

REPORT TO: Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 9th March 2010
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community
SUBJECT: Scrutiny Review of Adaptations for Disabled People
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To introduce the draft report of the Scrutiny Review of Adaptations for Disabled People for consideration by the Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) The Board comment on the findings of the Scrutiny Review;**
- ii) The Board endorse the Scrutiny Review and its recommendations.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 This report (attached as Appendix 1) was commissioned by the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board. A scrutiny review working group was established with four Members from the Board, an officer from the finance team and officers from the Halton Home Improvement and Independent Living Service (HHIILS).

3.2 The report was commissioned as historically a high level of complaints had been received regarding the waiting time for adaptations for service-users, the costs/financial output was identified as very high and the importance of adaptations in the independence of disabled people staying longer in their own homes was highlighted. Over the last two years, major changes have been made internally to the structure and processes within the adaptations service. In April 2008 the Independent Living Team, Grants Team and Home Improvement Agency integrated becoming the new HHIILS team based at John Briggs House in Widnes.

3.3 The scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means between April 2009 and January 2010, as follows:

- Bi-monthly meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;

- Presentations by various key members of staff (detail of the presentations can be found in *Annex 2*);
- Regular financial activity updates regarding each aspect of the Disabled Facilities Grant at each meeting from the Budget Monitoring Officer;
- Provision of information;
- Service-user consultation;
- Field visit to a modular building; and
- Meeting with members of the HHILS team.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Existing policies are endorsed by the report.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The following recommendations will have financial/resource implications:

- a) Consider developing a Business Plan for a financial contribution from Health towards adaptations to set against the savings achieved for health as described in 5.1.2.
- b) Ensure adequate training for staff within the Contact Centre dealing with the feedback forms is in place.
- c) Approve the in-house design of a bespoke IT system that brings together all the current systems therefore considerably cutting down on time and resources of the admin team.

5.2 The report makes a series of recommendations under each separate area of evidence that was scrutinised and have been collated into an Action Plan at Annex 4 for ease of reference and monitoring.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

As described in 5.1.2, the provision of adaptations for children promotes a healthy living environment, sustain individual good health and well-being and help prevent and efficiently manage illness.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

As described in 5.1.2, the provision of adaptations for disabled people promotes a healthy living environment, sustain individual

good health and well-being and help prevent and efficiently manage illness.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Providing disabled people with suitable adapted housing gives them the opportunity to stay living in the area they want, to continue enjoying their lives. All major adaptations are developed to high standards in keeping with the local environment.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

In line with "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society" by the Communities for Local Government, the recommendations within this scrutiny review report have a huge role to play in helping people live independently for longer in their own homes.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Taking on board the recommendations from the report will be positive steps to improving the efficient and effective running of the HHILS team and providing an improved service to the residents of Halton to help them live independently in their own homes.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The implementation of the recommendations will improve the independence of older people and disabled people within Halton.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.