

REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2017

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL CARE AND REPAIR UPDATE 2016/17

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 **Comment on the Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair Update 2016/17 found at appendix 1 to this report;**
- 1.2 **Agree that the update report is shared with area committees, and;**
- 1.3 **Agree for the report to be submitted to the Integrated Joint Board to consider how Health and Social Care can contribute to the Care and Repair Service.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 established the legal framework for integrating health and social care in Scotland. Aberdeenshire Council's Health and Integrated Social Care Partnership was established on 1st April 2016 with the housing adaptations function delegated from the partnership to the Housing Service. This function is delivered through Aberdeenshire Council's Care and Repair service.
- 2.2 Care & Repair offers owner-occupiers and tenants of private landlords who live within Aberdeenshire, advice and assistance with repairs, improvements and adaptations. Clients must be over 60 and/or have a disability. The Care and Repair service links into the national Care and Repair Scotland Group, a charitable organisation supported by the Scottish Government to help promote continued independent living within people's communities.
- 2.3 The Scottish Government's Housing Strategy for Older People '*Age, Home and Community*' 2012-2021 recognises the importance of making the best use of existing housing for older people.
- 2.4 It recognises how the use of adaptations to people's homes can promote independent living and reduce the need for more intensive and expensive social care services. Social Care services are provided through Aberdeenshire's Health and Social Care Partnership with the installation of adaptations from Housing budgets directly impacting on the level of services required from Partnership budgets.
- 2.5 Appendix 1 provides a Care and Repair Service update for financial year 2016/17.
- 2.6 The Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted and their comments are incorporated within the report.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section D 7.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the request for a written report on Aberdeenshire Council's Care and Repair Service for financial year 2016/17.

4. Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because this report is principally designed to provide an update on the Care and Repair service for 2016/17. There will be no differential impact, as a result of the report, on people with protected characteristics.
- 4.2 Disabled adaptation grant is funded from the General Fund Capital Plan, Private Sector Housing Grant allocation. This allocation has been sufficient to meet demand in previous years but is planned to reduce from 2019/20 to £750,000 with demand anticipated to remain at £1,000,000 per annum based on current levels.
- 4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level: demographic change. This may increase pressure on future budgets requiring increased prioritisation of budgets.

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07 August 2017

Appendix 1 – Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair Update 2016/17

1. Introduction

1.1 Aberdeenshire Care and Repair provides the following services to homeowners and private tenants who are over the age of 60 and/or disabled:

- Disabled adaptation grants
- Small repairs service
- Charitable fundraising
- Income maximisation checks
- Information, advice and practical assistance through the council's Scheme of Assistance.

2. Disabled Adaptation Grants

2.1 All local authorities must provide a minimum percentage grant of 80% for structural adaptations that are essential to meet the assessed needs of a disabled person. Grant funding is not provided to extend the original structure of the house to create additional living accommodation but the original structure may be extended to provide a standard amenity (fixed bath or shower, wash hand basin or toilet). Grant funding is means tested between 81% - 100%. Grant is awarded at 100% if the client is in receipt of certain benefits.

2.2 Examples of work that can be funded through a grant are:

- Level access shower
- Ramp
- Stair-lift
- Through floor lift
- Widening doors to allow wheelchair access.

2.3 In financial year 2016/2017, the Care and Repair Team have assisted 465 clients with major adaptations. There were 201 grants completed incorporating 237 different adaptation elements from adaptation grant funding provided totalling £976,844.

Year	Completions	Grant Spend (£)
2016/2017	201	976,844
2015/2016	194	874,907
2014/2015	200	905,418
2013/2014	174	858,935
2012/2013	230	1,111,033

2.4 Adaptations can be broken down by area as detailed in the table below.

Area	Major Adaptations (No's)	Major Adaptations (£)
B&B	48	249,988
Buchan	24	129,536
Formartine	39	146,482
Garioch	14	54,451
K & M	41	189,052
Marr	35	207,335
Total	201	976,844

2.5 The majority of disabled adaptations are bathroom works to improve client's bathing facilities which includes level access showers and wet rooms. The table below shows the different types of adaptations installed.

