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Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport

1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport – Councillor K Caan

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive - Place

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Progress Report to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Regarding Energy Conservation Measures in the Housing Sector

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**Is this a key decision?**

No. Although the content of the report relates to all Wards in the City, as it is a progress report the impact is not expected to be significant.

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**Executive Summary:**

Local authorities have duties under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) to prepare reports on measures to improve energy efficiency in residential accommodation for submission to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

HECA requires that reports are submitted at two yearly intervals. There is also a continuing requirement that the latest report should be made available to the public on the Council's website.

From time to time the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS) issues guidance to local authorities on the reporting requirements. Following the publication of new guidance by DBEIS on 5 January 2017, a report was last approved by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport on 13 February 2017.

The previous guidance has now been superseded by a version published by DBEIS on 17 January 2019. This sets out the requirements for the 2019 report. Amongst the changes made is an extension to the reporting deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March that previously applied. The report must now be submitted to the Secretary of State and published on the Council website by no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

The proposed 2019 HECA report for submission to the Secretary of State and publication on the website is set out in Appendix A to this report. The report is based on the template questions set out in the DBEIS guidance document.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport is requested to:

- (1) Agree to the submission of the HECA report set out in Appendix A to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy by 31 May 2019.
- (2) Agree to the HECA report being made available to the public on the Coventry City Council website.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix A – proposed 2019 HECA report for submission to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

**Background documents:**

None.

**Other useful documents:**

Guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities Issued Pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-english-energy-conservation-authorities-the-home-energy-conservation-act-1995?utm\\_source=2ad41428-f0fe-4a19-9daf-e70dc257b7e9&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-english-energy-conservation-authorities-the-home-energy-conservation-act-1995?utm_source=2ad41428-f0fe-4a19-9daf-e70dc257b7e9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

Council Plan 2016 – 2024:

[http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/10/performance/2089/council\\_plan](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/10/performance/2089/council_plan)

Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024:

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/documents/s43017/Adoption%20of%20Housing%20Homelessness%20Strategy%202019-24.pdf>

Climate Change Strategy 2012 – 2020:

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate\\_change\\_strategy\\_for\\_coventry](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate_change_strategy_for_coventry)

Coventry and Warwickshire Health Protection Strategy 2017 – 2021:

<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-630-1096>

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No.

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No.

**Report title:** Progress Report to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Regarding Energy Conservation Measures in the Housing Sector

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The Council is required by Section 5 of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) to submit a report to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, and guidance from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS) indicates that it must be submitted by no later than 31 May 2019. The Act requires that the report should relate to measures to improve energy efficiency in residential accommodation, and the report must be prepared with reference to the requirements of the DBEIS guidance.
- 1.2 DBEIS published the current guidance regarding the requirements for the 2019 report on 17 January 2019. The guidance is markedly different from the previous 2017 version. In an effort to streamline the reporting process and reduce the burden on local authorities, and to enable DBEIS to capture a consistent picture of local authority promotion and delivery of energy efficiency in England, the new report template is structured around a set of prescribed questions. Completed reports will be submitted digitally using the online survey tool, SurveyMonkey.

**2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 The Council is required to submit a HECA report to the Secretary of State and to make it accessible to the public on its website, and the Council must also prepare the report with reference to the guidance published by DBEIS that prescribes the set of questions to be answered.
- 2.2 Taking into account the above requirements, there are no realistic alternative options for dealing with this matter. In the past some local authorities have chosen not to comply with the requirements, resulting in letters being sent to their respective Chief Executives, but with no other consequences. This has not been considered here as an alternative option, on the grounds that i) the Council should comply with the legal requirements, ii) it could result in reputational damage if the Council failed to do so, and iii) it is in the Council's interests to inform Government of its approach to improving residential energy efficiency and some of the constraints that apply, with a view to possibly influencing future policy making.
- 2.3 It is therefore recommended that the report set out in Appendix A is submitted, and is made available on the Council's website, in accordance with the requirements.

