

**Wiltshire Council**

**Environment Select Committee**

**5 November 2019**

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**Task Group Update:**

**Housing Aids & Adaptations Task Group – Scoping Report**

**Background**

The Housing Aids and Adaptations Task Group held its first meeting on 31 October 2019, where the members held a ‘scoping meeting’; discussing their Terms of Reference, as well as the research information that they should consider throughout their scrutiny review. Alongside the task group, the additional attendees present were: Mark Henderson - Senior Planning Officer, Simon Hendeby - Director of Housing and Commercial Development and Natalie Heritage, the scrutiny support for the task group.

**Membership**

The membership of the task group is as follows:

- Cllr Trevor Carbin
- Cllr Bob Jones
- Cllr Carole King
- Cllr Gordon King
- Cllr Pip Ridout (elected as Chairman)

**Terms of Reference**

The task group agreed that their Terms of Reference should be the following:

1. To consider the ways in which Wiltshire Council can reduce the waiting time for residents with disabilities to access suitable housing, through:
  - a) Reviewing how the Council works with Housing Associations and private landlords, to increase the availability of suitably adapted properties
  - b) Reviewing the use of the Disabled Facilities Grant in Wiltshire and whether there is scope for further work with partners, to help them access this funding
  - c) Assessing whether all future Wiltshire Council housing stock could be built with some degree of adaptation, to meet current building regulations
  - d) Assessing whether relative design standards for new build properties could become policy for all affordable housing providers in Wiltshire.
2. Consider how the Council could incorporate new build standards into its Local Plan, to help ensure that there is a sufficient supply of aided and adapted properties to meet the needs of residents with disabilities in Wiltshire.

3. Consider data in providing suitable and adapted properties for residents with disabilities and make recommendations, where appropriate, for improvement.
4. Consider the Council's Housing Allocations Policy and whether there is scope for disabled individuals to access housing outside of the Homes4Wiltshire scheme.

### **Research Information**

The task group agreed to look at the following documents as part of their scrutiny review:

- The Government's new design guidance (published on 1 October 2019)
- Local Government Ombudsman report: 'Making a house a home: Local Authorities and Disabled Adaptations'
- Accessible Housing Standards 2015 – a briefing that compares 2015's building regulations, M4(2), with 2011's Lifetime Homes standards
- Wiltshire Council's Local Plan – the task group's consideration of the Local Plan would tie into the Council's current review of the Local Plan
- The process to obtain funding through the Disabled Facilities Grant: case studies
- The length of time it takes to obtain funding through the Disabled Facilities Grant and comparing this information with other local authorities
- The Council's Housing Allocations Policy

The task group felt that it would be imperative to speak to the following stakeholders:

- Housing Associations
- Spatial Planning
- Better Care Fund (Commissioning)

### **Proposal**

**For the Environment Select Committee:**

1. **To endorse the following membership of the Housing Aids and Adaptations Task Group:**
  - **Cllr Trevor Carbin**
  - **Cllr Bob Jones**
  - **Cllr Carole King**
  - **Cllr Gordon King**
  - **Cllr Pip Ridout**
2. **To endorse the Terms of Reference (as detailed above).**

## Appendix 1

### Forward Work Programme

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>WITNESSES</b>
Wiltshire Council Housing Stock	Cllr Richard Clewer  Simon Hendey Nicole Smith
Housing Associations (& other partners)	Main Housing Associations in Wiltshire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selwood Housing</li><li>• White Horse Housing</li><li>• Aster</li><li>• Greensquare</li></ul> (& other partners)
Local Plan: Design Requirements	Cllr Richard Clewer Cllr Toby Sturgis  Simon Hendey Director of Planning and Economic Development Georgina Clampitt-Dix
Disabled Facilities Grant	Cllr Richard Clewer  Simon Hendey James Corrigan
Private Sector Housing Strategy	Cllr Richard Clewer  Simon Hendey James Hudson
Council's Housing Allocations Policy	Cllr Richard Clewer  Simon Hendey Nicole Smith