



## Committee on Fuel Poverty

### **Minutes of Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) Meeting, 25th January 2018**

1. The Chairman and all members of the Committee were present: David Blakemore (Chair), Alice Maynard, Jenny Saunders, Liz Bisset, Paul Massara and Lawrence Slade. From the Centre for Sustainable Energy, Simon Roberts OBE and Dr Toby Bridgeman attended to discuss the research project they were completing for the Committee. From BEIS, an official attended to discuss the consultation on the minimum level of energy efficiency for the domestic private rented sector. The BEIS Sponsor and Secretariat were also present.

#### Minutes of last meeting and actions

2. The minutes of the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were approved and were subsequently published on the CFP web pages on 30th January.

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.

#### Private Rented Sector

5. The Committee invited a BEIS official to discuss the current consultation on the minimum level of energy efficiency for the domestic private rented sector. The Committee was intending to respond to the consultation.

6. Members felt that the proposals fell significantly short of what was needed to make a sufficient contribution towards the achievement of the 2020 fuel poverty milestone. They had particular concerns about the following proposals:

- to set an absolute cost cap at £2.5k for investments and for the cap to be inclusive of the landlord's contribution and any other third party contributions to funding of the improvements, such as through ECO;
- to upgrade 30% of Band F/G properties to Band E or above, versus the projection from the existing (2015) legislation to upgrade 73%.

7. Members welcomed the proposal to limit any exemptions from the current regulations to a one year time period, but re-iterated their previously advocated position that the cost cap should be set at £5,000 and should apply to the landlord's contribution. Other available funding contributions such as ECO should be in addition to the cap.

8. Members asked about the basis for the average costs for energy efficiency measures provided in the consultation for bringing properties up to Band E, and the components of the Net Present Value calculations (which were used to assess the net benefits of the options). They also explored some of the differences between the Impact Assessment published for the original regulations (in 2015), and the current consultation Impact Assessment, such as a reduced forecast of the number of properties that would be improved to Band E as a result of the regulations (from 73% to 30%).

9. Members also discussed questions such as how the regulations would be enforced and how local authorities and other parties involved could be supported in this activity and provided with the resources to do the job. They reiterated that mandatory national licensing of landlords should be considered to aid oversight and enforcement of implementation.

### Research project

10. Simon Roberts and Toby Bridgeman attended from the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to discuss progress with the research project that the CFP had commissioned jointly with the Committee on Climate Change. The project was examining the synergies, tensions and trade-offs that currently exist in household energy policies, along with potential policy changes that could help to increase synergies and reduce the tensions. It would also develop a set of high level principles that drew on the outputs and could be applied to future policy design. CSE provided an overview of their segmentation analysis plus results from modelling of existing policy impacts and policy change scenarios. The project was nearing completion and the discussion provided an opportunity for the Committee to understand the likely results and conclusions, and to provide any comments.

11. Members were grateful to CSE for their work. Whilst there was still work to complete the project, at this stage it appeared that the outputs would be very useful. Members discussed the next steps and plans for reviewing the draft report. They noted that the final report would be published in due course.

### Other discussion

12. Members discussed recent activity, including the Committee's responses to Calls for Evidence on the Green Deal Framework and on Building the Market for Energy Efficiency, stakeholder meetings and conferences attended.

13. Members also noted the forthcoming "Tailored Review" of the Committee. This was a review process which all non-departmental public bodies were subject to, designed to test the need for, efficiency and good governance of organisations. The review of the Committee on Fuel Poverty was scheduled for the first quarter of the 2018-19 financial year.

14. Other forthcoming activity would include responses to the forthcoming ECO consultation, Ofgem's consultation on its Future Work Plan and Citizens Advice's Draft Work Plan.

### Dates of future CFP Meetings

15. The next CFP meeting is on 8th March 2018. Dates for further meetings in 2018 will be arranged shortly.