

## **MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL HECA REPORT (Annex)**

### **1. Local Energy Efficiency Priorities and Ambitions**

Mansfield District Council's Vision 2016-19 is: Maintaining a safe and caring district where everybody can succeed.

This vision will be realised through a set of priority areas around economic prosperity, quality of life and community safety.

Our three priorities to 2019 are:

- A thriving, vibrant and sustainable district
- Strong, safe and resilient communities
- Clean and welcoming environment

In addition to the Council's own corporate priorities, the reduction of fuel poverty is a key element of the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its associated Housing Delivery Plan as well as the 'Housing and Environment' chapter of the Nottinghamshire Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP). One of the two key priorities within this chapter is the expansion and roll out of the Warm Homes on Prescription programme as referred to in the main report.

The Mansfield District Council Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021 Building Futures, Shaping Lives sets out how it intends to the improved energy efficiency of housing in Mansfield across the strategic themes.

In addition to this, the Council has prioritised the Warm Homes on Prescription programme as part of its Better Care Fund allocation for 2017/18 with a view to reducing fuel poverty, preventing admissions to hospital and expediting hospital discharge.

The Councils' Housing Service Plan and Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2017-2019 (to be approved) supports these priorities by setting out how it will provide advice and discretionary assistance in various forms; one of which includes expansion of the existing Mansfield Warm Homes on Prescription project.

The primary objective of the Housing Service Plan 2017-18 is:

Improving housing standards: Maintaining and improving our housing stock, raising standards in the private sector, supporting the development of new affordable housing and suitability of existing housing that meets the housing needs of the district and achieves high environmental standards of energy efficiency.

As part of this a dedicated energy efficiency budget has been set up to allow energy efficiency improvements to be undertaken e.g. insulation and increasing the energy efficiency of heating systems.

Mansfield's baseline position relating to fuel poverty is detailed further on page 3 of the main report.

## **2. Energy efficiency improvements 2015-17**

### **2.1 Information, advice, education and promotion**

The Council offers targeted information and advice to residents through the Warm Homes on Prescription programme as part of the home visit and property assessment. We also work with Nottingham Energy Partnership (NEP) and the Energy Saving Trust and signpost accordingly to these services where necessary.

The Council have trained key housing personnel in partnership with NEP to recognise the signs of fuel poverty when visiting vulnerable people in both private and public sector homes. In particular, the Council's hospital discharge scheme p[ersonnel based at Kings Mill Hospital can recognise those patients requiring discharge that require assistance with keeping their home warm to ensure a speedy discharge.

The Private Sector Housing service have trained a housing caseworker up to NEA City and Guilds standards to provide tailored advice to households in terms of fuel switching, programming heating systems, tariff advice and signposting to benefit maximisation advice and any available financial assistance.

### **2.2 Tackling Fuel Poverty**

Please see further details in the main body of the report detailing the Council's membership of the Local Authority Energy Partnership and provision of the Mansfield Warm Homes on Prescription Programme. This programme is a key priority within the 'Housing and Environment' theme of the STP for Nottinghamshire as well as the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and corresponding Housing Delivery Plan.

In terms of Warm Homes on Prescription delivery in Mansfield to date, we have utilised circa £45,000 of NEA funding through LAEP to secure new heating systems and have successfully bid for a further £150,000 spanning 2016/17 and 2017/18 for the programme from the Better Care Fund. Of this allocation the Council has spent £23,378 since the beginning of February 2017 with further committed/approved budget of circa £25,000.

In addition to the above, the Council, within the Private Sector Housing service have recently trained a Caseworker (Financial Assistance) to NEA City and Guilds standard in affordable warmth with a view to providing tailored advice to vulnerable households on staying warm at home. This resource complements the Warm Homes on Prescription programme and the Council's hospital discharge service. The caseworker is able to carry out home visits as well as telephone advice as required and focusses on residents living in private sector properties.

