

Ward: N/A

Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan – Annual Update Report

Report by the Director for Communities

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out the progress with the implementation of the recommendations from the joint Overview and Scrutiny review of Fuel Poverty which was undertaken by the joint Adur and Worthing Overview and Scrutiny Working Group in 2010. Regular reports have been provided to the Committee since 2010.
- 1.2. Committee is invited to comment on progress to inform a report to the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing

2. Background

- 2.1. An Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Working Group undertook a review which considered the Council's involvement with Fuel Poverty in deprived areas. The final report was presented to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) in June 2010 and also considered by the Joint Strategic Committee (JSC).
- 2.2. Since the original review work was undertaken, the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan has been update at least annually, with progress reported to JOSC on an annual basis.

3 Progress Update

- 3.1 JOSC is requested to note the progress being made to implement the recommendations and the further action being taken, details of which are set out in the Action Plan in the Appendix 1, attached to the report.
- 3.2. Since the completion of the report, progress has been ongoing as shown in Appendix 1. The Director for Communities is overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan with the assistance of the Adur and Worthing Officers Fuel Poverty Working Group which includes the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator. The Working Group meets on a quarterly basis.
- 3.3. There are a number of significant issues detailed in the Action Plan that your officers wish to draw Committees attention to:
 - 3.3.1. Following the identification of Fuel Poverty as a priority for the Adur and Worthing Financial Inclusion Group, a new Fuel Poverty network has been set up for Adur

and Worthing to help better connect all the local agencies working on alleviating fuel poverty. Members of the network meet quarterly but also share information and opportunities between meetings. The Councils' Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing are members of the network.

- 3.3.2.** The advice and information held on the Councils website on Home Energy Efficiency has been updated and two additional web pages have now been created; one is a seasonal campaign page on keeping warm well this winter and the other is a dedicated fuel poverty page.
- 3.3.3.** Adur Homes: A report was submitted and adopted by JSC in 2015 with a view to deploying solar PV panels throughout the Adur homes estate. Unfortunately in November 2015, Central Government announced dramatic reductions of 87% to the feed in tariff incentive payments, a revenue stream which the project relied on. Having reassessed the PV proposals taking into account the new feed in tariff, the viability of solar PV panel deployment to Adur homes has been found to be no longer financially viable. Work will continue to identify any alternative methods by which a solar PV project could be delivered.
- 3.3.4.** Adur Homes: Progress has been made in the Sompting Gas Project in the Test Road area. 72% of properties in the area who signed up (private, RSL and Adur Homes) have been connected already and the remainder are expected to be completed by April 2016. So far, Gas Central Heating has been successfully installed in 21% of the Adur Homes properties. By the expected completion date in April 2016, approximately 74% of the overall area will have been connected to mains gas and 92% of the Adur Homes properties in the area would also have had gas central heating installed.
- 3.3.5.** Local outreach and promotional work was undertaken as part of the Sompting Gas Project working in Partnership with SGN, Yorkshire Energy Solutions, Your Energy Sussex and Communities Matter in July 2015.
- 3.3.6.** The Councils have been working with the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator to contribute towards a West Sussex Fuel Poverty Strategy and Action Plan. The final version is expected to be signed off in February by the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Steering Group.
- 3.4.** In response to a spike in the data for Adur on excess winter deaths and national recommendations from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), in June 2015 the West Sussex Public Health Research Unit carried out local research into Excess Winter Mortality in Adur District. The research has provided a better understanding of excess winter death indicator and made recommendations for local action. The research has been shared and discussed with Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing. It is important to note that it was emphasised by the Public Health Team that the reasons for higher than average numbers of deaths are complex and varied, however it was also made clear that the over 75's, especially if they have a pre-existing chronic or CVD condition and live in cold homes are likely to be affected. Isolation and dementia are most strongly implicated.
- 3.4.1.** It should also be noted that since the briefing was produced, a new dataset has been released and the data for Adur is no longer showing as significantly higher

than the average rates for England, but rates are still slightly higher than average. The Public Health Research Team intend to continue to monitor and consider these figures for Adur and report back to Adur Council.

3.4.2. Adur has been selected by WSCC as one of three areas in the County to take part in a street level pilot as part of a county-wide targeted Winter Warmth Awareness Campaign. It is being collaboratively developed by West Sussex Public Health, Fire & Rescue, Your Energy Sussex, Adur District Council and other supporting teams in West Sussex to develop a targeted 'Winter Warmth' Awareness Campaign to raise awareness of the importance of keeping warm and identify residents that may be in need of extra support over winter. The street level pilot will be conducted in late January for a defined area of 100 homes in the east of Southwick.

3.5. Guildcare have been awarded funding from Adur Council through the Adur Community Grants fund to extend their existing "Energy and Money Home Visitor" project into Adur District during winter 2016 (currently funding in Worthing by Comic Relief). The extension to the project will allow Guildcare to support any referrals generated by the street level fuel poverty project described above in 3.4.2.

