

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

**22ND MAY 2008**

**UPDATE ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY GROUP**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E.
Responsible Head of Service	Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This provides an up date of the work of the Energy Efficiency Group established to promote and pursue actions to secure more efficient energy use by the Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To consider the progress of the Energy Efficiency Group.
- 2.2 To consider the work of the Energy Efficiency Group in the context of determining whether it is required to establish a scrutiny task group addressing climate change.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Energy Efficiency Group has met twice since its inception in January 2008. The group is chaired by Councillor Mrs. Jill Dyer and draws representation from across the Council's departments.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Steering Group requested an up date on the work of the Energy Efficiency Group and sought to consider the work of the Energy Efficiency Group to determine whether it should establish a task group to scrutinise the issue of climate change.
- 3.3 The Energy Efficiency Group has primarily been established to monitor the progress with pursuing the recommendations of the Energy Savings Trust (EST). The EST carried out work on behalf of the Council looking at areas where energy efficiency savings could be identified.
- 3.4 Progress in pursuit of these recommendations is considerable and is added to this report as an appendix.

- 3.5 Although the primary focus of the Energy Efficiency Group has been on the EST report, the Group has also begun to consider wider sustainability issues as many of the recommendations contained in the EST report are inter-linked with other aspects of the Council's activities.
- 3.6 The Energy Efficiency Group has begun to explore the possibility of corporate actions to promote sustainability and departmental approaches to sustainability.
- 3.7 Sustainability is not a priority of this Council. Therefore, the Council has to be mindful of the level of resources it can commit to this area. However, there is a keenness amongst officers to promote sustainability and formulate policies and approaches that will contribute towards a more sustainable organisation.
- 3.8 The Council is already active in a number of areas related to sustainability, but currently there is limited co-ordination and focus for those activities.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The principal financial implication at this stage is that through energy efficiency measures the Council can secure savings.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications, although legislation is being developed to promote reductions in carbon emissions and to promote greater energy efficiency.

#### **6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 Efficient use of energy does have links to housing and performance objectives.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The risk associated with the Energy Efficiency Group work is that the impact of carbon emissions can be significant on the environment.
- 7.2 There is the risk of not maximising the benefits of efficient energy use and not realising savings.

#### **8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The more efficient use of energy demonstrates to customers the Council's commitment to use resources effectively and to reducing costs.

**9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There is not a direct link to equality and diversity.

**10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Through more effective use of resources there will be a contribution to value for money. Use of energy saving lights and a consciousness regarding consumption of resources can contribute positively to VfM.

**11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues – There is a powerful connection with procurement, not only in terms of procuring sustainable products, but also in terms of approaches to purchasing and drawing on economies of scale and monitoring energy use so it is used efficiently.
Personnel Implications – May have implications for working from home policy.
Governance/Performance Management - None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - None
Policy – Procurement; Value for Money; Working from Home; Travel; Strategic Housing and Planning
Environmental – This has major implications for environment as efficient use of resources forms a major part of environmental protection and sustainable communities.

**12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	Yes
Executive Director - Services	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes

Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

**13. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**14. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Progress Report on Energy Saving Trust Recommendations

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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## Progress Report on Energy Saving Trust Recommendations

- a. In terms of addressing the priorities identified by the Energy Savings Trust in their survey for Bromsgrove District Council in March 2007. The following update was given:
- b. Establish top-level commitment, as this is critical for the allocation of resources and the provision of support to staff. Linked to this:**
- c. Establish an 'energy champion' at a senior level. This individual should take the lead in developing partnerships and could also lead an internal steering group on energy.**
- d. The Council have nominated the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects to be the energy champion.
- e. Set up a steering group on energy that includes representatives from eg environment, finance, regeneration, planning, building control, community planning etc.**
- f. A steering group has been established representing a cross section of Departments.
- g. Talk to the council's energy supplier about introducing different meters and establish a system for monitoring energy data, even for the buildings with low consumption of energy and use this information to benchmark Bromsgrove's performance with other councils.**
- h. This is now being pursued. See paragraph 1c above
- i. Consider applying to take part in the next round of the Carbon Trust's of the Local Authority Carbon Management programme. Phase 5 of this programme will be launched in May 2007 to 30 local authorities.**
- j. This has not been pursued although conversations are taking place with the Carbon Trust and BDC staff have attended events organised by that organisation
- k. Introduce a strategy and action plan with a target for reducing energy consumption by a given date.**

