

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Fuel Poverty Framework

REPORT AUTHOR: Louise Crane, Principal Environmental Health Officer

DATE: 13th October 2021

EXTN: 01903 737669

AREA: PLACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Fuel poverty is a complex public health issue in the widest sense and it is not just one agency's responsibility. It therefore requires a partnership approach to both identify vulnerable households and provide possible approaches to enable them to live healthier lives with minimal support.

The West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021 – 2026 seeks to update the work across the County tackling fuel poverty and to act as a tool for prompting best practice and engaging with other policy makers across West Sussex.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That committee:

- Adopt the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021-2026.

1. BACKGROUND:

Fuel poverty is a complex public health issue in the widest sense. It affects people's ability to keep warm, which in turn impacts upon their physical health and worry about money has been shown to negatively impact upon mental health and emotional wellbeing. Evidence shows it is linked to reduced educational attainment in young people and can lead to increased health and social care intervention in the elderly and vulnerable. Reducing fuel poverty can improve many aspects in people's lives, including enabling them to keep as warm as they need to, which will help maintain their health and wellbeing. There is also the potential to release some extra household income to spend on essentials such as healthy food, which in turn could benefit the local economy.

Fuel poverty is not just one agency's responsibility; it therefore requires a partnership approach to both identify vulnerable households and provide possible approaches to

enable them to live healthier lives with minimal support.

The post of West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator is an externally funded one which is hosted by Arun District Council and has been in existence since 2010. The funding for the post was originally from West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) Public Health Department. The WSCC funding ceased in 2015. Since then the post has relied upon external funding bids to maintain sufficient budget.

The Governance and work plan for the post is via the West Sussex Affordable Warmth Partnership which is represented by all the district and boroughs as well as West Sussex County Council.

The West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021 – 2026 seeks to update the work across the county for tackling fuel poverty and to act as a tool for promoting best practice and engaging with other policy makers across West Sussex.

The aims are:

- a) To support and empower residents to improve household energy efficiency, reduce their energy costs and increase income.
- b) Identify and support residents in the greatest need and at most risk of living in a cold home.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

That committee:

- Adopt the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021-2026.

3. OPTIONS:

Other options available to Members:

3.1 To not agree to adopt the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021-2026.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adur & Worthing Councils, Crawley Borough Council, Mid-Sussex District Council, Horsham District Council, Chichester District Council, West Sussex County Council, Arun Well Being, West Sussex Public Health, Arun and Chichester Citizen's advice, Home Energy West Sussex front line workers meeting (10 home energy front line workers, include Citizen Advice, Age UK, NEA, 	X	

Agility Eco), Adur & Worthing food partners.		
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal	X	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		X
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability	X	
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		X

6. IMPLICATIONS:

Financial – Funding for the continuation of the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator post and initiatives to support the Framework for Action are reliant on securing partnerships for funding from utilities and other sources.

Legal – District and Borough Councils are under a legal obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act to demonstrate what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve energy efficiency of residential accommodation within their area. Reports are required to be published every two years.

Sustainability – Implementation of the strategy will assist in delivering environmental benefits by reducing carbon emissions and making homes warmer, which benefits the health of the occupants.

Equalities – No adverse impact identified on protected characteristics. Many interventions will be targeted at and for the benefit of the most vulnerable groups.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To support the Council’s strategic target of preparing Arun’s response to the Climate and Environmental emergency and to meet the Council’s obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Fuel Poverty: West Sussex Framework for Action 2021-2016

Equality Impact Assessment

[Home - West Sussex Energy](#) - Link to the West Sussex Affordable Energy website which illustrates the work of the partnership