



## Committee on Fuel Poverty

### **Minutes of Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) meeting: 14 November 2022**

**Members Present:** Caroline Flint (Chair), Liz Bisset, Anthony Pygram, Gordon McGregor and Belinda Littleton.

**Apologies:** Anu Singh

Invited guests in attendance were BEIS officials, and guest speaker from Citizens Advice (CA).

### **Chair's Welcome**

1. The Chair welcomed members.

### **Members Interests**

2. No new interests were declared.

### **Minutes of Last Meeting**

3. Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

### **Action Log & Stakeholder Engagement**

4. The Chair thanked members for their engagement. Members spoke about plans for the Committee's next annual report and committed to consider the schedule for publication in 2023. The Committee also discussed the anticipated timeline for the official fuel poverty statistics.

### **Guest speaker: Citizens Advice (CA)**

5. Citizens Advice gave a presentation on their recently published report 'Insulation Nation: the roadmap to a future of affordable energy bills'. Citizen Advice highlighted an increase in visits to their website, including from those being referred to as the 'squeezed middle' – those that they have never had contact with before and/or live in an energy inefficient home but not on benefits.

6. The Citizens Advice report highlights issues such as poor quality/inefficient heating of UK homes, and high cost of energy efficiency schemes amongst the reasons why consumers are not engaging with energy efficiency support schemes. Citizens Advice recommends that a successful energy efficiency scheme should be:

- Simple,
- Easy to access, and
- Easy to understand and to navigate.

7. Further to that advice around schemes should:

- Be clear about benefits,
- Include information on the pros and cons of taking action ,
- Include information on what a consumer can do if something goes wrong (redress), and
- Enable strong consumer protection/s.

**Action:** Citizens Advice to provide information on the different cohorts that need support.

**Action:** Citizens Advice to provide statistics on how many contacts received to their website and a comparison to previous years.

### **BEIS policy update**

8. BEIS gave an update on the Energy Bills Support Scheme, the learnings to date and the changes planned, including recently published legislation.

9. BEIS referenced the upcoming Autumn Statement on 17 November. BEIS discussed the Energy Price Guarantee, long term support for consumers and the government's commitment to energy efficiency.

10. BEIS also updated on the status and progress of energy efficiency schemes, including the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG).

**Action:** BEIS to provide a note on how support is being provided for those in residential care and supported housing.

**Action:** BEIS to share trends identified in delivery of the Energy Bills Support Scheme

**Action:** BEIS to provide a note on the new regulations – The Energy Bill Relief Scheme Pass-through Requirement (England and Wales and Scotland) Regulations 2022 (introduced 1 November).

### **Targeting**

11. The Committee discussed different targeting measures and their effectiveness.

The Committee are keen to see for more information about the targeting of current schemes to consider their likely impact. The Committee would like to highlight areas where support for fuel poverty does not match the rates of fuel poverty to help inform future targeting and how it can be addressed.

12. The Committee discussed the private rented sector, and the need to make progress in this area to ultimately address fuel poverty.

**Action:** The Committee would welcome an update on the Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards.

**Action:** Committee members to compile all outstanding questions regarding fuel poverty statistics.

**Action:** Committee to consider how/what changes are required for existing fuel poverty energy efficiency schemes to become more effective.

**Action:** To share statistics available on the number of households supported by BEIS schemes

### **AOB**

No further issues were raised.

13. The next formal meeting will be held on 9 January 2023.