

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee on 18 July 2022

Review of the Council-owned Adapted Accommodation – Executive Response

Report of the Chair of Customer Service Scrutiny Committee

Classification	This report is Public
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PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To present Executive's Response to the Review of Council-owned Adapted Accommodation to Customer Services Scrutiny Committee.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Customer Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a Review of Council-owned Adapted Accommodation, as part of the 2021-22 Work Programme.
- 1.2 The issue was initially raised via an Executive report in April 2021, highlighting the need to evaluate our supply of family sized adapted accommodation. It was noted that the Council had recently been approached by applicants seeking very specific accommodation as a result of having younger family members with disabilities. Although these applications are relatively rare, they had raised the issue of the supply of family-sized adapted accommodation.
- 1.3 Under the Equality Act 2010 the Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities to ensure they receive the same services, as far as this is possible, as someone who is not disabled. A disability under this Act is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on the ability to do normal daily activities. 'Substantial' and 'Long-term' mean:
 - 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, i.e. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
 - 'long-term' means 12 months or more, i.e. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 The aim of the review was:

- To ensure that the Council has adequate plans and processes in place to maintain the required level of adapted accommodation for both individuals and families.

2.2 The objectives agreed were:

- Review of current policies and procedures
- Completion of an analysis of existing adapted stock inc. family-sized stock
- Assessment of demand against demographic profile of area.
- Assessment of current principles defining categorisation of stock as a 'disabled adapted property'

2.3 The key issues identified for investigation were as follows:

- Ensuring new supply through design and location of new stock – Bolsover Homes
- Location of existing stock across District
- Use of Housing management Officer information when assessing applications
- Existing approach for property categorisation
- Process for assessing demand/future demand
- Current cross-team working

2.4 The Committee met on six occasions in total and sought evidence by way of:

- Internal enquiries to establish existing policy and procedures and comparison of our policy approach with other local authorities.
- An assessment of our current supply of adapted accommodation.
- An analysis of the Districts profile in terms of health and disability and where hotspots for long-term ill health correlated to our stock profile.
- An evaluation of our procedure for categorising stock as disabled adapted.

2.5 The Committee put together nine recommendations which will hopefully assist the Council in improving our policy and procedures in relation to allocation and management of adapted accommodation.

2.6 The key findings arising from the review were:

- That a number of the Council's existing practices and procedures for allocation are satisfactory in addressing service delivery in this area.
- That the revised approach to officer meetings with DCC is working well to review applications and identify a clear course of action for the tenant.
- That the Council's approach to design of new stock via Bolsover Homes will ensure good quality housing and an increased supply of family-sized accommodation.
- That a revision is required to our existing policy which Members feel is met by the proposed draft which Scrutiny helped to develop.

- That the range of procedures identified during the course of the review are developed to support the effective implementation of the new Policy.
- That in order to aid officers to see stock availability at a glance, the data is mapped in both our GIS software and our data profiling tool, to aid future stock management and development.
- That the demographic profile will fill current knowledge gaps and aid future planning of additional stock.

2.7 On presenting the final report to Executive, Members approved all recommendations.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 Members are required to make their report and findings public, in accordance with Part 4.5.17(4) of the Constitution.

3.2 Committee is required to monitor implementation of their recommendations in accordance with Part 3.6(1) of the Constitution.

3.3 Members must note Executive's response to the review recommendations and agree to review progress on the approved recommendations. A progress report will be submitted in twelve months' time, with any exceptions to expected delivery highlighted.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Committee is required to monitor implementation of their recommendations in accordance with Part 3.6(1) of the Constitution and as such the report cannot be rejected.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

6.1 That Members note Executive's Response to the Review of the Council-owned Adapted accommodation.

6.2 That Members make its report and findings public, in accordance with Part 4.5.17(4) of the Constitution.

6.3 That Officers monitor progress on the recommendations and report in six and twelve months' time highlighting exceptions to delivery, in accordance with Part 3.6(1) of the Constitution.

Approved by Executive

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: None from this report. Suggested action for the service can be contained within existing budgets.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

In carrying out scrutiny reviews the Council is exercising its scrutiny powers as laid out in s.21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation which added to/amended these powers e.g. the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details: None from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	All
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Detailed consultation with service area and relevant Portfolio.

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.
Ambition: Customer

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
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Appendix No	Title
9.1	ER to Review of Council-owned Adapted Accommodation

Background Papers

<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
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Please contact Scrutiny & Elections Officer where further information is required.
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