- l. Data is being collected and analysed and once this has been completed a strategy and action plan will be prepared. This is likely to be completed by March 2009.
- m. Increase the time available for the HECA officer post, use energy efficiency data from the rolling survey to ensure resources are targeted appropriately, and set a target of bringing domestic carbon emissions below the national average.**
- n. Energy Efficiency questionnaires are sent out annually to Bromsgrove District, WEEAC analyse the information and feed back to the Private Sector Housing Team. Data is also collated from house inspections from both internal and external agencies. Grants, enforcement activity and advice are targeted to these areas and formally mapped to identify take up of the energy efficiency measures within Bromsgrove.
- o. Focus on developing schemes to promote sustainable energy to owner occupiers.**
- p. The Private Sector Housing Team have a Renewable Energy Grant schemes available in promoting a variety of technologies to home owners and non-profit community buildings. The budget has been set for £10,000 which will enable approximately 10 households within Bromsgrove to implement Renewable Energy technologies on or in their properties. The grant is a 50% match funded grant with a maximum limit of £1000. Leaflets and application forms have been produced and are currently being promoted.
- q. Create an overarching energy strategy and action plan that makes reference to existing strategies such as the housing strategy and the climate change action plan. This strategy should contain specific targets that are in line with national targets and should include an action plan showing how the HECA target will be met. It should also include a section on improving the energy efficiency of the council's estate and a section on tackling energy in the wider community.**
- r. Work has commenced on preparing a sustainability framework. The framework details the concept and scope of sustainability and considers the Council's internal and external responsibilities. It will provide definitions for sustainability, climate change and biodiversity. It will detail responsibilities in line with legislation and best practice and will contain information on the Council's work around energy; biodiversity; waste and litter; transport; water; pollution and health and well being.

- s. Allocate resources for the implementation of this overarching action plan.**
- t. Consideration is being given to identifying resources to carry out this work. Currently, work associated with sustainability is being undertaken over and above current duties as this is not regarded as a priority for the Council. It may prove possible to examine future vacancies and build some of the duties associated with sustainability strategy into that post. It was recognised that co-ordination was required for sustainability work. However, it was accepted that additional resources were not presently available and the Council budget did not provide for expansion in expenditure in this area at this time.
- u. Work with local housing associations to ensure that assessments of affordable warmth are incorporated into assignment procedures.**
- v. Ensure that energy efficiency is a regular item on the agenda of quarterly RSL Liaison Meetings with preferred partners to establish and monitor RSL standards and targets for energy efficiency in both new build projects and programmes for upgrading energy efficiency in existing affordable housing stock.
- w. Establish an energy training strategy and initiate an energy efficiency training programme with all staff (especially frontline staff). Include energy efficiency training in the induction programme for all new staff. This should ideally include key people from different departments.**
- x. This recommendation has not yet been addressed
- y. Initiate training with planners about energy efficiency, but more particularly renewable energy. This should include advice about how to 'future-proof' houses by exceeding the building regulations.**
- z. This recommendation has not yet been addressed
- aa. Train all outreach staff on energy saving measures.**
- bb. This recommendation has not yet been addressed
- cc. Use the 'Meeting the 10 per cent' publication to assist with the development of Bromsgrove's policy for renewable energy generation.**
- dd. This is being considered by the Planning Department, but not enacted as yet.**

**ee. Consider producing Supplementary Planning Document on energy efficiency and renewables aimed at householders that encourages them to exceed the building regulations when extending or refurbishing their home. As part of this explore waiving requirements for planning permission for certain renewable energy sources for households.**

ff. This recommendation has not been addressed.

**gg. Keep up to date on all available funding**

hh. The Council understands that DEFRA funding is being provided through the West Midland Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and contact has been made with them to enquire about means of accessing this funding.

**ii. Monitor the proportion of nationally available grant funding that is spent in the area to ensure that Bromsgrove is getting its 'fair share'.**

jj. This recommendation has not been pursued.