

**Report to:** Community Services Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
**Report of:** Energy Manager  
**Subject:** Service Unit Performance Reporting - Energy Conservation  
**Ward:** All

## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide information on the progress with the District of Easington Fuel Poverty and energy conservation schemes;
- 1.2 This report summarises the main schemes and activities that have taken place over the period October to December 2008 in line with the corporate Fuel Poverty Strategy and Warm Homes Campaign.

## **2.0 Consultation**

- 2.1 In preparing this report we have consulted with the Executive Member for Social Inclusion and Culture, Executive Member for Liveability and Head of Housing.

## **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2003 requires the eradication of Fuel Poverty by 2016 and sits alongside the Home Energy Conservation Act 1997 which sets a national target of a 30% reduction in domestic energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions over the same time period.

## **4.0 Position Statement**

- 4.1 Fuel poverty occurs when a household has to pay more than 10% of their income to provide an adequate level of heating to maintain a healthy indoor environment;
- 4.2 The District of Easington Fuel Poverty Strategy seeks to maximise external funding opportunities for energy conservation and fuel poverty schemes. Delivery is via the corporate Warm Homes Campaign to provide warmer healthier homes using a variety of schemes.

## **5.0 National Performance Framework NI 187 (Fuel Poverty)**

- 5.1 The Government have introduced National Indicator 187 to monitor levels of fuel poverty at a local level;
- 5.2 Regionally the levels of fuel poverty are estimated at 29% and rising due to increases in utility bills;
- 5.3 Due to the Warm Homes Campaign and capital funded fuel poverty intervention schemes the level of fuel poverty in Easington District is 12.2%.

## **5.4 NI 187 Best Practice Pilot Scheme**

- 5.5 District of Easington has been invited to attend a meeting with Joan Ruddock MP Fuel Poverty Minister in January 2009 to showcase our Warm Homes Campaign and fuel poverty targeting database;
- 5.6 Easington is one of the few Local Authorities nationally to have a whole stock energy

# Item no.

database for all 38,000 Council and private dwellings. This places Easington in a unique position nationally being able to identify all individual households to be targeted under NI187;

- 5.7 The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the proposal to undertake best practice guidance for Local Authorities on reporting of NI 187, developing a whole stock targeting database and working with partners to maximize the help available to fuel poor households.

## **6.0 Energy Performance Certificates**

- 6.1 As from October 2008 all new tenants in Council properties will be issued with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) supplying information on the energy performance of their home;

- 6.2 District of Easington have obtained DEFRA approval to develop best practice guidance for Local Authorities in production of EPC's. This scheme in partnership with East Durham Homes and the national fuel poverty charity aimed at demonstrating how to provide added value to the issue of EPC's;

- 6.3 To date 152 EPC's have been issued to council tenants.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

There are no direct financial implications as the initiatives contained within this report are already funded and there are no new commitments made.

### **7.2 Legal**

There are no direct legal implications.

### **7.3 Policy**

This report is in line with the District of Easington Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011.

### **7.4 Local Government Review**

This report does not introduce any new commitments for the new Authority post- April 2009, and the good practice currently undertaken by District of Easington Council will be fed into the Housing Workstream as part of the overall LGR transition project.

### **7.5 Risk**

The key risk identified is the risk of not being able to maximise future funding opportunities if the Council's approach to Fuel Poverty is not updated.

### **7.6 Communications**

The schemes detailed in the Strategy document will continue to be promoted through Infopoint and the Corporate Website as well as District-wide as part of the ongoing Warm Homes Campaign.

## **8.0 Corporate Implications**

### **8.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities**

The update of the Council's Fuel Poverty Strategy is in line with the Transitional Plan priority of recognising those services and activities that are exemplars of good practice and of 'managing and monitoring' our existing service priorities.

### **8.2 Equality and Diversity**

The Council's approach to tackling Fuel Poverty, as set out in the Strategy document, is specifically targeted at vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups. The

updated version has been referred to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer for consideration for an Impact Assessment.

### 8.3 **E-Government**

There are no E-Government implications.

### 8.4 **Procurement**

There are no Procurement implications.

## 9.0 **Recommendations**

9.1 That Members note the contents information provided in the report and the positive progress made.

**Item no.**

CSSC Report 17 01 09.doc