**3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 Officers maintain a dialogue with a range of partner and stakeholder organisations that have an interest in residential energy efficiency. Consultation will continue in order to i) identify priorities and issues to be addressed, and ii) explore project and funding opportunities where feasible.

**4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 After Cabinet Member approval, the 2019 HECA report will need to be submitted to the Secretary of State by no later than 31 May 2019. The same deadline applies to making the report available on the Council's website.

## **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications within this report as it represents a summary of past and current activity, or planned activity. The budget for this area will become increasingly reliant on grant and trading income rather than core funding. Specific Cabinet Member or Cabinet approval will be sought for new activities where required.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

Under the provisions of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, the Council is required to publish reports on energy conservation measures at various times and send a copy to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## **6. Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

The Council Plan for 2016 – 2024 sets out the vision and priorities for Coventry, and under the heading of Reducing the Impact of Poverty it states that supporting those experiencing fuel poverty is a priority. The approaches to domestic energy efficiency improvements described in the 2019 report will make a contribution to supporting fuel poor households. They will also make a contribution towards the ambitions of the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy, and Climate Change Strategy.

Action to tackle fuel poverty has multiple policy benefits. It will have a positive effect in terms of:

- Improving the quality of housing.
- Increasing disposable incomes.
- Creating employment opportunities.
- Preventing ill health and excess winter deaths arising from the effects of excess cold.
- Improving opportunities for home study and therefore educational attainment.
- Reducing carbon emissions.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

Any potential risks will be identified during the development of policies and projects, and when considering options to assist Coventry households.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

Existing staff and project resources will be required to continue with the Council's approach to supporting fuel poor households.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

Fuel Poverty disproportionately affects householders who are vulnerable, particularly those with ill-health or on low incomes, and those that live in homes that have poor energy efficiency. The approaches described in the 2019 report will help to support some of these householders.

If the Council were to curtail the support it provides to the fuel poor, this would be likely to have negative equalities impacts because of the disproportionate effect on the following protected groups:

Race

DBEIS national statistics indicate that for homes across England, 17% of homes occupied by a person from an ethnic minority are classed as fuel poor, compared to 10% for white occupants.

Age

DBEIS national statistics reveal that 28% of all households in fuel poverty have an occupant aged 60 or over. Furthermore, 43% of fuel poor households include at least one occupant under the age of 16.

Disability

Disabled persons often have a greater need for heat within their homes because of reduced mobility or as a result of their specific condition. DBEIS statistics show that 39% of fuel poor households include a person with a long-term illness or disability.

The figures for Coventry's fuel poor households are unlikely to be significantly different from the DBEIS ones given above.

## **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

The housing sector is responsible for a substantial proportion of air emissions in the city. The latest DECC figures for carbon dioxide available for 2016 show that Coventry's domestic emissions were 458,700 tonnes, which is 34.3% of total city emissions. Energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock will play an important part in reducing carbon emissions.

## **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

The approaches described in the report will have potentially positive implications for partner organisations with a shared interest in improving the energy efficiency of homes in Coventry.

### **Report author:**

**Name and job title:**

David Shiner

Domestic Energy Efficiency Manager, Sustainability and Low Carbon Team.

**Directorate:**

Place

**Tel and email contact:**

024 7683 1356

[david.shiner@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:david.shiner@coventry.gov.uk)

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	29.1.19	6.2.19
Davina Blackburn	Regulatory Services Manager	Place	29.1.19	6.2.19
Sarah Watson	Head of Energy and Low Carbon	Place	30.1.19	5.2.19
Nadia Inglis	Consultant in Public Health	People	30.1.19	30.1.19
Karen Mihajlovic	Senior HR Adviser Place/Resources	Place	30.1.19	6.2.19
Richard Moon	Assistant Director, Project Management & Property Services	Place	30.1.19	7.2.19
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and Members)</b>				
Mark Williams	Lead Accountant Business Partner	Place	30.1.19	30.1.19
Sarah Harriott	Corporate Governance Lawyer	Place	30.1.19	30.1.19
Martin Yardley	Executive Director, Place	Place	11.2.19	12.2.19
Councillor K Caan	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport	-	25.2.19	5.3.19

