver greater numbers of affordable housing units to meet increased national targets.
- 1.3 The Regional Housing Board allocation in previous years has been split between Winning Back Morecambe's West End, Poulton Renewal Area and the Disabled Facilities Grants.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 To continue with the Council's commitment to providing Disabled Facilities Grants it is suggested that in 2008/09 £323,333 (mandatory) and £39,667 (discretionary) grant be 'top-sliced' from the Regional Housing Board allocation. The remaining £918,000 is to be split between Winning Back Morecambe's West End and the Poulton Renewal Area. In future years, the discretionary element of the DFG's would cease to be provided from this source.

2.2

		2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Allocation (assumed continuation at 08/09 level)		1,281	1,281	1,281
DFG Proposed Budget		363	323	323
Available for Housing Regeneration		918	958	958
Option 1 (as Existing – 60% WE 40% Poulton)	West End Poulton	551 367	575 383	575 383
Option 2 (70% WE 30% Poulton)	West End Poulton	643 275	670 287	670 287
Option 3 (recommended proposal) 75% WE 25% Poulton. The Poulton allocation reducing to reflect programme completion.	West End Poulton	689 230	718 239	718 239

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 The proposed investment programmes for the Winning Back Morecambe's West End and Poulton Renewal Area has been developed in conjunction with the West End Partnership and the Poulton Housing and Built Environment Group. Both these groups comprise of residents, community representatives, elected members and other interested parties.

3.2 The governance arrangements for allocating the capital funding are described in the Constitution and Memorandum of Agreements of both the Poulton Neighbourhood Management Partnership and the West End Partnership Board. The Boards have responsibility for the approval of grants to projects with budget responsibility delegated to the appropriate Project Directors (i.e. Executives). The attached appendix gives an indication of the proposed priority allocation of these capital grants.

3.3 It can be seen from the appendix, however, that as yet, costings for individual schemes have not yet been finalised, and therefore it is not clear to what extent the proposed programmes can be progressed and delivered within the funding made available. Once finalised, the costings would be reported through to the relevant Partnership Boards, as part of gaining the necessary project approvals, and also this information would be fed through the Council's own capital programme monitoring and update arrangements, with progress being included within Performance Review

Team (PRT) meetings. In essence, this means that prioritisation and allocation of funds to individual projects would remain delegated to the relevant Partnership Boards, in line with their existing Constitutions, but also information on actual project approval and progress would be incorporated into the Council's existing performance management framework, in order to keep all other relevant members and officers informed.

3.4 With reference to the Disabled Facilities Grants, these are governed by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. These grants are mandatory and as such are central to Strategic Housing's approach to ensure that elderly, vulnerable and disabled residents are able to adapt and live independently in their homes.

3.5 Disabled Facilities Grants awarded in accordance with Lancaster City Council's adopted "Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy" and the above legislation, which was initially agreed by Cabinet on the 1 July 2003 (Minute No 46).

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 A process of comprehensive analysis and community consultation was used to formulate the Winning Back Morecambe's West End Masterplan which was adopted by the Council in February 2005 (minute 149). As a result of the Masterplan, a number of schemes / projects came into fruition and have been partly financed by the funding made available from the Regional Housing Board.

4.2 The Poulton Renewal area received Renewal Area Status in June 2000. The conditions laid down by Government Office are that the Authority adopt a realistic programme of renovation for the area over a ten year period. The Regional Housing Board funding, albeit reduced for future years, will continue to support the renewal area work and provide confidence for the community as a whole to completion of the ten year programme.

4.3 Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory and made available to all qualifying residents throughout the district. They provide facilities for access to dwellings whilst making them safe and also includes the provision of suitable kitchen, bathroom and bedroom facilities.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 The preferred option is Option 3. This is consistent with previous Cabinet decisions and continues to support the Winning Back Morecambe's West End, Poulton Renewal Area and Disabled Facilities Grants.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed allocation of this capital from the Regional Housing Board will support the Council's statutory responsibility for Disabled Facilities Grants and its corporate priorities to support housing led regeneration in Poulton and the West End of Morecambe.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposals support the Corporate Plan Priorities and the Housing Strategy.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

The proposed allocation of funding will continue to support the two regeneration schemes in the West End and Poulton areas of Morecambe and will also continue to support other town-wide policies of regeneration. The continued support of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant budget will provide better accommodation for the elderly, vulnerable and disabled residents within the community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The report seeks to adjust planned levels of spending in line with notified Government allocations. There are therefore, no additional financial implications arising and there is no variation in the demand made on the Council's internal resources. The Capital Programme needs updating to reflect the reductions in planned spending and funding, however.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

West End Masterplan, Poulton Renewal Area Declaration Document Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended)

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Proposed Capital Programme for 2008/09

Winning Back Morecambe's West End

1. Develop Shared Ownership Scheme (lateral conversions).
2. Demolish and re-develop pre-purchased Houses in Multiple Occupation and commercial properties on Marlborough Road.
3. External works to Clarendon Road.
4. Group Repair Schemes on Bold Street.
5. Creation of landscaped schemes on acquired sites.
6. Gateway improvements to Heysham Road.

Sub Total: £689k

Poulton Renewal Area

1. Group Repair Schemes to Primrose Street.
2. Individual Renovation Grants in target areas.
3. Facelift schemes in target areas.
4. Creation of landscape schemes on Edward/Union Street.

Sub Total: £230k