4. Legal

4.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

4.2. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (2000 Act) empowers the Council to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects –

- The promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;
- The promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area; and
- The promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.

4.2.1. The power may be exercised in relation to or for the benefit of-

- The whole or any part of a local authority's area; or
- All or any persons resident or present in a local authority's area.

5. Financial implications

5.1. Any financial implications are included in the appendix to the report.

6. Recommendation

6.2 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the progress in implementing the recommendations from the Fuel Poverty Overview and Scrutiny review.

6.3 Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments on the Fuel Poverty Action Plan (as detailed in Appendix 1) prior to its submission to the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing for approval.

Local Government Act 1972
Background Papers:

Report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee November 2010 and Joint Strategic Committee December 2010

Action Plan as Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Return for 2015-2017
<http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/media,132091,en.pdf>

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered. Fuel Poverty is an inequality and the Fuel Poverty review was undertaken to look at ways of reducing this inequality

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Any areas of risk are identified within the attached report.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 This report relates to Adur and Worthing.

Appendix 1: Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2016

Report Type: Actions Report

Report Author: Mark Lowe

Generated on: 11 January 2016

Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
Production of a Joint Fuel Poverty Strategy	Relevant Officers to work with Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing to produce a Joint Fuel Poverty Strategy	Director for Communities West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator	<p>To date the focus has been on the development and updating of the Fuel Poverty Action Plan.</p> <p>Work on the development of a Strategy has been delayed pending the appointment of a new West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator (see below). In addition consultation will take place with the newly appointed Head of Housing and Head of Wellbeing to agree who should take the lead for the Fuel poverty in the Councils. A Fuel Poverty Framework and Action Plan covering all of West Sussex has now been produced and is due to be signed off by the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Steering Group by spring 2016.</p> <p>Fuel Poverty is featured in the Director for Public Health's Annual Report 2013/14 published in October 2014.</p> <p>The Communities Directorate are currently developing a number of over-arching strategies to address issues such as Housing & Older People, and Social Isolation. Fuel Poverty will be a factor in these strategic approaches.</p>
Tackling Fuel Poverty	<p>Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing to take an active approach to targeting fuel poverty working with the Communications Team to publicise the benefits and grants available to help residents insulate their homes and combat fuel poverty.</p> <p>Councils also to develop a communications action plan to communicate issues of fuel poverty to residents in Adur and Worthing to continue to highlight fuel poverty. This</p>	Head of Housing and Head of Wellbeing	<p>The Private Sector Housing (PSH) team is continuing to take an active approach to targeting fuel poverty and advertising the benefits and grants if and where available. PSH staff have promoted the Energy Switch programme during their visits. The Environmental Health Repair Grant Assistance scheme (administered through Adur & Worthing Home Improvement Assistance) has approved 21 grants for boiler replacements.</p> <p>A further review of Fuel Poverty related content on the Councils website has now been completed and fuel poverty and energy efficiency information have been separated into two pages on the Councils website: Energy Efficiency: http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/home-energy-efficiency-grants/</p> <p>A campaign page has also been published for the winter period (linked to from a title on the home page) offering holistic advice on keeping warm and well: http://www.adur-</p>

	should involve creating a dedicated web page on the websites. A guide to be produced for local landlords on the Council websites to highlight funding/grants available for tenants.		worthing.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/keeping-warm-andwell-this-winter/ The PSH Team has also arranged additional funds to be available to the RGA scheme for boiler replacements as necessary.
House Condition Survey of private sector properties	Councils to undertake a House Condition Survey of Private sector properties working with the Building Research Establishment at a cost of £10,000 for each Authority (within budget) to help identify those in fuel poverty. With the benefit of the information provided from the survey, target the areas in most need of improvement in energy efficiency and then make contact with the occupants and landlords advising them of the findings and the help that is available to improve the energy efficiency levels of the properties.	Head of Housing	<p>In February 2012, Adur & Worthing Councils commissioned BRE to provide information on key housing indicators, with a focus on private sector housing. Principal among these indicators is the rate of Category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating Hazards found in the stock as this is now the minimum standard for housing which every housing authority is obliged to keep under review.</p> <p>The report and database was completed in April 2012, and the information provided on the Category 1 Hazards was used as the principal inputs for the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of private sector housing which was completed in May 2012. The report and database allows the identification of those properties most at risk of Excess Cold, as well as Vulnerable Households.</p> <p>The findings of the stock modelling in combination with national census data allows informed strategic decisions to be made in respect of housing in Adur & Worthing. It is also anticipated that the HIA will assist in the Councils' public health role and in their relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board. The information within the database has been made available to other departments for intelligence and appropriate actions.</p>
Use of powers under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to take action against landlords	Councils to continue to take enforcement action against landlords who, following warnings, fail to improve the energy efficiency levels of their properties and the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing ensure that the powers and how they can be used, are publicised.	Head of Housing	<p>The primary legislation in respect of housing and housing conditions is the Housing Act 2004, which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) as the methodology for the evaluation of the potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings and replaced the fitness standard contained in the Housing Act 1984. This means that the concept of fit or unfit dwellings no longer exists and that properties are assessed according to whether any Category 1 or 2 Hazards exist. Enforcement actions taken in respect of unsatisfactory housing conditions range from advice given to occupants and/or landlords through to the imposition of Prohibition Orders. The legislation requires that, in the case of any formal action, all decisions must be justified in writing. All enforcement actions will therefore be taken in compliance with the Council's Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.</p> <p>The PSH team have invested in the BRE Excess Cold Calculator which offers a more robust, intensive and evidence based model to calculate heating requirements for properties to support formal cases.</p> <p>During 2014/15, officers from the Private Sector Housing team responded to 413 complaints about housing conditions within the private rented sector. Since April 2015, they</p>

