

HousingNorthwest

DFG Event – 15 June 2007

Workshop 1:

DFG's, the new ways of operating the system

Shaun Robinson, Development Consultant (North) Foundations

Issues following Shaun's presentation:

- It was suggested that local authorities work towards unit rates. Some have received advice from legal to suggest that this doesn't give the applicant choice. This was seen as causing delays in the process and could be taken forward with CLG. Unit rates can be benchmarked to ensure consistency and value for money.
- Could be sub-regional bids for DFG allocation but these would need evidenced needs analysis. Difficult to allocate as no governance structures in place. The NE are working towards this.
- Some authorities could be underbidding for DFG allocation due to not being able to afford the 40% match funding. Some have been other capital programmes including urban renewal money. In some LA's it was identified that the money can run out by Christmas.
- Differences identified with RSL adaptations, some LA's funding all requests, in other, tenants are going on a waiting list. No SLA's in place with many RSL's and LA's. RSL's find this an easy budget to axe. Regenda have bid to the Housing Corporation for match funding.
- Handy persons schemes are operating in some areas – Rochdale do a large amount of work and Blackpool provide a good service. Some are charged at full cost, and some on hospital discharge schemes. A question around whether health should be funding this as it is social intervention rather than stock condition.
- DFG applicants are also accessing decent homes grants and some LA's are proactively looking for Category 1 hazards. There is an issue with HHSRS training for Home improvement agency staff. Foundations are able to assist with this.
- Individual budget pilots. This is where there is a pool of funding for various schemes for applicants to access, to be used like disability

living allowance. People can spend this on what they want around a care package.