



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION 27 JUNE 2005

Report of the Director of Policy

Home Energy Conservation Action Plan Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION

1. To consider the Action Plan update, which was drawn up in response to the 26 recommendations contained in the former Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Commission's report on Home Energy Conservation – How's Derby Doing?

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Commission undertook a detailed topic review in 2003. Its terms of reference were 'To review the home energy policy of Derby City Council and consider the targets and progress'.
- 2.2 Cabinet received the Commission's recommendations on 5 August 2003. The Commission's recommendations covered the work of several departments. Each submitted proposals and these were incorporated into a single Action Plan.
- 2.3 The Planning and Environment Commission considered the Action Plan on 24 May 2004. The Plan put forward proposals to deliver the recommendations over the short, medium and long term.
- 2.4 The Action Plan has now been updated and is attached at Appendix 2.

For more information contact: Richard Murrell 01332 255622 e-mail richard.murrell@derby.gov.uk
Background papers: None
List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications
Appendix 2 – Action Plan update

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The financial implications are set out in Appendix 2 under the column headed 'resource implications'. It will be seen that, in some cases, further work will need to be carried out to establish costs.

Legal

2. Any legal implications associated with the recommendations are contained in the individual responses.

Personnel

3. Any personnel implications associated with the recommendations are contained in the individual responses.

Equalities impact

4. Work on home energy conservation helps to make sure that all residents in Derby have access to the advice and resources necessary for them to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Corporate objectives and priorities

5. Work on home energy conservation contributes to the Council's objective of **providing a diverse, attractive and healthy environment.**

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT

PROGRESS ON ACTION PLAN

- * Short term – 2004/05
- * Medium term – 2005/06
- * Long term – 2006/07 onwards

