Appendix 2: Assistive technology, fixed equipment, adaptations and community equipment

Summary

- We will continue to provide assistive technology, fixed equipment, adaptations and community equipment to people who have an assessed eligible need for adult social care.
- We are moving towards enabling these individuals to purchase products themselves using a direct payment.
- We are supporting providers to develop their retail market so that people who are not eligible can also purchase equipment directly.
- We will be stopping the routine maintenance of most fixed equipment – this equipment belongs to the person using it and is generally covered by warranty.

Current services

Current commitments and recommended savings are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Committed expenditure 2016/17 (£m)</th>
<th>Savings 2016/17 (£m)</th>
<th>Savings 2017/18 (£m cumulative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology for people with long term conditions (in Section 75 with SSOTP)</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology for people with learning disabilities (SCC Budget)</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Community Equipment (in Section 75 for ICES)</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>-0.100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Improvement Agency (SCC Budget)</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Works &amp; Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Top Ups (SCC Budget)</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Equipment Maintenance (SCC Budget)</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Equipment Staff (SCC Budget)</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.532</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.750</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.107</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Details of savings and impact
• **Assistive Technology for people with long term conditions.** People who have an assessed eligible need for adult social care will be offered Assistive Technology, where this can contribute to meeting those needs. Increasingly we will be offering direct payments that enable individuals to purchase products themselves. People who are not eligible will no longer be offered Assistive Technology products for free. We are supporting providers to develop their retail market so that these individuals can purchase products directly from the supplier. For people who are not eligible and who already have Assistive Technology the County Council will no longer pay towards monitoring costs and will support these individuals to make a decision about whether they want to take over these costs themselves.

• **Assistive Technology for people with learning disabilities.** This budget has been underspent in previous years and the reduction will have no impact on current service provision.

• **Home Improvement Agency (HIA).** The HIA provides advice, assistance and support for people who are adapting their home through a DFG. The County Council is in discussion with the District Councils about the possibility of meeting these costs from the increased DFG funding in 2016/17. There is ongoing work to redesign the DFG pathway which may reduce the need for the HIA to be involved.

• **Minor Works & DFG Top Ups.** This budget has been underspent in previous years and the reduction will have minimal impact on current service provision. There is ongoing work to redesign the DFG pathway to remove top ups, simplify and speed up the process, which will reduce the need for minor works.

• **Fixed Equipment Maintenance.** The County Council offers free maintenance for fixed equipment such as specialist stair lifts, baths, toilets and hoists for people who have had major adaptations through a DFG. In most of these cases this is a discretionary service (except for hoists being used by care staff). It is proposed that this service is reduced to one which meets statutory responsibilities. In some cases maintenance will be covered by a warranty. In others, householders who have fixed equipped installed can add the item to their household building and contents insurance which should cover breakdown as well as accidental damage.

**Consultation**

• Consultation has been through a project group, which has involved Clinical Commissioning Groups, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership Trust, Medequip, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, District Councils, and Assistive Technology Service Providers.

• The group have explored a range of options in order to reach the recommendations listed above, taking into account:
  - The potential impact of the proposed savings on people and communities.
  - The financial benefit of each option.
  - The implications for demand on other services.
  - The quality and availability of alternative services.
  - Legal implications.
  - Risk and benefits associated with each option explored.
Findings of CIA: risks and mitigation

Ensuring that people can continue to maintain their independence and fixed equipment continues to be operational. – the proposal includes a period of transition to enable communication with current users and allow them time to put in place new maintenance arrangements. All new fixed equipment is supplied with a warranty.

Failure of market to provide a retail options for Assistive Technology – the current market in Staffordshire already has providers who provide a retail model for AT for self-referrals and self-funders.

People with assessed care needs being unable to access AT and possible increase in face to face care required as a result – implementation plan allows for eligible users to transition to the new model after their annual review. People will be able to use their DP to fund AT.

Impact on the Contract for ICES and potential effect on volume and activity guarantees – the proposal includes options for adding new areas of activity within the contract which will reduce the impact on volume and activity.

Potential impact on staff employed by SCC – to be determined once the implementation plan is finalised.

Implementation Plan

To be developed but to include negotiation with existing contractors, development of a communications plan for all people currently benefitting from the services and scheduling of reviews with assessment and care management providers.