



TIME LEAN Review

Disabled Facilities Grants

TIME LEAN INTRODUCTION

TIME LEAN is best practice processing mapping methodology adopted by the Council in 2013. This was on the back of a project managed by iNetwork (NWEgg) to get public sector organisations to use Business Process Improvement (BPI) techniques to achieve service redesign and improvement which has been very successful.

The main principles are:

- efficiency: develop process consisting of value-added tasks only
- consistency: agree, promote and monitor best practice
- training: bring new or inexperienced officers up to speed quickly
- transparency: unlocking measurable detail
- direction: focus on clearly defined aims throughout the process

Lean is: *“about engaging people and aligning systems into processes that deliver a continuous stream of value to customers whilst continuously eliminating waste in the process.”*

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS REVIEW

Much of the time spent during the review in Housing Service has been with Tom Birtwistle. The team consist of four members of staff. In brief Housing Technicians roles involves; visiting customers to assess the changes that are needed, getting quotes for the necessary works, liaising with contractors, overseeing the works and then checking and signing the works off as complete. They also ensure that the necessary paperwork is completed at each stage of the process.

Approvals for all spend are sanctioned by the Team Leader, Tom Birtwistle. Tom is also involved in the prioritisation panel who meet monthly to decide which grants can be carried out in the immediate future based on the customers’ level of need and the funding available.

The service is reactive to the demands placed on it from referrals from Social Services Occupational Therapist team. Applicants must firstly be medically assessed and a suitable referral stating the required works sent to the council.

Demand for DFG adaptations have historically outstripped the financial resources which have been available to the Housing Services team to deliver all the necessary works. As such the council has operated a ‘holding list’ of non-urgent applicants based on medical need. It is important to note anyone with an urgent need for an adapted property is dealt with immediately.

- In April 2015 non urgent applicants were required to wait 80 weeks on the holding list.
- In April 2016 non urgent applicants were required to wait 52 weeks on the holding list.
- In April 2017 the council currently have no applicants on the holding list

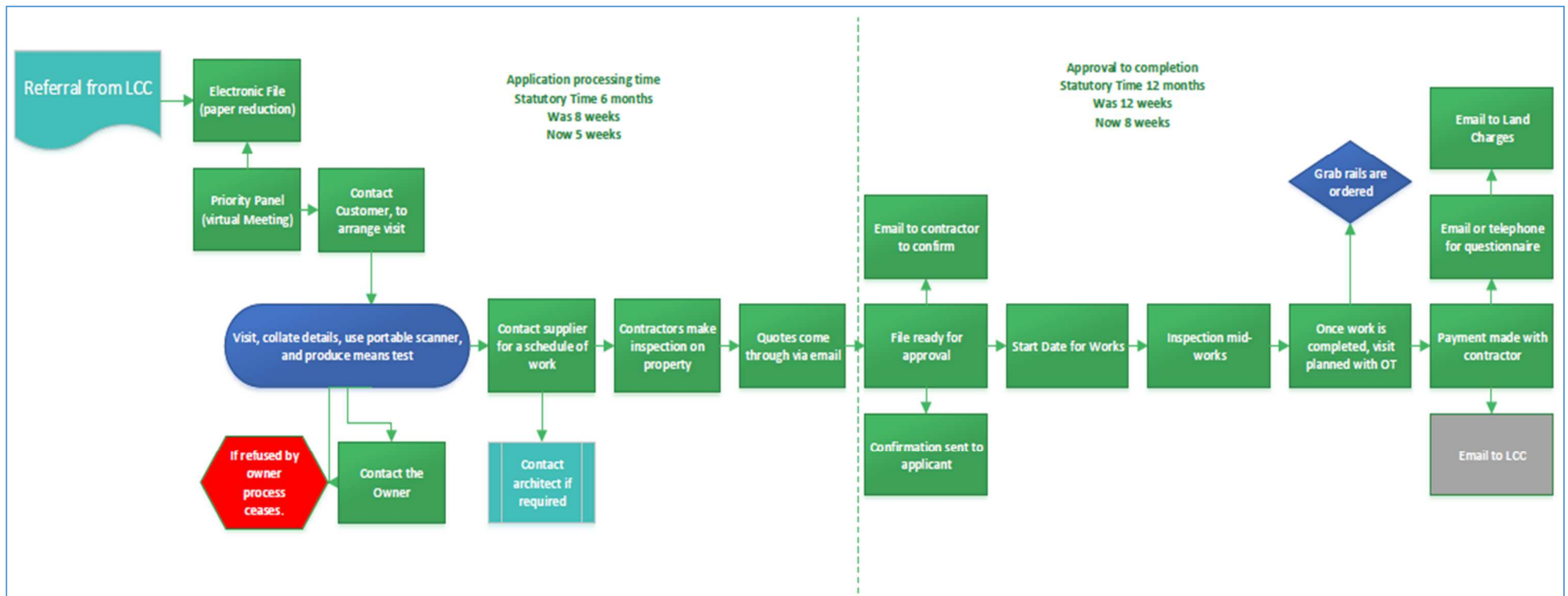
Further data in relation to the housing services DFG performance is captured in a separate report to the Environment, Health and Housing committee June 2017.