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
1	Council Cabinet endorse a range of activity to improve home energy efficiency among the relatively affluent residents because it is intrinsically virtuous and essential if government targets are to be achieved.	Continued support of the Council's Home Energy Advice Service.	Promotion of initiatives aimed at fuel rich included in Affordable Warmth Bulletin. Mobile energy Advice Unit visits to, and Energy Advice Surgeries in, more affluent parts of the city.	Short term.	To be confirmed within existing resources.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Bulletin delivered to all households Nov 2004. Home Energy Advice Tour across city Jan/Feb/March 2005, with follow-up in Oct 2005. Currently planning Mobile Energy Advice Trailer visits in 2005/06. Supported pilot mailout to DE22 postcode promoting discounted loft and cavity wall insulation - ongoing.						
2	Council Cabinet note that the service is vulnerable in respect of staffing; if no one was in post, as happened in 1999-2000, it would mean an impasse in the Council's ability to promote energy efficiency and its ability to make Home Energy Conservation Act – HECA – reports to Government. Later recommendations in this report on reporting by councils to government and for Best Value targets to be set would, if accepted nationally, reinforce the need for continuity of staffing.	Council has committed itself to maintaining staffing current levels. Home Energy Advisor post was filled in September 2003.	Cover for vacant posts and long-term absences in Derby Home Energy Advice Service – DHEAS – to be provided from existing Renewal and Grants team. Look in to the possibility of training officer(s) from other Council House team(s) to provide cover.	Short and Medium term.	To be confirmed within existing resources.	Private Sector Housing Manager.
Progress to date: Current staffing levels adequate. Plans in place to cover workload in the short-term. Plans to look at training other staff in the near future.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
3	Council Cabinet institute as standard practice the referral by the welfare rights service of Minimum Income Guarantee recipients to DHEAS, to ensure that older residents take up additional Warm Front entitlements.	Agreed. Referrals will also be made by Money Advice, which is part of Derby Advice. Note: Minimum Income Guarantee was replaced by Pension Credit in October 2003.	Now routinely happens. A short formal protocol confirming the arrangements to be confirmed.	Short term.	Possible resource implication for Derby Advice. No additional implications for DHEAS Team.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Welfare Rights team, together with other Derby Advice staff, fully aware of DHEAS work. Derby Advice staff now receive training to identify fuel poor householders and refer to DHEAS.						
4	A mechanism for the local authority to undertake urgent works and to be retrospectively reimbursed by Warm Front should be sanctioned by central government and the Council should lobby for this.	Agreed. The Warm Front Scheme is currently under review, with changes to it likely from April 2005.	From April 2005, the Council to lobby central government through Parliamentary Warm Homes Group, Association for the Conservation of Energy, Warm Front/LA Working Party, Notts/Derbys Local Authorities' Energy Partnership and East Midlands HECA Forum.	Medium term.	To be assessed when new Warm Front Scheme published.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Changes to Warm Front scheme from June 2005 – we need to see what these changes are before the Council decides about lobbying.						
5	More to be done to promote home energy generally and Warm Front specifically to private sector landlords.	Agreed.	Will look at contacting private sector landlords with a view to running workshops.	Short term.	Nothing beyond resources already committed.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Very successful mailout to private tenants on the CTB/HB register regarding Warm Front in November 2004 – over 13% referred to Warm Front, including many private tenants. We attended Peartree and Normanton Landlord Association's Open Day on 22 May 2004. We sent a mailout to 61 letting agents / landlords in Summer 2004 – very poor response. Plan to work more closely with landlords as a result of Housing Act.						
6	Following from item 5, to maximise impact the DHEAS staff work through the estate agents managing large numbers of private rented properties.	Agreed.	Will look at contacting estate agents with a view to promoting to as many private landlords as practicable.	Short term.	Nothing beyond resources already committed.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Mailout sent to 61 letting agents / landlords in Summer 2004 – very poor response. Plan to work more closely with agents / landlords as a result of the Housing Act. Will look at producing an Agents / Landlords' Newsletter in 2005/06.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
7	The City Council should lobby for policy change at national level so that some grants are again available based on the building, rather than its occupants; a home energy grant administered by Warm Front should be available subject to proviso that the property remained available for rent for a number of years after completion.	Agreed. The Warm Front Scheme is currently under review, with changes to it likely from April 2005.	From April 2005, the Council to lobby central government through Parliamentary Warm Homes Group, Association for the Conservation of Energy, Warm Front/LA Working Party, Notts/Derbys Local Authorities' Energy Partnership and East Midlands HECA Forum.	Medium-term.	None.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Changes to Warm Front scheme from June 2005 – we need to see what these changes are before the Council decides about lobbying.						
8	Home energy should be integral to the 'checklists' of in-house professionals and those of other agencies and be factored into Sure Start and Home Start client work; this comprehensive approach need not be burdensome. Council Cabinet should implement this for in house staff and persuade other relevant employers to do so.	Agreed.	<p>Home Energy Advice Manager will explore the practical implications and costs involved in this recommendation to see how it could be taken forward with Social Services staff.</p> <p>Sure Start Home Visitors will be asked to discuss home energy with parents both during home visits and as part of the education/support package offered.</p> <p>This will be extended to parents using Children's Centres as they are developed. Continuation of developing working with frontline staff.</p>	<p>Short to medium term.</p> <p>Short term.</p> <p>Medium term.</p>	<p>Nothing beyond resources already committed.</p> <p>Nothing beyond resources already committed.</p> <p>Nothing beyond resources already committed.</p>	<p>Home Energy Advice Manager.</p> <p>Sure Start Programme Managers.</p> <p>Children's Centre Managers.</p>
Progress to date: Now delivering 'Fighting Fuel Poverty' training course for frontline staff as part of the Derby Advice Training Programme – in 2004/05 we trained 71 people from a range of Council departments and some from external agencies. Course includes a 'checklist'. Sure Start / Children Centre staff will attend Fighting Fuel Poverty training course and discuss home energy with their clients, where appropriate.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