			<p>have responded to 396 complaints. In line with the Enforcement Policy, most inspections were carried out under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which allowed advice to be given without detriment to the complainant's security of tenure. 51 full inspections were necessary under HHSRS, but works to improve conditions including for Excess Cold were completed without recourse to statutory notices.</p> <p>Since April 2015, there have been 94 formal inspections which have resulted in 76 Housing Act notices being served. There have also been 3 prosecutions for breaches of notices which include elements affecting the provision of efficient, effective and affordable heating. Officers have re-inspected and re-licensed over 40 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's), with license conditions now including the provision of efficient, effective and affordable heating.</p>
Targeting Fuel Poverty through Partnership	The Strategic Partnership (Waves Ahead) continue to ensure that fuel poverty is addressed and reduced in local communities.	Communities Team	<p>The Sussex Energy Saving programme has now been renamed Your Energy Sussex (YES) and despite the problems and delays they encountered in securing funding for local energy projects, YES continue to work with local organisations to develop projects and advice around fuel poverty. The Councils have officially signed up to the Your Energy Sussex Partnership as Strategic Partners (see below).</p> <p>Fuel Poverty has been identified as a priority for the Health and Wellbeing Partnership for All Ages (HWPAA). The new Financial Inclusion group for Adur and Worthing (who report to the HWPAA) consists of a range of partners. A number of fuel poverty actions have been identified within the group's new Financial Inclusion Framework.</p> <p>The Financial Inclusion Framework was taken to the Adur & Worthing Strategic Partnership Executive Board (Waves Ahead) in February 2015. The Board fully supported the framework.</p> <p>The report has since been placed on the Adur & Worthing Councils web site on a dedicated page (http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/debt-advice-and-support)</p> <p>A network of local organisations working on fuel poverty in Adur and Worthing has also now been set up to help deliver the Fuel Poverty Actions in the framework with a view to working more closely together through collaboration, but also ensuring unnecessary repetition is avoided. The network meet several times a year: the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing are included in the network.</p> <p>Once completed, a link to the West Sussex fuel poverty strategy will be placed in the Financial Inclusion Framework</p>
Training on fuel poverty issues for Adur and	Adur and Worthing Councillors to be provided with training on fuel poverty	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator	The Councils hosted a half day Energy Awareness Course run by National Energy Action in March 2015 for frontline workers and volunteers working on Fuel Poverty and Energy.

Worthing Councillors	issues, utilising the support of the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator and other Councillors experienced in fuel poverty issues, to help them deal with, understand and recognise fuel poverty cases amongst their constituents.		Fuel Poverty training has been identified for the Adur and Worthing Wellbeing Advisor Teams and Councillors and is due to be delivered in February 2016.
Fuel Poverty/cold homes as a wider determinant of ill health	That Health visitors, GP's and Practice Managers be encouraged to help highlight fuel poverty when dealing with clients to assess if they are in Fuel Poverty to provide them with information on what is available and what can be done to help them as well as providing them with information outlining the services available to tackle fuel poverty.	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator	<p>Further to the 2015 winter warmth project organised by Public Health, West Sussex Fire & Rescue and the Sustainable Energy Partnership, a slightly different, more measurable approach has been adopted this winter.</p> <p>A few remaining free winter warmth packs from 2015 (including insulated mugs to keep drinks hot, socks and hand warmers as well as practical advice and information about staying warm) will be handed out again at some local venues between January-March 2016.</p> <p>The main focus on winter 2015-16 will be a series of (pilot) winter warmth outreach projects involving a doorstep conversation carried out by Fire Officers who will generate referrals to Guildcare's Energy and Money Home Visitor, Public Health's Prevention Assistance Team (PAT) and to the Adur and Worthing Wellbeing Advisors. The target area in Southwick, Adur has been identified as one of three pilot areas in the County. The project will commence at the end of January with 100 houses. The outcomes are expected to form an evidence base to help feed into the design of a larger targeted approach to be rolled out across Sussex in future years.</p>
West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator	That the continuation of the funding for the post of the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator (FPC) be welcomed.	Director for Communities	<p>Following a lengthy period in 2014 when the Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator post was vacant, the post was filled in January 2015.</p> <p>The Fuel Poverty Coordinator post has now been extended for a further period until March 2017.</p> <p>West Sussex FPC continues to work with the Councils on various projects to tackle fuel poverty issues and is also working with voluntary groups who support vulnerable people. The FPC will partner with the Councils on delivering the tasks identified in the Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2015-17.</p>
Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO)	How Adur and Worthing Councils engage in Green Deal and ECO resources	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator; Energy & Sustainability Manager	<p>As of October 2015 Adur and Worthing Councils are a fully signed up strategic partner with Your Energy Sussex (YES previously known as the Sussex Energy Saving Programme). This does not incur any financial obligation upon us, but allows us to have a vote in how funds are distributed across the Sussex region through the Your Energy Sussex partnership through the opportunity to sit on the Strategic and Project Boards, which guide and consider investments and projects in our areas.</p> <p>As a full strategic partner to YES, the Councils are continuing to work with Your Energy</p>

			<p>Sussex to better understand how Adur and Worthing can lever in ECO and Feed in Tariff (FIT) resources to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock.</p> <p>HHCRO (Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation) is part of ECO that provides funding for boiler replacements / repairs for low income residents in receipt of certain means tested benefits. In January 2015, Your Energy Sussex set up a HHCRO scheme in West Sussex using a Brighton based company called Charlie Mitten. Your Energy Sussex have recently re-tendered for a new company as Charlie Mitten withdrew from the scheme in Autumn 2015. The new company 1, Green Place are due to start taking referrals in late January 2016. The scheme includes providing top-up funding where ECO is not fully funded (which is the case for most applications).</p> <p>Due to difficulties securing ECO funding, a domestic insulation scheme is yet to be rolled out to West Sussex residents, but it is now hoped that an offer will be able to be rolled out soon.</p> <p>CSCO (Carbon Saving Communities Obligation) is an area based programme which forms part of ECO. Specific communities considered income deprived will qualify. There are 5 eligible Local Super Output Areas in Worthing and 8 in Adur. Some of these will cross over with Think Family Neighbourhoods and should be targeted first with any projects through Your Energy Sussex.</p>
Community Energy proposals/projects			
Energy/Fuel Switching initiative		Energy & Sustainability Manager	Adur and Worthing Councils have now been operating and promoting a Fuel Switching offer to the residents of Adur and Worthing since December 2013 in partnership with leading fuel switching company (IChoosr).
Install a gas supply to the electric only estate in Test Road, Lancing		Head of Housing	<p>The project aims to provide a gas supply to an estate of approximately 200 properties, along with other energy efficiency measures leveraged through our partnership with the your energy Sussex scheme. On 6/2/14 JSC approved a proposal for Adur Homes to contribute £54,000 to a scheme alongside £237,500 grant funding from Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) to supply gas infrastructure to the Adur Homes properties in Test Road – approximately 50%.</p> <p>Work continues with SGN to offer affordable funding packages to the private sector element of Test Road so that non-Adur Homes properties can benefit from this scheme.</p> <p>As of the beginning of January 2016, 118 (private, RSL and Adur Homes) properties have been connected to gas and a further 46 connections are expected to be completed by April</p>

			<p>2016. So far Gas central heating has been successfully installed in 21% of the Adur Homes properties. By the expected completion date in April 2016, approximately 74% of the area will have been connected to mains gas and 92% of the Adur Homes properties in the area would also have had gas central heating installed.</p> <p>Adur Homes has set aside £118,000 in its 2015/16 Capital Programme in install Central Heating in Test Road following completion of gas supply.</p>
Solar PV Panels project		Energy & Sustainability Manager	<p>A report was submitted and adopted by JSC in 2015 to deploy solar PV panels throughout the Adur homes estate. This coincided with our signing of a strategic partnership agreement with Your Energy Sussex, who would be funding and coordinating the delivery of this project. By the time the final signatures were secured on the legal agreements, Central Government had moved to dramatically reduce feed in tariff incentive payments which the project relied on. This was to be announced in the November statement and the expected reduction would be an 87% fall in the feed in tariff revenues.</p> <p>This dramatic reduction in feed in tariff means that the viability of the solar PV panel deployment to Adur Homes has been reassessed and found not to be financially viable. Work continues to identify any further methods by which this project can be delivered.</p>