

Minutes of Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) virtual meeting: 24 March 2022

The Chair and all members of the Committee were present: Caroline Flint (Chair), Paul Massara, Jenny Saunders and Anu Singh. Invited guests in attendance were BEIS officials and Adam Scorer from NEA.

Chairs Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed members and provided updates on the recruitment process of new committee members.
2. The Chair thanked Paul Massara and Jenny Saunders for all their work as members of the CFP in recognition of their final Committee meeting. The Chair also thanked her predecessor David Blakemore and BEIS officials for their help during her induction.
3. The Committee discussed the Chancellor's Spring Statement (23 March 2022) which some members felt was a missed opportunity.
4. The Committee suggested it would be helpful to have a meeting with officials from HM Treasury relatively soon.
5. The Chair expressed a wish to meet informally with both the old and new members for a shared learning session.

Members Interests

6. No new interests were declared.

Minutes of Last Meeting & Actions

7. Minutes from January meeting were agreed.

Action Log

8. The Committee were happy with the actions log. They agreed new members should get the chance to shape the content going forward.

Stakeholder Engagement

9. The Chair noted she had attended the APPG on Energy and Efficiency on 2 March 2022.
10. Agility ECO contacted a member of the committee regarding meeting the new chair.
11. There was a discussion on how to structure future meetings with stakeholders in order to access key information relating to Fuel Poverty and heating systems in homes.

Energy Bill Support Scheme - Session with BEIS Officials

12. BEIS officials gave an update on the Energy Bill Support Scheme.
13. There will be a public consultation on this soon, the CFP will respond to that once it is live.
14. Members asked questions around the structure and repayments. They queried the provision for those not on direct debit and how this scheme would reach the most vulnerable people. Members queried what would happen to customers if energy companies failed. They were also concerned that there was no ability for members of the public to opt out of this scheme.
15. Members raised concerns that BEIS was not proactively reaching out to hard-to-reach communities. Members stressed the importance of informative and clear communication on this scheme to the public.
16. Members of the committee felt this scheme should be more targeted and that they should be pushing for a cancellation or exemption of repayments.
17. The Committee discussed the various Chancellors' Spring Statement and upcoming Energy Announcements and proposed that they would write to the Prime Minister, Chancellor and BEIS Secretary of State.

Actioned and Available [here](#)

Guest Session with Adam Scorer (NEA)

18. NEA highlighted the increased interest they received during the pandemic. NEA were keen to work with Committee and support the members where they can. Members were keen to work with NEA and there was a conversation about key opportunities to work more closely.

Fuel Poverty Statistics Presentation

19. BEIS Officials presented the recent Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics report: 2022 to the committee. BEIS officials summarised findings and spoke about projections.

20. Members remarked that the published data shows that schemes are better targeted than previously thought. Members asked for a breakdown of numbers of fuel poor in different tenures and benefits to see how recourses need to be shifted between schemes.

Actioned and available [here](#).

(14:00- Anu Sigh left)

BEIS Policy Updates

21. BEIS Officials gave an update on the progress of the Warm Home Discount scheme, the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards.

22. There was a discussion about the anticipated Energy Statement. Members asked if it would include a focus on energy efficiency.

Review/ Forward Look

23. There was consensus that gaining insights from members who were leaving the Committee would be important and useful going forward.

24. Members suggested from experience that – it would be helpful to have more learning sessions outside formal meetings. That there is an ongoing need for good data sharing within and across Departments, and that it is important to have a range of short, medium and long terms actions. There was a need to consider areas where the Committee could have greatest impact – suggested areas being health and housing.

AOB

Action: Forthcoming CFP meetings to be scheduled.