The Council's Private Sector Housing Service also includes Environmental Health Officers responsible for enforcing conditions in rented homes. These officers have also received NEA training and can signpost to the Caseworker as well as requiring physical works to improve the condition of the property using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

The Council does not have a stand-alone fuel poverty strategy however we are part of the Local Authority Energy Partnership (LAEP) and fuel poverty is recognised in the Council's corporate priorities and Housing Service Plan.

Since 2015, 4312 ECO measures have been carried out within the Mansfield District across private sector, private rented and housing stock properties.

Within the Council's own stock, the following insulation measures have been undertaken giving demonstrable CO<sub>2</sub> and cost savings for tenants. Four more schemes are planned for 2017/18 with a budget secured within the Housing department to allow further rolling schemes to progress.

Loft Insulation to 78 properties saving between £120 and £500 per year showing CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 240 – 1000 kgCO<sub>2</sub>.

External Wall Insulation to 27 properties saving between £150 and £600 per year showing CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 250 – 1200 kgCO<sub>2</sub> / y

Cavity wall insulation has also been carried out to properties as and when identified as requiring it (demonstrating average savings of £200 or 800 kgCO<sub>2</sub> / year).

### **3.3 Boilers and Heat Pumps**

Housing Repairs have replaced 373 boilers with high efficiency new boilers.

The average EPC for standard Council Housing property is now band C.

Decommissioning of 2 district heating boiler houses has taken place with disconnections of 140 properties between 2015 – 2017. Four more schemes are planned for 2017-18 covering 450 more properties (currently both coal and gas fired).

New housing has been designed to include smart boilers which can be centrally controlled, ensuring that people are using them as efficiently as possible and that any issues can be identified quickly.

### **3.4 Smart Meters**

The Council is planning to engage and support their residents (including the most vulnerable and those with pre-payment metering) and work with local/ community groups, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers to promote the take up of smart metering and achieve associated benefits (e.g. ability to control energy use, identification of more appropriate tariffs to save money etc); however this is likely to be done in consultation with the LAEP because of resource implications.

### **3.5 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in the Private Rented Sector**

The Council's Private Sector Housing team provide both a reactive and proactive service to address property conditions, including affordable warmth related defects. In terms of enforcing the proposed minimum EPC standards in rented housing, the Council will seek to work proactively using available intelligence to identify those properties without a valid EPC. The Council will look to work with owners on an informal basis initially to improve deficient properties and will consider formal enforcement action if owners fail to respond or required improvements are not made. This work will be accommodated within existing resources.

The Council will also seek to advise landlords well in advance of the proposals through regular landlord forums organised in partnership with neighbouring authorities along with articles in local newsletters and the Council's website/Twitter/Facebook pages.

### **3.6 Area based/street by street roll out of energy efficiency improvements**

We are not currently working with a provider to offer street by street programmes however we are looking to work collectively in Nottinghamshire with other districts and boroughs and LAEP to approach providers regarding ECO. We are also proposing to offer discretionary loan-type assistance to private owners within predominantly Council external insulation schemes; this is currently being trialled following on from a housing stock scheme to insulate 13 properties.

#### **4. Looking ahead 2017-19**

The Council will be continuing to focus on the expansion of the Warm Homes on Prescription programme in Mansfield utilising Better Care Fund resource plus any other available external funding. This aligns with the Nottinghamshire STP priorities, the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Better Care Fund objectives.

This will be delivered in partnership with LAEP with links to Nottingham Energy Partnership also. The Council can further support the programme by signposting individuals to the Caseworker (Financial Assistance) for tailored advice as well as to the Council's in-house benefits and debt advisors as required. Referrals will be generated through a number of sources including the Council's Hospital Discharge Team based at Kingsmill Hospital, Mansfield.

Within the Council's Housing stock, the Energy Efficiency and District Heating budgets have been confirmed and will continue to be used to improve the energy efficiency of housing properties, leading to a reduction in fuel poverty for some of the most vulnerable tenants in the district.

Date:

For further information about this HECA report, please contact:

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