



Committee on Fuel Poverty

Minutes of Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) virtual meeting: January 20/01/2022

1. The Chair and all members of the Committee were present: David Blakemore (Chair), Paul Massara, Jenny Saunders and Anu Singh. Invited guests in attendance were BEIS officials.

Members Interests

2. No new interests were declared.

Minutes of Last Meeting and actions

3. Minutes from December meeting were agreed.

Action Log

4. Most actions from the last meeting had been completed and the rest were being progressed.

Stakeholder Engagement

5. The Chair noted discussion with Utility Week on Annual Report and current fuel cost problems.
6. Members noted upcoming meeting with National Energy Action in January.

Review of Recommendations and Handover

7. The Chair presented on the statistics utilised in previous CFP annual/interim reports, describing how they had been calculated. The Chair noted that the biggest gap in homes to be upgraded was in the owner occupied sector, emphasising the importance of the Home Upgrade Grant scheme.
8. Members discussed current targeting methods and how best to target those in fuel poverty who are not in receipt of benefits.

BEIS Policy Update

9. BEIS officials gave an update on progress on recruitment of Chair and members.
10. Members discussed cost of living and energy prices. BEIS officials noted that the Price Cap was set by Ofgem. The Committee referenced the letter they had sent to HMT which highlighted the importance of ECO, emphasising it should not be delayed or reduced. The Committee decided to also contact the Climate Change Committee regarding the importance of ECO which presents a long term reduction in energy bills and carbon emissions.
11. BEIS officials presented on the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) which is currently allocated £1.1billion. Delivery is expected from January 2022 to March 2025. The first part of the scheme is being delivered alongside the Local Authority Delivery Scheme as part of the Sustainable Warmth Competition. The next phase of the scheme is currently being designed to deliver the remaining £950million. The Chair and members asked about targeting of the next phase of the HUG.
12. Members and BEIS officials discussed how Local Authorities have found engaging with the Sustainable Warmth Competition and what can be learnt for future schemes . Feedback received suggests a positive overall reaction from Local Authorities. BEIS officials are looking into ways to further support Local Authorities and reduce burden on them. The Committee discussed the risk of it becoming a postcode lottery if some Local Authorities are less engaged than others.
13. BEIS officials discussed the energy efficiency and heating options available to households under HUG, which is primarily designed to be fabric first. Members highlighted the importance of giving customers as much information as possible to make informed decisions about heating options when they are available

AOB

14. Members and BEIS officials thanked David Blakemore for his time as Chair, noting the valuable contribution he has made to the Committee and to tackling fuel poverty in England.
15. Forthcoming CFP meetings scheduled are:
 - Thursday 24th March