

**Select Committee Work Programme  
Suggested Review – Pro Forma**

**Summary of issue you wish to be scrutinised, including key concerns and outcome for scrutinising the topic?**

**Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)**

A DFG is a means tested grant provided by the Council to make an individual's home suitable to their needs (works may include for example widening doors / installing ramps, stairlifts and level access showers and building extensions to accommodate a downstairs bedroom/bathing facilities). Monies to fund DFG's is provided to LA's via the Better Care Fund.

The review will explore:

- the Councils current approach to delivery of a DFG (are we doing enough to support vulnerable residents / can the customer journey be improved) and
- the Councils use of discretionary funding (financial loan assistance) to ensure that the delivery of DFG's continues to meet both individual needs and are cost effective.

**Please be clear about the focus of the review and desired outcome.**

NOTE: ENTRIES BELOW RELATE TO ISSUE CATEGORIES OF THE PICK PROCESS.  
PLEASE REFER TO THE EXPLANATION NOTES TO THIS FORM FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION.

**Public interest justification:**

Demand for DFGs continue to rise at a time when building costs have significantly increased. The result of this is an increasing number of DFG applications costed above the maximum grant threshold (£30k) and a growing waiting list (in terms of numbers of those waiting for a DFG and time taken from the point of application to DFG works commencing). This impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and potentially their ability to remain living independently in their home

As noted above building costs have risen significantly over recent years resulting in an increasing number of residents needing to make greater financial contribution to the cost of their DFG, specifically in instances where the value of DFG works is above the maximum £30,000 threshold. SBC has adopted measures to support individuals who do not have the financial means available to contribute to a DFG in the form of discretionary loans with the aim of preventing residents 'falling out' of the system.

**Impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area:**

Issuing DFG's helps the most vulnerable residents with disabilities in the Borough live independently in their own homes for longer, preventing pressures on other council and health services and supporting hospital discharge.

DFG legislation includes the Regulatory Reform Act which gives Council's the authority to bring in discretionary policies and procedures to support their residents, therefore there is the scope to modify, influence or improve this service area.

**Council performance, efficiency (identification of savings and reducing demand) in this area:**

The demand for DFG's has risen year on year and is acknowledged by Government. The Council aim to deliver an efficient DFG service (from the point of application through the

completion of works). This review will explore both current and potential alternative options to ensure the service is delivered in an efficient, effective and customer focused way.

**Keep in Context (are other reviews taking place in this area?):**

Good practice guidance has been issued by Central Government (produced on their behalf by produced by 'Foundations'). <https://www-foundations-uk-com/guides/>

**How does the topic support delivery of the Council Plan?**

DFG directly supports the following Council plan priority: "To support people to remain safely and independently in their homes for as long as possible" (Council Plan Objective - '*A place where people are healthy, safe and protected from harm*').

**What would you want the outcome of the review to be?**

To ensure SBC is delivering an effective, efficient and quality DFG service which meets our residents needs. Whilst also exploring whether SBC is offering sufficient financial support (loan) to enable vulnerable residents to secure a DFG in the face of rising building costs?