This report is published on the council's website: [www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)

**Appendix A – proposed 2019 HECA report for submission to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

***Headline and Overview***

***Name of Local Authority***

Coventry City Council

***Type of Local Authority***

City Council

***Name and contact details of official submitting the report***

David Shiner [david.shiner@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:david.shiner@coventry.gov.uk)

***Job title of official submitting the report***

Domestic Energy Efficiency Manager

***Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool***

Affordable Warmth Team  
Public Health  
Sustainability and Low Carbon Team  
Property Licensing Scheme

***Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE) broken down by team if possible***

Affordable Warmth Team – 2 FTEs  
Public Health – 0.1 FTE  
Sustainability and Low Carbon Team – 7.7 FTEs  
Property Licensing Scheme – 5.8 FTEs (2 FTE vacancies at the present time)

***Question 1 - Does your local authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties? (Y/N)***

Yes.

***Question 2 - If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here.***

The Council's strategy on carbon reduction and energy efficiency is set out in more than one document:

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate\\_change\\_strategy\\_for\\_coventry](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate_change_strategy_for_coventry)

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/documents/s43017/Adoption%20of%20Housing%20Homelessness%20Strategy%202019-24.pdf>

<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-630-1096>

**Question 3 - If no, are you planning to develop one? (Y/N)**

Not applicable.

**Question 4a - What scheme(s) has your local authority implemented to support energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) since 2017? (If you have not implemented any scheme, please enter N/A)**

**Free text response to question 4a – please outline in no more than 200 words**

The Council's Affordable Warmth Team and Public Health collaborate closely to develop and deliver projects that will provide maximum support within the limited resources available. Most projects are focused on helping low income and vulnerable householders who have health conditions that are affected by their cold homes. Since the last HECA report in March 2017, the following projects have been undertaken:

Keeping Coventry Warm - providing a quick response service to help low income and vulnerable households whose boilers and heating systems have failed. Without this service very vulnerable individuals would be left without heating in the cold winter months.

Warmer Homes in Coventry - provides insulation and heating measures funded by the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). The Council has taken advantage of the new ECO Flexible Eligibility provisions introduced by the Government in 2017 to help a broader range of low income and vulnerable householders, including those with health conditions.

Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders – Disabled householders are particularly vulnerable to the adverse health effects of cold homes. This project provides external wall insulation and other insulation and heating improvements for low income householders who have recently received a Disabled Facilities Grant from the Council.

Heating Assistance Preventing Hospital Admissions – provides heating repairs and improvements, and affordable warmth advice, for vulnerable and low income individuals identified by hospital discharge services and home care providers providing personal care.

Affordable Warmth on Prescription - this pilot project operated in the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Seven GP practices in Coventry, with large numbers of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) cases on their patient lists, were selected as project partners. Patients with COPD and other conditions affected by the cold were helped with insulation and heating improvements.

Affordable Warmth Advice and Information - The Affordable Warmth Team provides wide-ranging advice and information and this includes help with energy saving/carbon abatement.

**Question 4b - What scheme(s) is your local authority planning to implement in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties in the next two years? (if you are not planning to implement any scheme, please enter N/A)**



**Free text response to question 4b - please outline in no more than 200 words**

For residential accommodation, the Council hopes to be able to continue delivering the following projects over the next two years; Warmer Homes in Coventry, Keeping Coventry Warm, Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders, Heating Assistance Preventing Hospital Admissions and Affordable Warmth Advice and Information. Delivery will be subject to staffing resources and project funding being available. There is considerable uncertainty about project funding for 2019/20 onwards. The inadequacy of Government funding for local authorities, and deficiencies in the Government's ECO scheme, continue to limit their ability to provide energy saving and carbon reduction services for all who need them.