9	Building inspectors should raise and talk through issues of cylinder lagging, loft insulation and other steps when undertaking home visits.	Not agreed.	Resources not currently available within Building Consultancy to undertake additional guidance on these matters. However, Building Consultancy does send out some information on energy efficiencies in the form of Local Authority Building Control – LABC / Powergen insulation offers.	Not applicable.	None.	Building Consultancy.
Progress to date: Head of Building Consultancy has been provided him with latest DHEAS Scheme Sheet for sending out with building application letters where applicable.						
10	Council Cabinet refer to the Social Care and Health Commission the issue of collaborative working with the NHS to gain the Commission's views about maximising the opportunities presented by the National Energy Action – NEA – Guidance Note to PCTs on Local Plans and Fuel Poverty.	Agreed.	To refer to Social Care and Health Commission.	Short term.	None.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Referral to the Social Care and Health Commission. Deferred to give further opportunity for DHEAS to explore whether there are further opportunities to enhance existing collaborative working with the health agency.						
11	The enhanced co-ordination between agencies envisaged should include the timing of key campaigns to achieve campaigning coherence and the most effective use of resources.	DHEAS already does this and reviews its activities to make sure that marketing activities are as effective as possible.	Continued review of marketing activities. Promotions to tie in with national, regional and local activities.	Ongoing.	Nothing beyond resources already committed.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: DHEAS has an annual marketing plan that details current and planned promotional activities. Promotions include, for example, working with Warm Front and the health sector at the local and regional level, and working with the EEAC and the Energy Saving Trust to deliver the national message at the local level.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
12	The Council should seek, through the Local Government Association – LGA, agreement for, and funding of, a national home energy television and newspaper campaign on behalf of involved local authorities in conjunction with the Builders Merchants Federation.	No further action considered appropriate - this is already covered by the work of the Energy Saving Trust – EST, in partnership with the LGA and the building industry.	Home Energy Advice Manager to continue liaison with the EST to ensure co-ordination.	Ongoing.	Nothing beyond resources already committed.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: DHEAS ties in activities with the national activities of the EST – including through the local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre. We held an energy advice surgery event at the Guildhall on 21 October 2004 to tie in with the start of National Energy Efficiency Week, which ran from 25 October 2004.						
13	The City Council act as a catalyst to creation of a purchasing consortium with a potential membership of 40 councils, for environmentally friendly white goods for onward sale to the public.	Agreed in principle. This has been tried – managed by the Notts/Derbys Energy Efficiency Advice Centre – EEAC – on behalf of the 19 Councils in Notts and Derbys. Had to be withdrawn because of minimal discounts and complex management. However, forthcoming changes to the EEAC network may make this timely to revisit.	The Council will explore feasibility with the HECA officers in Derbyshire and neighbouring counties and report back to Cabinet.	Feasibility: Short to medium term. Implementation: Short to medium term.	None.	Home Energy Advice Manager
Progress to date: Still awaiting developments to the EEAC network before addressing this again.						
14	Derby Loans should encourage and facilitate potential borrowers of white goods to choose 'A' rated new products whenever this makes economic logic for the client.	Not currently the practice.	Home Energy Advice Manager to discuss with Derbyloans Manager to see how this can be taken forward.	Short term.	None.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: DHEAS makes residents aware of Derbyloans by distributing its leaflets.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
15	The City Council lobby for Best Value targets, akin to those applying to recycling and recovery, to be placed on local authorities to encourage a higher priority for home energy; in parallel there needs to be nationally agreed and adhered to reporting protocols to ensure consistency and reliability.	Agreed.	To discuss best way forward with local MPs.	Short term	None.	Leader of the Council
Progress to date: On the agenda for the next MPs meeting in June 2005.						
16	To mainstream good practice in building design, location and orientation, the City Council should produce Supplementary Planning Guidance modelled on that recently adopted by Leicester City Council; this should be done as soon as practicably possible.	Agreed. There are proposals in hand for both supplementary planning guidance and best practice advice which will, if implemented, address this recommendation.	The Development Best Value Review Improvement Plan, considered by Cabinet on 27 April 2004, includes a proposal to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document setting out guidance on building design standards and principles. This can incorporate appropriate guidance on designs to promote energy efficiency. In addition, the 04/05 Community Strategy Action Plan and the Environmental Sustainability Unit's work programme propose the preparation of best practice guidance on sustainable development.	Medium term.	The Development Improvement Plan indicates that consultancy may be required to prepare the design guidance, possibly funded through Planning Delivery Grant. The best practice guidance can be prepared in-house with existing resources.	Development Division, Development and Cultural Services.
Progress to date: A Design Policy Post has been included in the Development Control Action Plan, funded from Planning Delivery Grant, with specific responsibility for design guidance. The supplementary planning document needed to achieve this is included in the Council's Local Development Scheme submitted to GOEM with a target date of December 2005 for the draft document for public participation and consultation. We are currently engaged in the early stages of recruitment to the post.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
17	The City Council should also lobby for legislation requiring high Standard Assessment Procedure – SAP – ratings in all new buildings and failure to demonstrate that to be a sufficient reason to withhold planning permission for any proposed scheme.	Not agreed.	Requirements on SAP ratings currently covered under Building Regulations. Legislation currently going through Parliament, the Sustainable and Secure Building Bill, addressing energy issues. The Council could lobby local MPs to support this Bill – in supporting the Bill, request that the current enforcement powers are updated to make sure that the legislation can be properly enforced. In addition, currently awaiting imminent changes to Part L of Building Regulations to encourage further improvements to fuel and power use.	Not appropriate.	None.	Development Control and Building Consultancy.
