

Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 2021

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

1. Introductory Questions:

Name of Local Authority

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Type of Local Authority

District

Name, job title and email address of official submitting report

David Smith, Head of Communities and Climate Change, david.smith@highpeak.gov.uk

2. Headline and Overview

Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?

No

If yes, please provide a link If no, are you planning to develop one?

Yes; we are looking to formulate a 'Decarbonise Strategy' at the end of 2021.

What scheme(s) is your Local Authority planning to implement in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation properties in the next two years?

We will continue commissioning an affordable warmth service and will be working alongside the CCG fragility hubs to target the help available to the most vulnerable; in line with NICE.

Up to 2022 we will continue to provide first time central heating systems via the Staffordshire Warm Homes Fund (SWHF), under Category One funding .

In addition, Category 2 of the SWHF will provide Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) to those residents that have never had the ability to upgrade their heating, to a gas central heating system, due to their extended distance from a gas mains connection.

Through the SWHF partnership, further government funding was secured under the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (GHG LAD); phase 1a. The scheme can give eligible households access to funding to provide renewable heating systems and energy efficiency measures within their homes and.

In addition, under the SWHF Partnership, a consortium proposal has been submitted into Phase 2 of the GHG LAD. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council have been

allocated £545,000 under phase 2 and, if the proposal is secured, will provide energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating to eligible residents.

What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of running and administering the scheme(s), such as the value of grants and other support made available, plus any other costs incurred (such as administration) as desired?

The cost of SMDC commissioning Beat the Cold Charity, to provide an affordable warmth service, is £12,000pa.

The Staffordshire Warm Homes Fund Cat 1 bid secured £4m to deliver First Time Central Heating (FTCH), other energy efficiency measures and wrap around services to vulnerable households across the county. The funding has been jointly provided by; Affordable Warmth Solutions, through the award of Warm Homes Fund and E.ON; through Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Warm Homes Discount (WHD) Industry Initiative Obligation monies.

GHG LAD Phase 1a secured £1.06m for delivery up to March 2021 across the SWHF Partnership

GHG LAD Phase 2 grant allocation for SMDC is £565,000 which is ring-fenced for the district. The allocation forms part of a combined allocation pot of £4.1m across Staffordshire Councils; for which a consortium proposal has been submitted by the SWHF Partnership.

What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?

Staffordshire Warm Home Funds Partnership, Beat the Cold Charity, Eon and Communitas.

What has been, or will be, the outcome of the scheme(s)? These outcomes could include energy savings, carbon savings, economic impacts such as job creation and/or increased business competitiveness or societal impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc.

The schemes can provide energy efficiency measures including External Wall Insulation, Cavity Wall Insulation, Loft Insulation, Double/Triple Glazed windows, Solar Thermal/PV, SMART heating systems and doors. This will help towards reducing energy costs for residents whilst increasing improvements in health and reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions.

3. Communications

Does your Local Authority provide any advisory services to customers on how to save energy?

If yes, please briefly outline how this is undertaken.

SMDC do not directly provide advisory services in regards to energy to our customers. Residents who contact the Council for energy efficiency advice are generally referred to the government-supported Simple Energy Advice website or Beat the Cold Charity.

How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses.

We provide a Business newsletter that contains information on funding for energy saving/carbon reduction and events. There is always a 'clean growth' feature – which includes relevant topics – Staffordshire Moorlands District Council currently have 986 registered readers

The Council has a webpage called 'Improving your environmental performance' which details support and available funding. Our business funding pages feature all sources of funding available to businesses which can support conversion to low carbon. Our communications team will often feature business focused grants in social media posts to raise awareness.

The Council has recently applied for funding from the Community Renewal Fund which, if successful, will provide grant funding for low carbon equipment for small businesses and farmers

4. Local Green Supply Chain

Have you made any assessment, or undertaken any analysis of the existing capacity in your local energy efficiency retrofit supply chain to support the decarbonisation of buildings by 2050? If Yes, please summarise the outcomes.