FINDINGS & RESULTS

PROCESS MAPPING END RESULTS

Below is a suggested process map for the DFG service following a time lean review. This process map is a simplified version of a complex process and only covers the process which Fylde Council are involved. It excludes equipment purchase and supply which is undertaken by LCC. The Time Lean group suggested changes to improve paper reduction via increasing the use of E-Mail and the possibility to trial an 'electronic file' system. Further work is required to establish the viability of this and the possible purchase of an electronic storage system such as I-DOX to facilitate this.

A recent benchmarking review of processing times by districts across Lancashire highlighted that in 2016/17 Fylde processed DFG's faster than any other district in Lancashire. Delays in the process are often associated with factors which are beyond the control of the council, such delays include ordering and supply of equipment, invoicing from contractors and LCC, delays in the supply of grab rails, conducting asbestos surveys in social housing properties.



ACTION PLAN – THE PLAN OF CHANGES

Current method	Proposed change	Cost/Time saving
Wash/Dry toilet quotes are arranged and paid direct by LCC they invoice FBC after install. Significant delays have occurred after install of shower awaiting install and invoice of wash/dry toilet from LCC process.	Wash/Dry toilet will be ordered direct by FBC. Supplied to contractor who will install during bathroom conversion. DFG contractors to be trained on install process (free training)	6-8 week reduction in time for install of wash/dry toilet. Improved customer satisfaction. 4 week reduction in wait for invoice from LCC.
Copies of benefit letters are taken, copied and returned to applicants for approval at initial visit.	Officer to witness document on original visit and sign declaration. Photograph taken or scanned?	1x visit reduction to return forms. 3x paper saved from reduction in photocopying
Means testing is undertaken by hand by senior technical officer and then checked by Principal Housing Services Officer.	Purchase of the Ferret renovator software for automatic calculation of means test. (financial cost £235 for first year and £190 per year after)	3 hours (estimate) of officer time per non passported means test.
Quotes and invoices are sent via letter to contractors.	Quotes and invoices to be sent via electronic mail where & when possible	2x Letters. Time saving 3-5 days dependent on postage.
FBC notify LCC on completion of DFG via letter	FBC to send notification of completed DFG via E-Mail	1x Letter.
Customer satisfaction questionnaire sent by post with SAE.	FBC to send questionnaire via E-Mail where possible	Paper and postage saving

TIME LEAN RECOMMEDATIONS SUMMARY

Based on the process mapping analysis by the TIME LEAN group, the following point below is the main key recommendations that still needs further consideration.

- 1) Officer to witness document on original visit and sign declaration, OR photograph taken or scan required documentation.
 - This would eliminate the need of repeat visits, and provide a better service for the customer to deal with the checks at one visit.
 - Reviewing what other neighbouring authorities do in this instance has shown that most do not require a copy of the checks, removing the audit requirement based on trust and responsible given to officers. The question is, does this audit requirement help the customer? Do we legal require the information? If the answer is both no then we need to review this particular process.

Final point - There appears to be some external dependencies in the process regarding LCC, contractors and registered providers that could be further improved with response times. However this is out of Fylde's control and something we need challenge whenever possible. Based on the full process mapping review, we feel that there little more changes that could now be applied made that would make the current procedures more LEAN.

HEADLINE RESULTS

CLAIM HANDLING PROCESSING TIME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory 6 months• Current performance is 8 weeks
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSING TIME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory 12 months• Current performance is 12 weeks
PERFORMANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current waiting list 0, last year was over 80.• 94% of the 935,000k 2016/17 DFG budget committed

Performance over the past 12 months has been excellent. Credit and praise should be directed to Tom Birtwistle and DFG his team for their efforts and contribution.



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