

Appendix 2 Proposed Changes to Eligibility Criteria

Table 1 Proposed Changes with Reasons

| Change to criteria | Reason |
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| The property must have been in the current ownership for at least 12 months. | If there is defective heating in the property then it is expected that the value of the property would be decreased accordingly and this will assist with having sufficient funding to improve the heating. This in in line with other council funding schemes such as Home Repairs Assistance. |
| Discontinue the element of the scheme which contributes £500 towards assisting those with a household income below the Worcestershire average to replace inefficient heating systems (£2000 of spend in the scheme so far). | Although it would be ideal to continue this element of the scheme it has less impact as it is more relevant to reducing the risk of future fuel poverty than reducing current fuel poverty. |
| Realign household incomes thresholds following changes to government criteria for the energy company obligation, see Table 2. | The purpose of this government change was to make the income thresholds fairer for larger households. |
| Exclude income for a specific purpose from income threshold calculations e.g. DLA, PIP. | Some households were being excluded from the scheme on the basis of income from DLA or PIP, where this funding was for e.g. mobility and transport needs and so could not be used towards heating measures. |
| Continue to include child maintenance payments in income threshold calculations. | Child maintenance is to assist with all aspects of looking after a child, including keeping them adequately warm. |
| A savings cap of £16,000 had already been introduced, in-line with government led energy company obligation funding. Reduce funding for households with savings above £6000 (the level of savings above which benefits are incrementally reduced), see Table 3. | The changes decrease the demand on public funds, by increasing the onus on those with above a certain level of savings to use these savings before public funds are used. At the same time, some assistance is still provided; allowing householders to retain some savings for future needs. The aim is to spend where there is most need without removing the incentive to save. |
| For cases with loft and/or cavity insulation with no heating works: £50 household contribution required towards the cost of works. | £250 (as for heating measures) would be a proportionately high contribution for these lower value works. As these measures are also less obvious, a higher proportional contribution is likely to deter uptake. |
| The grant for boiler servicing is increased from £35 to £70 (therefore fully funded on a one-off basis per household). | This should increase uptake of this highly beneficial element of the scheme, with the aim that residents may then commit to this on a regular basis. Administration of this element of the scheme was excessively onerous for contractors when it was partially funded, deterring uptake. |
| For any boiler repairs that are economic, the maximum grant is increased from £150 to £300. | It is more cost effective all round for a resident to receive a £300 repair to a partially functioning boiler than be deterred from completing that repair by a £150 contribution, leading to the need for a boiler replacement in the near future. |

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Table 2 Qualifying benefits/income threshold:

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| Qualifying benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Support Pension Credit Guarantee (not pension saving credit) Jobseekers allowance (JSA) (income based) Employment Support Allowance (ESA) (income based) | | | | | |
| <u>OR</u> | | | | | |
| Qualifying household income threshold | | | | | |
| Household income before tax, depending on household composition, as below: | | | | | |
| | 0 Children | 1 Child | 2 Children | 3 Children | 4 or more Children |
| Single Adult | £13,200 | £17,400 | £21,600 | £25,800 | £30,000 |
| Two Adults or more | £19,800 | £24,000 | £28,200 | £32,400 | £36,600 |

Table 3 Qualifying savings threshold

| | Householder contribution | Maximum grant |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Savings up to £6000 | £250 (or £50 if insulation measures only) | £5000 |
| Savings between £6000 and £11000 | Savings amount (£) minus £6000 | £5000 minus savings amount (£) over £6000 |
| Savings over £11000 | Cost of works | No funding |

Example: If the householder has £8000 savings, they would have to make a contribution of £2000 (£8000-£6000) and the maximum grant would be £3000 (£5000-£2000). If the works cost £3000, the grant would be £1000. If the works cost £8000, the mandatory householder contribution would be £2000, the grant would be £3000 and the remaining £3000 would either have to be contributed by the householder or found from other sources.