Area	Bathroom Works	Stair lift	Ramp & Access	Bathroom Extension	Other Work	Total
B&B	29	12	8	1	1	51
B	21	2	4	0	1	28
Form	28	3	10	0	10	51
G	12	1	2	0	0	15
K&M	32	5	6	1	3	47
M	26	4	8	0	7	45
Total	148	27	38	2	22	237

3. Small Repairs Service

3.1 The small repairs service covers small internal and external repairs. The work is done by tradesmen approved and contracted by Care and Repair. The repairs must be high priority for safety, prevention of long term deterioration of a property or for making energy efficiencies. Examples of small repairs are:

- cleaning out or repairing guttering
- roof repairs if there are internal leaks
- leaking doors and windows
- repairs to central heating and hot water
- security of doors and windows

3.2 The number of small repairs completed in financial year 2016/7 is 464 which is consistent with the number of completions in previous years.

Year	Completions	Project Spend (£)
2016/2017	464	46,422
2015/2016	469	50,880
2014/2015	593	68,558
2013/2014	554	65,095
2012/2013	305	34,883

4. Charitable Fundraising

- 4.1 Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair also provides a charitable fundraising service that will approach charities to request funding on behalf of clients for essential repairs to property or items that are required to maintain client's health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 Fundraising will usually only be considered for amounts less than £5,000 and includes an assessment against our qualifying criteria. This assessment takes into account weekly income levels and savings/capital limits for single people or for a couple with additional elements included for children over 16 and still in education.
- 4.3 Some income and expenditure is disregarded including disability benefits. The client must be willing to provide reasonable proof of their financial circumstances including provision of bank statements, credit card statements, pay-slips and anything else that may reasonably be required to verify income and expenditure levels. This verification is required by charities that Care and Repair contact when seeking donations on behalf of clients in order for them to assess eligibility for allocating funds.
- 4.4 Fundraising will only be undertaken for those on a low income. The majority of charities Care and Repair approach on behalf of client will only provide financial assistance to those on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits.
- 4.5 If clients meet the charitable fundraising criteria then fundraising will only be considered for works that cost less than £5,000. This is because the majority of charities generally provide grants of around £400. There is a limit to the amount of appropriate charities that can be applied to which will therefore limit the total amount of funding likely to be obtained.
- 4.6 The criteria ensures that fundraising targets are realistic and achievable and that the resources within the team for fundraising are used effectively. Fundraising may still be completed at the discretion of the service if clients fall out with any of the set criteria, if the circumstances are shown to be exceptional and that there is confirmed risk to the person's health and wellbeing.
- 4.7 In financial year 2016/17 Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair assisted 44 clients via the Funding Assistant. A total of 18 clients either did not meet our criteria or chose to not continue with fundraising. 5 of these were helped through the small repairs service. Care & Repair were successful in raising funds for 5 clients totalling £10,837 with work still ongoing with the remaining 16 clients.

5. Income Maximisation

- 5.1 All 201 clients who received a disabled adaptation grant were offered income maximisation checks along with Scheme of Assistance clients to ensure they are receiving the full amount of benefits they are entitled to.
- 5.2 In financial year 2016/17, 76 income maximisation checks were completed which generated an additional income identified of £736 per week, calculated at £38,272 per year. We were also able to help one client who received £1,500 in backdated benefits and identified one client who through a referral to SCARF, then received grant funding to install new heating, secondary glazing and a new door which improved the warmth of their home and helped to reduce fuel bills.

6. Information and Advice through Scheme of Assistance

- 6.1 In order to maintain clients living independently at home, Care & Repair provides information, advice and practical assistance to help clients carry out repairs and maintenance to their homes. In financial year 2016/17 Care and Repair assisted 188 households with issues surrounding repairs and maintenance.
- 6.2 These included telephone calls from customers requesting names of tradesmen in their areas, referrals to SCARF in order to address the warmth of client's homes and referrals direct to the Occupational Therapy Service following discussions identifying clients who may require additional support.