Progress to date: The Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill received Royal Assent on 16 September 2004 - not enough time to lobby. New Building regulations introduced in April 2005 will help to make sure that homes are more energy efficient – this will include requirement for fitting high efficiency condensing boilers as standard.						
18	Council Cabinet should engage with Centre for Renewable Energy Systems Technology – CREST – and the Learning and Skills Council – LSC – with a view to ensuring the proactive planning and acquisition of the skills needed to respond to expected future growth in demand for the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewable technologies.	Agreed.	Assistant Director – Housing and Advice Services to put issues to CREST and LSC.	Short to medium term.	None.	Assistant Director – Housing and Advice Services.
Progress to date: Awaiting an update.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
19	If it is still possible to influence the design of the respective projects, to show what can be achieved, the schools PFI scheme should provide energy efficient schools and the Riverlights scheme provide energy efficient buildings; CityScape should be taken forward on this basis.	Responsibility of Building Services and other officers promoting CityScape initiatives. Existing and proposed Housing PFI schemes already incorporate high levels of energy efficiency in refurbishment work.	Wherever possible, relevant departments will promote the design process for energy efficient buildings.	Short to long term.	None directly.	Relevant departments.
Progress to date: Council is engaging with Derby Cityscape on the design aspects of schemes as they are brought forward. D&CS Building consultancy is responsible for making sure that all new buildings meet the stringent energy efficiency requirements of the Building Regulations. Schools PFI: Energy conservation and efficiency formed part of the Council's specification for the new schools and was a feature of the bid evaluation. Subsequently, Norwest Holst – the construction partner of the preferred bidder – in conjunction with their architects, have incorporated a significant number of contemporary and innovative features within the designs. These are now clearly visible as the construction programme moves forward.						
20	Council Cabinet encourage the Environment City Partnership to facilitate the development, at an easily accessible venue within Derby City, suited to the purpose, of an environmentally friendly base for business offices, training and/or community and voluntary organisations and/or an environmentally friendly show house.	Agreed.	The 2004/05 Community Strategy Action Plan will have a commitment to carry out a feasibility study into the possible development of an Environment Centre for the city.	Medium term.	None directly.	DCP – Environment City Executive.
Progress to date: This was to be a joint project between the Council and Derbyshire Environment Centre Organisation – DECO. Unfortunately, DECO folded last year and this has had a knock on effect with a number of projects in the 2004/5 Community Strategy including this one. It has been dropped from the latest action programme but it may well materialise in Derby in some shape or form in the future.						
21	To overcome householders' reluctance to engage contractors, the City Council should explore the costings and potential economic viability of providing a support service for householders aged under 60, akin to that provided locally to older householders by Walbrook.	Council is currently planning to further develop the working relationship with Walbrook Care and Repair.	Further development of the working relationship with Walbrook Care and Repair.	Short term.	None.	Private Sector Housing Manager.
Progress to date: Handy Person scheme now up and running – provided by Walbrook Care and Repair.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
22	The City Council lobby central government to make it a requirement for each company to provide annual returns, by local authority area, to the regulator so that aggregated totals of customer take up of discounts and other energy efficiency steps can be provided to councils without compromising individual company interests.	Not currently happening and unlikely to happen in the near future.	Council to lobby central government through Parliamentary Warm Homes Group, Association for the Conservation of Energy, Warm Front/LA Working Party, Notts/Derbys Local Authorities' Energy Partnership and East Midlands HECA Forum.	Long term.	None directly.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Council to continue to lobby on this. Some data from the fuel companies now looks likely in the future.						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
23	<p>Every tier of the City Council's business plan include a section on energy efficiency suggesting the scope for improvement in accommodation occupied, identifying:</p> <p>a) quick wins that might be achieved and</p> <p>b) seeking to integrate more major improvements with planned maintenance.</p>	<p>The Council's corporate and business planning arrangements do provide the opportunity to identify actions to improve home energy efficiency.</p> <p>Much work is already being done corporately on energy efficiency in accommodation.</p> <p>The 2003-06 Corporate Plan included reducing the number of households in fuel poverty as an outcome and the Council's BVPP sets targets for improving the fuel efficiency of Council homes.</p> <p>The Council's objectives for 2004-05 includes Healthy Environment as an objective. Where relevant, unit business plans can show the actions the service will take to improve home energy efficiency under this heading.</p>	<p>No action proposed on including in business plans as this would not be relevant to the majority of plans.</p> <p>Property Services to look at issue of quick wins and greater integration of major improvements with planned maintenance.</p>	Medium term.	None.	Assistant Director – Property Services.
<p>Progress to date: Energy policy for went to Cabinet on 26 April. Policy proposes that the Council will: assess new buildings for their projected lifetime energy consumption and ensure design solutions cost effectively reduce this consumption; use maintenance work as an opportunity to improve and upgrade fabric and systems to reduce energy consumption; set up a Cross Service Working Group responsible for implementing the policy across all departments monitoring performance and giving feedback. Each Group member will be their department's energy 'champion'; ensure each building has a trained energy 'monitor' to provide information to their departmental 'champion'; improve energy training and awareness of both current staff and all new staff; set up a monitoring system to allow assessment of each buildings energy consumption per sq metre. Buildings will then be 'benchmarked' as good, average or poor; display the energy performance and benchmark rating of each public building prominently; change to an electronic accounting method and adopt electronic billing to improve both data and financial management and staff efficiency; it is proposed to set up a rolling budget. Energy efficiency projects with a good payback - probably 5 years maximum - will be funded. The fund will be reimbursed from the savings until the capital cost is repaid. All savings then go to the occupying department and the funds are available to carry out further work. Other relevant items: 25 sites have been surveyed – 16 by DCC and 9 by The Carbon Trust – recommendations made and, where possible, work is being actioned.</p>						