No

What actions are you taking, if any, to upskill and/or grow the local energy efficiency installer supply chain? This could include the facilitation of training, and local installer networking opportunities.

None

What actions are you taking, if any, to promote energy efficiency and the installer supply chain to consumers, and encourage households to consider energy retrofit?

If no action is taking place in either of these two areas, please let us know of any barriers you have encountered.

How effectively is your LA able to engage (Trustmark/PAS2035/PAS2030 certified) installers?

Engagement with certified Trustmark/PAS2035/PAS2030 is conducted via the SWHF Partnership.

Do you have any plans to develop policies or initiatives in this space over the next five years as part of supporting your local decarbonisation efforts?

Yes, we plan to develop a Decarbonising Strategy in 2021/22

5. Social Housing

What action, if any, has your LA taken to install energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures in social housing? Have these been installed to a satisfactory quality? What actions (if any) have your social housing partners taken?

N/A

Do you have easy access to the information/knowledge within your organisation that you would expect to need for social housing retrofit projects? (e.g. stock condition; property data; approach to procurement; alignment with existing internal maintenance/upgrade plans; tenant engagement and management plans; costings)

If no, would it be easy/difficult to obtain this information?

N/A

Have you experienced any challenges to retrofit, including during any previous government schemes you have taken part in (e.g. supply chain, funding, tenant cooperation, mixed tenure, split incentive, policy clarity, etc)? Please provide some detail. Have social housing partners reported any challenges to retrofit?

How does your LA currently/how will your LA in future plan to go about identifying suitable housing stock and measures for retrofit? How do social housing partners identify suitable stock? By the same measures or via a different method?

What considerations would make you more or less likely to apply for government funding? If known, what is the opinion of your social housing partners?

To what extent are social housing tenants willing or unwilling to undergo retrofit, and what are the barriers and facilitators to their participation? If known, is this the same opinion across all social housing tenants or is it different with HA and ALMO tenants?

Does the approach to retrofit change for leaseholders in mixed tenure blocks? What encourages them to co-operate?

6. Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards regulations requiring private rentals in England and Wales to meet a minimum energy performance rating of EPC Band E as of April 2020, unless a valid exemption applies?

Yes

Which team within your authority is responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard? Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.

Environmental Health

Mike Towers - Senior Officer (Housing, Public Health & Licensing)

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What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?

Website information; inclusion of information in all correspondence with landlords; information through the landlord accreditation scheme

What barriers, if any, does your local authority face enforcing these regulations (e.g. identifying non-compliant properties/landlords, budgeting/resourcing, any legal issues)?

Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties to enforce these regulations? If yes, how? If no, please explain:

Where possible, please set out your answers to the following questions by tenure (owner occupied, privately rented, or social housing).

We respond reactively to issues relating to properties with F and G ratings when we visit as a result of tenant complaints, and where such ratings occur we engage with landlords to encourage improvements.

We offer a grant through the landlord accreditation scheme for members to improve thermal efficiency in their properties. We aim to adopt a more pro-active response when the requirements become applicable to all tenancies from April 2020.

What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable please outline the budget (and % of the budget that is used), where such funding is sourced and where it is targeted.

- Affordable warmth Programme.
- ECO3
- Flexible eligibility under ECO3.
- Warm Homes Fund (Cat 1 and 2)
- Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 1a.

What future investment for energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures do you have planned, and when are these investments planned for?

We hope that the collaborative proposal into the GHG LAD2 funding scheme will secure funding to provide energy efficiency measures and/or low carbon heating into eligible properties.

7. Fuel Poverty

Does your Local Authority have a Fuel Poverty Strategy?

No

What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? What blockers, if any, have there been in identifying households in fuel poverty?

We access data from the non-gas map , sub regional fuel poverty statistics , and other health data via the CCG provided by our commissioned affordable warmth service.

How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall Carbon Reduction Strategy?

N/A

Please highlight any fuel poverty issues specific to your area.

What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? Include information on partnerships with local businesses or energy providers you have.