7. Client Outcomes and Satisfaction

- 7.1 Care and Repair continues to assess the impact of adaptations on people's lives through the use of outcomes based questionnaires. Questionnaires are sent out to all clients following completion of their adaptation with a total of 135 questionnaires being returned during 2016-17. The impact of the adaptations provided can be seen from the results below:

- **Outcomes Q1: I feel more confident that I can continue to live independently in my home (110 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	47% (52)
Strongly agree:	49% (54)
Disagree:	4% (4)

- **Outcomes Q2: It is easier for me to use the facilities (kitchen, toilet, bathroom) in my home (109 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	32% (35)
Strongly agree:	67% (73)
Disagree:	1% (1)

- **Outcomes Q3: My home is warmer at the same or reduced cost to me (10 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	80% (8)
Strongly agree:	10% (1)
Disagree:	10% (1)

- **Outcomes Q4: I feel more confident about my safety and security in my house (70 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	47% (33)
Strongly agree:	52% (36)
Disagree:	1% (1)

- **Outcomes Q5: I feel I am less likely to have a fall at home because of the work that has been carried out (102 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	50% (51)
Strongly agree:	47% (48)
Disagree:	3% (3)

- **Outcomes Q6: I am more likely to get out and about, or receive visitors at home, as a result of the work that has been carried out (45 answers from 135 questionnaires returned):**

Agree:	56% (25)
Strongly agree:	42% (19)
Disagree:	2% (1)

7.2 Care and Repair also continues to monitor all aspects of the service to assess client satisfaction with the standard of works and the service provided by Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair. During year 2016/17 we received 291 client responses from small repairs questionnaires and 138 client responses for major adaptations.

7.3 **Small Repairs** - Standard of Work (291 answers from 291 questionnaires returned):

- Very Satisfied: 74% (216)
- Satisfied: 21% (61)
- Neither: 2% (7)
- Not Satisfied: 2% (7)

7.4 **Small Repairs** - Overall Satisfaction with Aberdeenshire Care & Repair (291 answers from 291 questionnaires returned):

- Very Satisfied: 84% (245)
- Satisfied: 16% (45)
- Neither: 0% (0)
- Not Satisfied: 0% (1)

7.5 **Major Adaptation** – Standard of Work (138 answers from 138 questionnaires returned):

- Very Satisfied: 76% (105)
- Satisfied: 20% (27)
- Neither: 0% (1)
- Not Satisfied: 4% (5)

7.6 **Major Adaptation** – Overall Satisfaction with Aberdeenshire Care & Repair (138 answers from 138 questionnaires returned):

- Very Satisfied: 82% (113)
- Satisfied: 16% (22)
- Neither: 2% (3)
- Not Satisfied: 0% (0)

8. **Service Improvements**

8.1 Work is ongoing with the Service Improvement Officer (Housing) to make improvements to processes and procedures with the intention of streamlining the process for the client whilst creating efficiencies within the team.

8.2 Standardised and streamlined work processes will ultimately improve services to customers by:

- Identifying the current capability and appropriateness of processes.
- Identifying and eliminating waste from processes to ensure they are fully functional and streamlined.
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities throughout each process flow.

8.3 A pilot of is currently underway in relation to a dedicated occupational therapist for major adaptations in South Aberdeenshire. The pilot is to be fully monitored and evaluated but benefits of the dedicated occupational therapist dealing specifically with major adaptations have already been identified by staff within Care and Repair.

8.4 The main benefit being that the specialist knowledge of detailed procedures by the occupational therapist means that client's expectations are well managed and not raised. The detailed evaluation should be available in late 2017.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

- 9.1 A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed to improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to assess the performance and identify ways the service can be improved. It will allow the service to learn from experiences to improve practices and activities in the future whilst having accountability of all the resources. Processes to be monitored include:
- Occupational therapy service approval period for major adaptation
 - Care & Repair specification period for major adaptation
 - Contractor instruction to installation period for major adaptation
 - Payment of grant period for major adaptation
- 9.2 The framework will provide a sound evidence base allowing for the taking of informed decisions on the future direction of the service and provide confidence to service users that the process is monitored to ensure no unnecessary delays in the process of major adaptations from recommendation to payment of work.
- 9.3 The framework is being built into the development and implementation of our new ICT System Uniform Enterprise. This system is used across Building Standards, Planning and Environmental Services and is a date specific task driven system which will help monitor and evaluate with greater accuracy and will help improve the management of caseloads. This is currently working towards full implementation by April 2018.

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7 August 2017