

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: HAC-002-2022/23

Date of report: 28/07/2022

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing & Community - Councillor H Whitbread

Author: Sandra Wilson (Ext) 4287 Democratic Services: J Leither

**Subject: Procurement for Housing Framework:
Stannah Lift Services Limited and Epping Forest District Council**

Decision: To agree to the Private Sector Grants Team entering into a Call-Off Contract with Stannah Lift Services for the provision and installation of stairlifts for residents eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

ADVISORY NOTICE: <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision: Comments/further action required: None	
Signed: Cllr H Whitbread Date: 15 th August 2022	
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i> None	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a
Office use only: Call-in period begins: 15 th August 2022	Expiry of Call-in period: 22 nd August 2022

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

Reason for decision:

The Councils Housing and Property Services (Property Assets) Department previously entered into a Framework agreement with Stannah Lift Services on 19th June 2017 for a period of 4 years.

The Private Sector Grants Team were able to use the Call-Off Contract for the supply and installation of stairlifts for residents in the private sector who met the eligibility criteria for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

The existing Framework Agreement expired on 18th June 2021 but, at the goodwill of Stannah, the Council has still been able to provide stairlifts on the basis of the agreement, and as such has continued to receive the preferential purchasing rates.

However, Stannah are no longer able to continue on this basis and the Private Sector Grants Team are now being charged for services that were included in the lapsed Framework Agreement.

The Team Manager of Private Sector Housing and Grants has had conversations with the Property Assets Manager to establish if he will renew the Contract but due to a restructure and other commitments this has been put on hold indefinitely.

It is therefore appropriate for the Private Sector Grants Team to enter into its own new Framework Agreement to enable us to continue to provide an efficient and effective DFG service and to ensure we get value for money.

The annual spend on stairlifts with Stannah could be in the region of £100,000 to £130,000 and as such we must ensure that we are compliant with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Options considered and rejected:

It is not appropriate to do nothing as our elderly and vulnerable residents who are eligible for Disabled Facilities Grants will be adversely affected:

- If we do not enter into a new Framework Agreement, we will have to issue tenders to at least 2 stairlift suppliers which increases the administrative workload on the team and causes delays in processing applications and ultimately delays approving grants, ordering and installing stairlifts.
- This would also impact on our clients by causing inconvenience as they would have to facilitate more visits from contractors (these often have to be arranged with extended family members etc.).
- The installation delays will leave our clients vulnerable to trips, slips and falls associated with stairs.

There have been significant price increases in materials and manufacturing costs in the last 12 to 18 months and if we continue to do nothing the council could be subject to more price increases for stairlifts. The effect of this is that our budget is stretched, and we may not be able to provide adaptations for as many residents as we would like.

Under the terms of the Call-Off Contract the Stannah may request an annual price increase which will be scrutinised by the PpH.

Stannah are indicating that a further 10% price increase is likely in October this year; if we have not entered into a new Framework Agreement by then we will have no option but to accept this.

Background Report:

The Private Sector Grants Team deliver mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) through Central Government funding via Essex County Council. Recommendations are received from Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care at ECC.

Stairlifts are a relatively inexpensive form of adaptation that improve the safe use of stairs for many 'at risk' residents which allows people to remain living independently at home and out of the care system.

They support the promotion of 'early intervention' to reduce the financial impact on the NHS in dealing with the care and rehabilitation of people who have suffered trips, slips and falls on the stairs.

Stairlifts make up a healthy amount of the Councils annual DFG commitment/expenditure:

- **2021 to 2022: 28 stairlift applications approved to a value of £161,627.90**
- **2022 to 2023 (year to date) 14 stairlift applications approved to value of £66,130.75**

Resource Implications: There are no resource implications.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended)
Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002
Housing Act 2004
Disabled Facilities Grant General Consent 2008
Disabled Facilities Grant Order 2008

Epping Forest District Council ("the Council"), in its role as a local housing authority, has a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to qualifying applicants under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act).

The Procurement for Housing Framework is OJEU Compliant:

- **The OJEU Notice:** the contract notice with reference number 2018/S 176-398421 dated 13th September 2018 published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

The Procurement for Housing Framework has been scrutinised, approved, and processed by the councils Procurement Team who will include the details in the Contacts Register in accordance with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

DFGs provide essential financial assistance to help disabled residents live safely in their own homes for as long as they can or wish to. One of the most common risks to the elderly, infirm or disabled people is the risk associated with trips, slips and falls inside the home, with the risk of an accident associated with the falls on stairs being the most significant in terms of the potential harm outcomes associated with this.

Consultation Undertaken: None.

Background Papers:

The current Housing Assistance Policy 2022 relates. Please see Appendix 2 for excerpt relating to stairlifts and the PfH Agreement.

Impact Assessments:

The initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Councils' general equality duties did not reveal any potentially adverse equality implications.

The provision and installation of stairlifts targets those groups of people considered vulnerable, such as older people and disabled people and has a positive impact on the Council's statutory duty to promote equality and to help our most vulnerable residents live independently and safely in their home. The Framework Agreement allows the Council to cut down on unnecessary bureaucracy in order to provide a efficient and effective service delivery to those most in need.

Risk Management:

The risk management is that same as that provided as part of the Housing Assistance Policy 2022.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information was provided as part of the Housing Assistance Policy 2022.

Key Decision Reference (Y/N):

Appendix 1

Draft Framework Agreement



Contract Ref - Lot
6A - Epping Forest L

Appendix 2



HAP excerpt
stairlifts.docx