

## ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting - 1 March 2016

Present: Mrs Sullivan (Chairman)  
Mr Bradford, Miss Hazell and Mr D Smith

Apologies for absence: Mr Harding and Mr Read

### 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the PAG held on 8 December were received.

### 2. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

### 3. CURRENT ISSUES

None.

### 4. DECC COMMUNITIES FUND PROJECT

The PAG received a report updating Members on energy efficiency and fuel poverty within South Bucks, and were asked to consider the next steps.

The report informed the PAG that in March 2014 South Bucks District Council and 14 other local authorities won £2,574,991 from the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to retrofit solid wall insulation (SWI). The purpose was to generate interest in the Green Deal programme and to create the local infrastructure necessary to deliver improvements, with SBDC being appointed 'Accountable Body' for the partnership - responsible for financial probity / risk, and overall decision-making.

It was noted by the PAG that following altered priorities and direction from Central Government, the Project has now re-focused activity to reduce fuel poverty via energy efficiency methods such as cavity wall insulation, underfloor heating etc. These are measures that are already popular with residents, and as such, forecasts predict that the project is likely to surpass its goal of installing energy efficiency measures in 586 dwellings.

As of December 2015 there were:

- 566 Green Deal Assessments / EPC's completed
- 311 sign ups
- 299 completed SWI installations
- 8 finance packages provided through the Green Deal Investment Bank.

Furthermore, the Project Board has demonstrated effective partnership working across 15 local authorities, having delivered significant reductions in household energy usage, alongside savings to the wider health and social care economy, and reductions in CO2 emissions.

The PAG were informed that by 31 March offers for grants will cease, with installations, audits, evidence-gathering and other documentation to conclude by September 2016. In order to continue to provide fuel poverty measures, several LA's are looking at alternative ways to fund this, including the Bucks Affordable Warmth Network, managed by Chiltern

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District Council. The AWN is seeking further Energy Company Obligation payments from companies including E.ON, with such funding being able to aid with the installation of capital measures. Members suggested ways to further aid exposure of the scheme, with officers agreeing to look into these.

It was therefore **RESOLVED that** the report be noted.

### 5. **CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN**

Members received a verbal update regarding the Clean for The Queen Initiative, taking place over the weekend of the 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March, prior to the celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Members noted that this was a nationwide initiative that would also aid in improving the condition of the district, and could be undertaken by community groups, schools, and the Council's own staff. Members were further informed that equipment, including purple sacks, litter pickers and high-visibility vests had already been sourced and could be lent to groups, subject to availability.

### 6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Following questions from members concerning untidiness caused by residents placing food loosely within food bins, the Head of Environment clarified to the PAG that SBDC would be undertaking targeted recycling campaigns.

### 7. **CURRENT ISSUES (PART II)**

None.

The meeting terminated at 6.35 pm