	Commission recommendations	Response	Proposed action	Timescale*	Resource implications	Responsibility
24	A short-life project be supported, to be delivered by an external provider, to provide a step change in the knowledge of renewable energy sources throughout the City Council and promote appropriate conversions.	Agreed.	The Community Strategy Action Plan contains a commitment to organise a talk/ workshop for local businesses and public/voluntary sector organisations on green design / sustainable technologies. The recommendation would be a logical extension to this.	Short and Medium term.	Workshop can be contained within existing resources. Funding would have to be identified to support the delivery of the project.	Home Energy Advice Manager / Environmental Co-ordination Unit / Derbyshire Alternative Technology Association.
Progress to date: This project has been linked with the guidance on green design issues that will be a Supplementary Planning Document – SPD – as part of the new planning system. There is a timetable to produce this guidance this year but the process to go through to make an SPD is quite onerous. Environmental Co-ordination Unit leading on this.						
25	Derby City Partnership and all of the component organisations and businesses should be asked to use an organisational self-assessment form to publicly indicate what each is doing to promote energy efficiency.	Agreed.	Questions about energy efficiency form part of the Climate Change questionnaire being sent out to local groups and organisations shortly.	Medium term.	Some.	DCP – Environment City Executive.
Progress to date: Climate Change questionnaire was sent out to organisations and businesses in summer 2004 – results of survey are available. DCP – Environment City Executive taking this forward.						
26	Derby Homes and other social housing providers be requested to routinely include the Standard Assessment Procedure – SAP - and National Home Energy Rating – NHER – in the information provided to potential tenants whenever a home is being re-let; as well as being virtuous in itself it may act as a catalyst to similar information becoming more widespread in the owner occupied sector.	Home Energy Advice Manager already working with Derby Homes to provide this information through Derby Homefinder.	Hope to develop this initiative – some technical difficulties. Home Energy Advice Manager to pursue with Derby Homes and Registered Social Landlords – RSLs.	Medium term.	Difficult to assess.	Home Energy Advice Manager.
Progress to date: Home Energy Advice Manager awaiting follow-up meeting with Derby Homes. The approach being taken is to get the energy ratings for DH properties established before starting work with RSLs and before the information goes on Homefinder. Derby Homes is working on this and the information is gradually being pulled together, but it is a lengthy process. Timescale now anticipated to be long-term rather than medium-term.						

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CREST	Centre for Renewable Energy Systems Technology
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DHEAS	Derby Home Energy Advice Service
EEAC	Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
EST	Energy Saving Trust
ESU	Environmental Sustainability Unit
HECA	Home Energy Conservation Act
LABC	Local Authority Building Control
LGA	Local Government Association
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NEA	National Energy Action
NHER	National Home Energy Rating
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure