



RECORD OF DELEGATED DECISION (OFFICER)

1. Decision Reference No.	CEX280
2. Name/Title of Officer	Chris Flannery/Housing Asset Manager
3. Email address of Officer	cflannery@melton.gov.uk
4. Title / Subject Matter:	Aids and Adaptations Policy Exemption (Council Properties)
5. Type of Decision:	Public
6. Key Decision?	No
7. Decision Taken: To apply Aids and Adaptations policy exceptions to enable the successful completion of necessary aids and adaptations to two council properties and specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To exceed the usual Aids and Adaptations policy position to enable the completion of necessary work at a cost of more than £15,000 per property and;2. To exceed the upper limit of £30,000 as set out within the Aids and Adaptations policy for necessary works per property	
8. Reasons for Decision: The Council has received an occupational therapist referral for two properties in the housing stock. The referrals state that: Property 1 requires a ground floor extension to include suitable bathing facilities for the person with a disability that lives in the property. Property 2 requires a ground floor extension to include a bedroom and toilet facilities for the person with a disability that lives in the property. A housing options assessment has been completed for both properties and they concluded that the extension would benefit the tenants. Options to move into alternative accommodation are limited as there is a low stock of larger properties and these would need adapting. Both tenants have also expressed a desire to stay in the properties on a long term basis. The housing options assessment approved a feasibility study to see if the extensions could be built for less than the £30K limit set out in the aids and adaptations policy.	

Our new planned maintenance contract includes for aids and adaptations work, including extensions. An initial feasibility study has been undertaken and an estimate of the cost of each extension has been produced. The budget estimate is £40,000 for the smaller extension and £70,000 for the larger one.

The current aids and adaptations policy requires that any work over £15,000 requires approval from the Director for Housing and Communities and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services (Section 10.2).

Most extensions will be in excess of this limit and the Housing Options Assessment has indicated that there is a strong justification for this extension.

The policy also sets an upper financial limit of £30,000:

The Council will normally only fund major adaptations up to a maximum limit of £30,000. This is set in line with DFG limits, currently £30,000. Anything not being funded by the Council, e.g. over the maximum limit, or having a client contribution, will need to be funded by other means. In such circumstances, the Council will discuss with the tenant the options of self-funding, alternative funding available or re-housing

This policy and limits were introduced at a time where the aids and adaptations budget was significantly overspent and a high volume of extensions was being approved. The policy was intended to introduce controls for this and it has been successful. The final spend in 2021/22 was £212,000 against an original budget of £250,000. Spend, including commitments, for quarter 3 of 2022/23 is £120,000 against an annual budget of £250,000. Both of these statistics indicate that the aids and adaptations budget is underspending and has capacity for larger scale work.

The policy requires that alternative funding should be provided by the tenant where possible. This is in line with DFG guidance, but that applies to private sector housing. The Occupational Therapist has approached a charity to see if they can help fund the amount over £30,000 but they are no longer accepting applications. The Housing Officer has approached the tenants to see if they have the resources to fund the difference, but they do not.

In each case, there is strong justification for proceeding with the work. If we do not carry out this work both tenants will need to be re-housed and there is a strong likelihood that similar work will be required there too. The proposed extensions are relatively simple and straightforward, i.e. a cost effective solution to create additional space. It is also within the guidelines in the policy which require extensions to be minimised to the ground floor only.

Carrying out adaptation work at a property can also form grounds for exemption from the right to buy scheme. This will protect the investment in this asset.

9. Authority / Legal Power:

The Director for Housing & Communities has a delegation for Housing Management, Housing Assets, Repairs and Maintenance.

10. Background Papers attached?

Appendix A - Aids and adaptations policy

11. Alternative options available / rejected:

1. To relocate the families to another property. The properties are already four bedroom and there are a limited supply of properties of this size. If the families were to move it is likely that similar adaptation work would be required at the new property.

12. Implications:

<p>Legal</p>	<p>The current aids and adaptations policy requires that any work over £15,000 requires approval from the Director for Housing and Communities and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services (Section 10.2).</p> <p>The policy also sets an upper financial limit of £30,000:</p> <p><i>The Council will normally only fund major adaptations up to a maximum limit of £30,000. This is set in line with DFG limits, currently £30,000. Anything not being funded by the Council, e.g. over the maximum limit, or having a client contribution, will need to be funded by other means. In such circumstances, the Council will discuss with the tenant the options of self-funding, alternative funding available or re-housing</i></p> <p>The decision should be taken in consultation with the PH for Housing and Landlord Services.</p> <p>Detailed records should be kept of the work undertaken and consideration should be given as to whether the properties should be designated as exempt under Right to Buy legislation.</p> <p>[Legal Approval – 08 February 2023]</p>
<p>Finance</p>	<p>This work will be completed next financial year (2023/24).</p> <p>There is a budget for aids and adaptations contained within the HRA Capital programme of £280,000 for 2023/24 which will be funded from the Major Repairs Reserve.</p> <p>[Finance Approval – Director for Corporate services 7.2.23]</p>
<p>HR</p>	<p>N/a</p>

13. Signature of Decision Maker with authority to sign

Signature Redacted
Michelle Howard
Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)

14. Consultation with:	Email notification received Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services
15. Date:	16/02/2023

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