



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

TOPIC – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FUEL POVERTY REDUCTION INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Sara-Kay Baker, 01962 848593, sbaker@winchester.gov.uk

Democratic Services Officer:

Nancy Graham, 01962 848235, ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

In order to assist those most in need in the District, the Council agreed at its meeting of 20 February 2014 (report CL92) that £60,000 should be made available in each of the next two years for fuel poverty reduction measures.

An Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG) was appointed to recommend how these funds would be best deployed to tackle this issue. The ISG reported the outcome of their review to The Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 27 October 2014 (report OS108). The Committee supported the recommendations of the ISG in full and recommended that they be taken forward by the Portfolio Holder for decision.

The actions recommended by the ISG would help ensure our communities are healthy and warm in their homes, whilst working towards a lower carbon District through domestic energy efficiency.

Under the Localism Act 2011, Section 1, the Council has the power to do anything an individual may do, subject to specific limitations set out in the Section. An individual can give grant aid and incur expenditure as considered in this notice, and there are no restrictions in other legislation which would restrict the use of the general power for this purpose. Accordingly, the Council is able to undertake the actions recommended pursuant to Section 1 of the 2011 Act.

DECISION

- a) That the final recommendations of the Fuel Poverty Reduction ISG are agreed for implementation as set out below:
1. That funds be deployed to support the delivery of Hampshire County Council's 'Hitting the Cold Spots' and WinACC's 'Home Energy Advice Resource' - complementary schemes that signpost, support and offer emergency assistance to residents living in fuel poverty. This includes the deployment of £55,204 in 2014-15 and £59,148 in 2015-16 for both schemes.
 2. That the forthcoming Energy Strategy for Council-owned properties prioritises fuel-poor households (SAP rating E, F or G and low household income) for energy efficient enhancements. The strategy must provide a cost benefit analysis on fuel efficient technologies, which can be used as guidance for private homeowners/tenants and landlords across the District.
 3. That Housing Services continue to proactively introduce and pilot fuel efficient technologies, and subsequently acquire the necessary expertise to identify which technology is best suited to the property type and household make-up.
 4. That in support of the Private Sector Housing stock condition survey £4,000 be allocated to the survey costs required to generate strategic fuel poverty data for the District, and the remaining funds (c. £1,600) be reserved for targeting and directing those households identified as fuel-poor to the services of Hitting the Cold Spots and the Home Energy Advice Resource.
 5. That the Housing Services' leaflet 'Keep your home free from Condensation, Damp and Mould' be reviewed by the TACT readers panel to ensure the effectiveness of ventilation alongside heating is highlighted, and then used to raise further awareness amongst Council tenants.
 6. That the Council actively seeks to participate in appropriate and significant networks to learn and share best practice in this area.
- b) That the 2014/15 budget allocation of £60,000 to support these recommendations be made available with immediate effect in order to implement the recommended activities in time for this winter. These include:

1. The full cost of Hampshire County Council's 'Hitting the Cold Spots' enhanced programme for Winchester, set out in Appendix B to the Report OS108, at £45,000;
2. A match funding contribution towards WinACC's 'Home Energy Advice Resource', set out in Appendix C to Report OS108, at £10,204;
3. Supplementary work to generate strategic fuel poverty data for private sector housing in the District, set out in paragraph 5.1 of Report OS108, at £4,000.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

All of the alternative options were considered by the original ISG who have recommended the actions within this PHD.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

This decision utilises the £60,000 allocated by Council (report CL92) for both 2014-15 and 2015-16 from the Major Investment Reserves.

<i>Fuel Poverty Reduction</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>
Budget Allowance (£)	60,000	60,000
<i>Allocation</i>		
Hitting the Cold Spots – enhanced programme for Winchester (HCC)	45,000	37,000
Home Energy Advice Resource (WinACC)	10,204	22,148
Stock Condition Survey (Private Sector Housing)	4,000	-
Targeting & directing fuel poor households (Private Sector Housing)	796	852
Total (£)	60,000	60,000

Some of the recommendations impact on staff time; however, where possible these recommendations are in alignment with the officer / team's allocated workload. The recommendations provide focus within these areas to ensure that fuel poverty and those affected remain a priority for the Council.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

These recommendations were put forward by an ISG and considered by Members of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 October 2014 (Report OS108).

**FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION
NOTICE**

None.

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR
OFFICER CONSULTED**

N/A

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 12.11.14

Councillor Jan Warwick – Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing