



## Committee on Fuel Poverty

### **Minutes of Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) Meeting, 15th November 2017**

1. The Chairman and all members of the Committee were present: David Blakemore (Chair), Alice Maynard, Jenny Saunders, Paul Massara and Lawrence Slade. Three members of the CFP's Off-Gas Advisory Group (the group's Chairman, Jeremy Nesbitt, plus Peter Smith and Daniel Alchin) attended for discussion of their report. BEIS staff attended for discussion of ECO. Also from BEIS, the Sponsor and Secretariat were present.

#### Minutes of last meeting and actions

2. The minutes of the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October were approved and were subsequently published on the CFP web pages on 28th November.

3. The majority of actions from the last meeting had been completed and members were content that remaining actions were being progressed.

#### Members' Interests

4. No potential conflicts of interest specific to the meeting's agenda were declared.

#### Off-Gas Advisory Group

5. In September, the CFP's Off-Gas Advisory Group had submitted its report to the Committee. Key points had subsequently been included in the CFP's annual report. Members of the Advisory Group had been invited to the meeting to discuss their report in more depth with the Committee.

6. Members felt the report had provided a very helpful overview of the issues and would inform future work. Off-gas group attendees highlighted in particular the continuing challenges around developing a clear and sufficiently-detailed understanding of the composition of the off-gas population. There existed a level of knowledge of the types of properties and householders, and of some typical characteristics that could be attributed to different sub-populations, but there was a lack of substantial data in support of this. The database developed by the previous Off-Gas Advisory Group (who had advised the former Fuel Poverty Advisory Group) was helpful in identifying significant populations of off-gas properties, but it did not include breakdowns of property or household types. There was discussion of the potential sources of data that could be used to improve the evidence base, and of the challenges in accessing and using this data.

7. Attendees noted that the CFP's report had discussed the possible need to supplement the ECO programme, if it could not be designed to reach all types of fuel

poor households. The Off-Gas Group had noted that specific action was needed for Band F and G properties off the gas grid. Attendees discussed the extent to which this could be addressed without having a deeper understanding of the potential target population. The Committee agreed to consider further – with members of the off-gas group – whether there might be value in further work in this area and how best to take this forward.

8. In conclusion, members wished to record their thanks to Jeremy Nesbit and his colleagues on the Off-Gas Advisory Group for their work and valuable advice.

### ECO

9. The Committee had invited BEIS officials to discuss the design of ECO post-2018. This would be a focus for members leading up to the consultation in the new year. There would also be an increasing focus on the post-2022 position, following the commitment in the Clean Growth Strategy to extend support for home energy efficiency improvement through to 2028 at the current level of ECO funding.

10. The discussion covered a range of issues including eligibility criteria, improving targeting efficiency, customer contributions to costs of ECO measures, and the scope for being able to encourage - and benefit from - innovation.

### Other discussion

11. Members noted several current consultations and calls for evidence. They agreed to respond to the Call for Evidence on the reform of the Green Deal Framework and the Call for Evidence on Building a Market for Energy Efficiency. On the former, the response would note the fact that many fuel poor households underheat their homes. This led to a risk that fuel poor customers taking out Green Deal Plans would not achieve the assumed levels of savings upon which the value of loans would be based, and as a result they could face energy bill increases without receiving adequate benefits. The response would also note the importance of safeguards for new tenants entering rented properties which had existing Green Deal Plans.

12. Members reviewed stakeholder engagement following the publication of the annual report and considered plans for further engagement help progress the report's recommendations.

### Dates of future CFP Meetings

13. Dates for forthcoming meetings are:

- 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018
- 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018