The Council is currently party to a consortium bid for funding from the Warm Homes Fund along with neighbouring authorities. If successful, this would provide an additional staff resource from September 2019 to identify and refer vulnerable householders for affordable warmth assistance.

Partly funded by the European Regional Development Fund, the Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Programme supports businesses with fewer than 250 employees based in Coventry and Warwickshire who want to save money on energy, waste and water bills and maximise low carbon opportunities. The Council programme provides grants and free energy and resource efficiency audits to help identify where energy, water and waste savings can be made. Companies can receive grants to make energy efficiency improvements such as LED lighting, insulation and new heating systems. The current programme is a continuation of a previous ERDF funded programme and runs from January 2019 to December 2021.

**Question 5 - What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of running and administering the scheme(s), such as the value of grants and other support made available, plus any other costs incurred (such as administration) as desired? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.**

**Free text response to question 5 - please outline in no more than 100 words**

Keeping Coventry Warm – £35,000 of Public Health funding in 2017/18, and £51,000 in 2018/19, supplemented in 2017/18 with £20,000 from the Better Care Fund for first-time central heating.

Warmer Homes in Coventry – It's disappointing that the Government's ECO scheme still expects fuel poor households to contribute towards the cost of insulation and heating improvements. To help householders who can't afford their contributions, £14,000 of Public Health funding has been spent in 2018/19.

Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders - £200,000 of Disabled Facilities Grant funding in 2018/19, supplemented by ECO funding. A Housing Assistance Policy under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 has been adopted to enable this project to be delivered.

Heating Assistance Preventing Hospital Admissions - £42,000 funding from the Better Care Fund in 2018/19.

Affordable Warmth on Prescription - £39,000 of Public Health funding, and £39,000 match funding from Warm Zones.

Affordable Warmth Advice and Information – approximately 25% of one officer's time in the Affordable Warmth Team is spent providing the advice and information service.

Affordable Warmth staffing costs – the main cost is that of the Affordable Warmth Team, comprising 2 full-time officers. The Team runs all of the above mentioned schemes as well as the Council's Switch and Save scheme to help householders switch to cheaper energy tariffs. In addition, some of the Council's Consultant in Public Health's time is spent supporting affordable warmth work.

Green Business Programme costs for phase 2 2019 – 2021 – a sum of £1,265,680 is available for grants to eligible small to medium sizes business located in Coventry & Warwickshire The amount of ERDF funding to cover salaries and overheads is £732,829 for this 3 year period.

**Question 6 - What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?**

**Free text response to question 6 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

The Public Health service in Coventry is a key stakeholder.

The Affordable Warmth Team works with a wide range of partners to help Coventry residents. It works with insulation and heating contractors, and ECO managing agents, to deliver insulation and heating improvements; and also works with GP practices, private home care providers, and hospital discharge services to identify householders whose health may be impacted by their cold homes.

Local charities such as NEA Coventry, Age UK, Citizens Advice, Groundwork West Midlands and Act on Energy all collaborate to provide affordable warmth assistance.

The focus of the Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Programme is on working with small businesses. The Council collaborates with the CWLEP Growth Hub, Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, and the Federation of Small Businesses to deliver the programme.

**Question 7 - What has been the outcome of the scheme(s) (e.g. energy savings, carbon savings, economic impacts such as job creation and/or increased business competitiveness, societal impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc.)?**

**This does not have to be measured against national data or benchmarks, but rather focuses on the local authority's own monitoring and evaluation.**

**Free text response to question 7 – please outline in no more than 200 words**

Most of the affordable warmth projects undertaken by the Council have eligibility criteria that focus assistance on low income and vulnerable householders who have health conditions that are affected by their cold homes. This focus results in positive outcomes in terms of mitigating the effects of fuel poverty and improving householders' health.