Our affordable warmth service carries this out on our behalf for vulnerable households, and we are part of a larger programme under the SWHF Partnership providing energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating into eligible households

8. Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery

Of the £2bn Green Homes Grant scheme introduced in summer 2020, £500m was assigned for Local Authority Delivery (LAD). LAD enables Local Authorities to bid for

grant funding to support low income households in their area with energy efficiency and low carbon heating upgrades. £200m was made available through Local Authority grant competitions in 2020, known as phases 1A and 1B and £300m was allocated under Phase 2 between the five regional Local Energy Hubs.

Has your Local Authority Participated in GHG: LAD? If yes, please indicate which phase you participated in and briefly outline the project.

Yes SMDC did participate in the GHG LAD Scheme. SMDC made a consortium into all three phases of LAD, 1A, 1B and phase 2.

If no, please indicate what barriers prevented you from participation in the scheme:

N/A

Would your Local Authority be in a position to manage the delivery of upgrades through a scheme such as LAD in 2022?

In 2020/2021 SMDC collaborated with other SC LA's to delivery a scheme across the County through the submission of a consortium bid into phase 1a. of the LAD scheme.

SMDC is not in a position to deliver a scheme such as LAD in silo.

If yes, please indicate the anticipated number of homes that could be upgraded per year:

N/A

If no, please indicate what barriers would prevent you from delivering upgrades in your area:

In-house capacity to deliver all aspects of the scheme would be the main barrier in delivering a project of this nature without a collaborative, partnership approach.

9. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an obligation on energy suppliers aimed at helping households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving measures. Following the Spring 2018 consultation, the Government set out in its response that ECO3 will fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households.

The ECO “Local Authority flexible eligibility” (LA Flex) programme allows LAs to make declarations determining that certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes and vulnerable to the effects of cold homes, are referred to ECO obligated suppliers for support under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO.

LAs involved in the LA Flex programme are required to issue a Statement of Intent (SOI) that they are going to identify households as eligible, and the criteria they are going to use; and a declaration that the LA has been consulted on the installation of measures in a home.

Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (SOI) for ECO flexibility eligibility?

Yes. The current SOI can be viewed online at:

<https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/media/4056/ECO---Flexible-Eligibility-Criteria-for-Staffordshire-Moorlands-Mar20/pdf/SMDC - ECO Flexible Statement of Intent - Mar 2020.pdf?m=1585584098520>

Please answer the following questions to help us to understand LA Flex delivery in more detail:

Figures up to 22/03/2021

How many declarations were issued for low income vulnerable households?

Sixteen

How many declarations were issued for Fuel Poor households?

Twenty-Four

How many declarations were issued for in-fill?

None

What is the highest income cap published in your SOI?

£47,190

If you have used an income over £30k gross, what reason have you given?

An uplift of 20% on the mandated levels for ECO using child benefit rules, and agreed in advance with BEIS

Do you charge for declarations to be signed? If so, please state how much:

Flex declarations are issued free of charge from the local authority, scheme administration is organised through our contracted fuel poverty service with Beat The Cold Charity.

10. Smart Metering

Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to promote smart meter take up and supporting residents to achieve benefits:

Please provide further information on activities relating to smart metering, including but not limited to:

- ***Integrating approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation.***
- ***Arranging for smart meters to be installed by energy suppliers in vacant social housing premises.***
- ***Using social landlords to promote smart meter uptake.***
- ***Including smart meters in landlord licencing schemes.***
- ***Supporting residents who have had appliances condemned for safety reasons.***
- ***Other supporting activities.***

Our Affordable warmth service partners with smart energy GB, and has provided advice to those identified as high risk, groups. This work will continue, as well as being covered under the services core delivery.

11. Future Schemes and Wider Incentives

Please outline any further schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve energy efficiency in residential accommodation:

Our intention through our affordable warmth service is to integrate more closely our work with health and social care, to improve the targeting of our service.

We also hope to continue to take a collaborative approach, with other Staffordshire Councils, to secure future government funding when/if this becomes available.