A number of projects are being evaluated to measure the health and wellbeing benefits of investing in insulation and heating measures. Pre-intervention health and wellbeing surveys are being carried out by the Affordable Warmth Team with participating householders, and post-intervention surveys using the same questions will be carried out 12 months afterwards.

Early evidence from a small number of pre and post-intervention surveys completed for the Affordable Warmth on Prescription project shows positive health benefits. Following completion of the insulation and heating work, GP appointments fell, and there was a reduction in emergency GP appointments and hospital appointments. Two thirds of patients had reported that their general health had improved.

All of the contractor's appointed by the Council to work on current affordable warmth projects are based in the Midlands and this will benefit the local economy.

Phase 1 of the Green Business Programme achieved the following outcomes during the period 2016 – 2018:

- 60 local SME businesses received grant funding
- Over 11,667 tonnes of CO2 savings
- 60 new jobs created
- 139 SME businesses received support

**Question 8 - What lessons have you learned from delivering the scheme(s)?**

**Free text response to question 8 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

With 15.3% of all households in Coventry (20,479) in fuel poverty, demand for assistance with insulation and heating improvements is high. Working within funding constraints, projects have to be designed to target those who have the greatest need.

### **Local Communications Strategy**

**Question 9 - Does your local authority provide an advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy? (Y/N)**

Yes.

**Question 10 - If yes to question 9, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter N/A if appropriate)**

**Free text response to question 10 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

Advice for consumers on energy efficiency services and products is available from the Affordable Warmth Team by telephone, e-mail, the Council's website, and by home visit, as well as through weekly surgeries held at Age UK. In 2017/18, 469 households received advice and information from the Affordable Warmth Team, and the Council's webpages received 7665 web page views.

The Council has supported local businesses with free energy efficiency advice, grants and environmental management accreditation for over 22 years. Phase 2 of an ERDF funded Green Business Programme commenced in January 2019, providing audits, advice and financial support to enable SMEs to be more energy efficient.

**Question 11 – How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses? (if you do not, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Local Green Supply Chains')**

**Free text response to question 11 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

Information is made available on the Council's website to encourage consumers to save energy, and details are provided on energy saving products and services. Leaflets are used to promote the advice service provided by the Affordable Warmth Team. Occasionally information on energy saving projects will be published in the Council's Citivision magazine, which is distributed to all households in the city.

For some projects, such as Warmer Homes in Coventry, letters are sent to householders who may wish to have insulation or heating improvements. Benefits and fuel poverty data has been used to target households.

For businesses in Coventry the Council operates a Green Business Network. This allows business of all sizes access to a monthly newsletter, social media platforms and our website which all contains information of saving energy, best practice and relevant news stories and case studies. As part of the network, businesses can attend free events on environmental topics covering energy efficiency. Recent examples have included 'Understanding Your Energy Bills' and 'Renewables Market Place'.

As part of the Green Business Programme the Council is able to undertake energy audits for Small to Medium sized companies within Coventry & Warwickshire, which identifies measures companies could take to save energy and save carbon.

### **Local Green Supply Chains**

**Question 12 – Does your Local Authority promote the use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)? (if you answer no please move onto the next section 'Private Rented Sector')**

Yes.

**Question 13 - If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.**

**Free text response to question 13 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

Reference has already been made to the promotion of products to consumers in the answers to questions 10 and 11.

For businesses, The Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Network promotes energy efficiency via a monthly newsletter, dedicated Twitter, LinkedIn & Facebook accounts, through attendance at exhibitions, advertising in the local press and in publications such as the Chamber of Commerce magazine. The Network raises awareness and promotes best practice in energy and carbon saving. In addition to sponsoring Green Awards and putting on events on topics such as 'Renewables Market Place', 'Understanding Your Energy Bills', 'Battery Storage – The Opportunities' etc.

**Question 14 - What engagement (formal or informal) does your local authority have with local businesses/supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?**

**Free text response to question 14 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

A dedicated Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Network provides advice, news, legislation updates and an event programme to local businesses on all aspects of sustainability, energy efficiency and low carbon.

### **Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards**

**The Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations (the Regulations) apply to all privately rented properties in England and Wales. As of April 2018, all such properties are legally required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least an E before they can be let on a new tenancy. This requirement will then extend to all such properties by 1 April 2020, even if there has been no change in tenant or tenancy (please see BEIS's published guidance documents for the full details on the standard).**

**The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to local authorities, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.**

**Question 15 - Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018? (Y/N)**

**(if you answered no, please move on to the next section 'Financial Support for Energy Efficiency')**

Yes.

**Question 16 - Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard?**

**Free text response to question 16**

The Council's Property Licensing Team leads on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard.

**Question 17 - Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.**

**Free text response to question 17**

Adrian Chowns [adrian.chowns@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.chowns@coventry.gov.uk)

**Question 18 - What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?**

**Free text response to question 18 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

The Council communicates with landlords and tenants by the following means:

- Council's Website – Advice to Private Landlords and Tenants
- Updated Housing Enforcement Policy
- Landlord Forums
- Footer Note on paperwork sent to Landlords

**Question 19 - Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties? (Y/N)**

**If yes, how? If no, please explain.**

**Free text response to question 19 – please outline in no more than 100 words**

Not at the present time. The services provided by the Housing Enforcement Team are currently reactive, however the Council is looking to recruit further officers and introduce self-financing schemes which will enable resources to be allocated to dealing with proactive services, including the enforcement of MEES.

### **Financial Support for Energy Efficiency**

**Question 20 - What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable, please outline the sums, where such funding is sourced, and where it is targeted.**

**(If you do not have any financial assistance programmes, please enter 'N/A' and move onto the next section 'Fuel Poverty')**

**Free text response to question 20 – please outline in no more than 200 words**

Public Health - £51,000 for the Keeping Coventry Warm project, and £14,000 towards the Warmer Homes in Coventry ECO project.

Better Care Fund - £42,000 for the Heating Assistance Preventing Hospital Admissions project.

Disabled Facilities Grant - £200,000 for the Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders project.

ECO – ECO funding is being used in the Warmer Homes in Coventry project and the Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders project. The level of funding available is not fixed, and depends on the number of householders that will be assisted in the financial year and other factors.

Green Business Programme Phase 2 - European Regional Development Funding Priority Axis 4: Supporting the Shift Towards a Low Carbon Economy in All Sectors. £2,056,759 of ERDF investment. £1,265,680 available for grants which are capped at £50,000 at a 40% intervention rate for each eligible small to medium sizes business located in Coventry & Warwickshire.

### **Fuel Poverty**

**Question 21 – Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy? (Y/N)**

**If yes, please describe the scope of the strategy, and the support that is available for low income and vulnerable households to help tackle fuel poverty in your local area. Please also provide a link to your strategy if published.**

**Free text response to question 21 – please outline in no more than 300 words**

The Council does not specifically have a Fuel Poverty Strategy, but strategic priorities and actions to mitigate fuel poverty are set out in the documents referred to below:

#### Council Plan

The Council Plan for 2016 – 2024 sets out the vision and priorities for Coventry, and under the heading of 'Reducing the Impact of Poverty' it states that supporting those experiencing fuel poverty is a priority.

[http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/10/performance/2089/council\\_plan](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/10/performance/2089/council_plan)

### Housing and Homelessness Strategy

An Action Plan is incorporated in the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy, and under the heading of 'Improve the energy efficiency of existing housing, provide affordable warmth assistance, and reduce fuel poverty', the following will be actioned during the period 2019 – 2024:

- Continue to provide affordable warmth advice and information for vulnerable and low income households, by phone, home visits, surgeries, events and the Council website.
- Continue to make Energy Company Obligation funded insulation and heating measures available through a partnership arrangement with an energy supplier or contractor, using the Flexible Eligibility provisions to target vulnerable and low income households.
- Continue to pursue opportunities through the Better Care Fund and other programmes to deliver projects to improve home insulation and heating efficiency, and to provide help to reduce fuel costs and maximise incomes.
- Continue to manage the Council's Switch and Save scheme to offer households the opportunity to switch to cheaper energy tariffs.
- Submit a report to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as required by the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, detailing measures that will lead to significant domestic energy efficiency improvements.
- Take action to enforce regulations regarding minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector.

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/documents/s43019/Adoption%20of%20Housing%20Homelessness%20Strategy%202019-24%20-%20Appendix%202.pdf>

### Climate Change Strategy

One of the stated objectives of the Council's Climate Change Strategy is to improve home energy efficiency and reduce the number of people living in fuel poverty in line with Government targets. The Strategy sets out a series of actions to reduce the carbon footprint from the city's homes and reduce fuel poverty.

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate\\_change\\_strategy\\_for\\_coventry](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/1640/climate_change_strategy_for_coventry)

### Coventry and Warwickshire Health Protection Strategy

The Coventry and Warwickshire Health Protection Strategy 2017 – 2021 has tackling excess winter deaths as one of its priorities, and provides a summary plan with outcomes to be delivered. The outcomes include a reduction in the number of homes experiencing fuel poverty through increasing referrals to commissioned services; widening out affordable warmth initiatives through exploring multi agency commissioning opportunities; and ensuring an ongoing collaborative approach to planning for cold weather across health and care services.

<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-630-1096>

**Question 22 – What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? (enter N/A if not appropriate)**

**Free text response to question 22 – please outline in no more than 200 words**

Residents that are more likely to be in fuel poverty have been identified through a number of different approaches:

- The Government's annual fuel poverty statistics have been used to identify the neighbourhoods with the highest levels to be targeted with letters offering assistance.
- Housing Benefit data has been used to identify those who are on a low income and who are living in the private rented sector.

- Details of recipients of Disabled Facilities Grants have been used to identify disabled householders for assistance.
- Through partnership arrangements with frontline services such as GP practices, home care providers, AgeUK, hospital discharge services, social workers and children's centre staff, as they are in a position to identify clients as being fuel poor.

**Question 23 – How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy? (enter N/A if not appropriate)**

**Free text response to question 23 – please outline in no more than 200 words**

Tackling fuel poverty is directly linked with carbon reduction through the Council's Climate Change Strategy. The Strategy sets out a series of actions to reduce the carbon footprint from the city's homes and at the same time reduce fuel poverty. The Council will be producing a new Climate Change Strategy over the next 18 months and this too will link to fuel poverty.

The Council is also organised operationally so that carbon reduction and fuel poverty can be addressed together – the Affordable Warmth Team that delivers fuel poverty projects is a part of the Council's Sustainability and Low Carbon Team.

**Question 24a – What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? (enter N/A if not appropriate)**

**Free text response to question 24a – please outline in no more than 200 words**

All of the projects referred to in the answer to question 3 promote fuel cost reduction for fuel poor households.

In addition, the Affordable Warmth Team also manages the Council's Switch and Save project, which is open to all Coventry households including those that are fuel poor. Through this project, fuel poor households can reduce their energy costs by switching to a cheaper tariff in a collective switching scheme.

**Question 24b - If you have taken measures or initiatives to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty, what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken? (enter N/A if not appropriate)**

**Free text response to question 24b - please outline in no more than 200 words**

For Keeping Coventry Warm, Warmer Homes in Coventry, Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders and Heating Assistance Preventing Hospital Admissions, 4 different contractors have been procured by the Council to work in partnership to deliver the projects.

Energy providers were given the opportunity to work with the Council to provide ECO funding for the Warmer Homes in Coventry and Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders projects, but the tenders were won by contractors with their own business arrangements with ECO managing agents.

The Council works with its business partner, iChoosr, to deliver three Switch and Save campaigns every year. In the last Switch and Save campaign, the Council and its business partner, iChoosr, promoted the project through a letter sent to all households in the city.



## **The Energy Company Obligation**

**The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an obligation on energy suppliers aimed at helping households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving measures. Following the Spring 2018 consultation, the Government set out in its response that ECO3 will fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households.**

**The recently introduced ECO “flexible eligibility” (ECO Flex) programme allows LAs to make declarations determining that certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes and vulnerable to the effects of cold homes, are referred to ECO obligated suppliers for support under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO. LAs involved are required to issue a Statement of Intent that they are going to identify households as eligible, and the criteria they are going to use; and a declaration that the LA has been consulted on the installation of measures in a home.**

**Question 25 – Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexible eligibility? (Y/N) If yes, please include a link to your Sol.**

Yes.

[http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/28183/energy\\_company\\_obligation\\_flexible\\_eligibility\\_statement\\_of\\_intent\\_version\\_3\\_26102018](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/28183/energy_company_obligation_flexible_eligibility_statement_of_intent_version_3_26102018)

**Question 26 - Please use the following space to provide any further information you feel might be of benefit to BEIS, in helping us to understand ECO Flex delivery in more detail. For example, the number of declarations signed versus the number of households helped.**

**Free text response to question 26 - please outline in no more than 200 words**

Warmer Homes in Coventry, the Council’s ECO funded project, was launched in February 2018. The Council is pleased to be able to use Flexible Eligibility to help a broader range of low income and vulnerable householders, including those with health conditions. Targeted letters have been used to promote the project to households that may meet the eligibility criteria. Households have been selected to receive letters using Housing Benefit data and Government fuel poverty statistics.

### **Smart Metering**

**Question 27 - Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:**

**Engage and support your residents (including those in vulnerable circumstances or with pre-payment metering) to promote take up of smart meters and achieve associated benefits (e.g. ability to control energy use, identify best value tariffs)? Please detail any work undertaken or planned with local/community groups, housing associations, micro businesses, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers.**

**Free text response to question 27 – please outline in no more than 150 words.**

The Affordable Warmth Team currently doesn't have the capacity to undertake initiatives to raise awareness of smart metering.

It would be beneficial if the Government were to provide new funding for this work for local authorities.

**Question 28 - Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:**

***Integrate your approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation with the opportunities presented by the installation of smart meters, drawing upon materials from the Smart Meter Energy Efficiency Materials Project or other sources of independent information.***

***Free text response to question 28 – please outline in no more than 150 words.***

Please see response to question 27.

**Question 29 - Please detail any:**

***Resources/ support (e.g. services, funding) available to residents who have had an appliance(s) condemned for safety reasons and cannot afford to replace it (e.g. during visual safety checks conducted during their smart meter installation or otherwise).***

***Free text response to question 29 – please outline in no more than 150 words.***

Where a resident's gas boiler has been condemned, they could potentially be helped through the Council's Keeping Coventry Warm project or Warmer Homes in Coventry project if they meet the eligibility criteria and funding is available.

**Question 30 - Please detail any:**

***Existing relationships with energy suppliers to help ensure that the opportunities presented by vacant properties under your control are effectively utilised (i.e. gaining access to install a smart meter).***

***Free text response to question 30 – please outline in no more than 150 words.***

Please see response to question 27.

### ***Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives***

**Question 31 – Please outline any future schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation or businesses in your area, for example, within your Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Energy Strategy (if you do not plan any future schemes currently, please enter N/A).**

***Free text response to question 31 – please outline in no more than 500 words.***

The Affordable Warmth Team has been involved in early discussions with other regional stakeholders about how an Energy Company Obligation pilot scheme could potentially be operated in the West Midlands under the auspices of the West Midlands Combined Authority. If

supported, the pilot would develop new approaches to insulation and heating improvements, and would run during the current ECO 3 obligation period which ends in 2022.

The newly created Coventry & Warwickshire Energy Innovation Zone could be a conduit for innovative projects related to energy efficiency for business and specifically for tackling fuel poverty. It is still in initial stages and potential projects are being identified.