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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods
Date	2 August 2021
Present	Councillor Craghill (Executive Member)

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## **1. Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

## **2. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 April be approved and signed as a correct record by the Executive Member.

## **3. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## **4. The Enforcement of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Regulations within the Private Rented Sector in York**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an update on progress of the Housing Energy Efficiency Programme, following on from the Executive Member Decision Session of 18 March 2021.

The Housing Standards and Adaptations Manager and the Head of Housing Delivery and Asset Management were in attendance to provide an update and answer any questions.

The Housing Standards and Adaptations Manager explained the background to the Energy Efficiency Regulations, the Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), the Minimum Energy

Efficiency Standards (MEES) and the project, including the outcomes and future opportunities.

Key points arising from the presentation of the report included:

- Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) was shown on an A to G rating scale and was accompanied by a recommendation report that showed how to improve the dwellings energy efficiency.
- Since April 2020 it had been unlawful to rent out any residential property whose Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) did not meet an E as a minimum, unless they had a valid exemption in place.
- 12 regional partner authorities had been assisted with implementing processes and systems to ensure compliance with and enforcement of the MEES Regulation.
- A list of 315 properties with non-valid EPCs was compiled and from this initial list, further investigation showed that 123 had subsequently been found to have improved their EPC rating, 49 had left the private rented sector or had been let under a tenancy type not covered by the MEES Regulation, 9 properties had been referred for grant assistance and 5 were currently empty.
- 3 letting agents had amended/repaid websites to include EPC data.
- Findings of the pilot project had been fed back to the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- BEIS were considering raising the minimum standards so that from April 2025 it would be unlawful to let a residential premises that did not reach a minimum energy efficiency standard of C on a new tenancy and from April 2028 to make it unlawful to let any residential property whose EPC did not meet a C.
- Additional external funding was being sourced to continue the project and to share experience and best practice with other regional councils.

The Executive Member noted that the pilot project had already brought about substantial improvements and knowledge across the private rented sector and she welcomed the energy performance improvements which would support the council's strategy to reduce carbon emissions and improve the health and financial circumstances of residents.

Officers were thanked for the work they had achieved so far and for the support they had offered to landlords to meet the increase in legal standards and the Executive Member:

Resolved:

- i. Noted the report and the possible implications of future Government proposals for the Council;
- ii. Supported the continuation of this project subject to the necessary external funding being available; and
- iii. Noted the future implications for carbon reduction and housing energy efficiency strategy development.

Reason: This work seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents, reduce fuel poverty and reduce the carbon emissions from our housing sector, supporting the city's carbon neutral 2030 aspirations.

## **5. Update on the Housing Energy Efficiency Programme and grant application for the Sustainable Warmth Competition**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an update on progress of the Housing Energy Efficiency Programme.

The Head of Housing Delivery and Asset Management was in attendance to provide an update and answer any questions. He highlighted the background to the programme and the improvements made under the Local Authority Delivery Programme round 1B (LAD1B) and the Local Authority Delivery Programme round 2 (LAD2) funding.

Key points arising from the presentation of the report included:

- LAD 1B funding would support, across the region, room in the roof insulation to 37 homes and cavity wall insulation to 60 homes.
- LAD 2 funding would support, across the region, room in the roof insulation to 81 homes, loft insulation and draft proofing to 100 homes and cavity wall insulation to 60 homes.
- All works would be undertaken in homes with occupants who were on low incomes to support fuel poverty and

improve health and wellbeing and help York to achieve its 2030 carbon neutral ambition.

- Working with partners within the region, officers anticipated that 450 energy efficiency home improvements would be supported through the LAD funding by the end of 2021.
- The Sustainable Warmth Competition grant had opened for applications, giving council's the opportunity to bid for funding by the 4 August 2021. If successful this would support further work to 380 homes in the region in the private, rented and homeowner sector and would be used to reduce the energy demand in each home.

The Executive Member was also informed of a further grant opportunity, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. If successful, this would support the council's retrofit programme.

The Executive Member noted the challenges and welcomed the progress made to develop and expand the retrofit and energy efficient programmes in the city, which would support resident's energy bills, the city wide strategy to reduce carbon emissions, tackle fuel poverty and support retrofit, homeowners and tenants.

The Executive Member commended officers for the work already achieved by maximising the funding attained so far. She also welcomed the additional staff recruited to support the programmes and she

Resolved:

- i. Noted the implementation and delivery of the LAD1B funding and the successful application for LAD2 funding from TVCA including the tight timescales for delivery;
- ii. Noted the opportunity to reset the retrofit programme for Council– owned homes following the withdrawal from the WYCA Energy Accelerator project and to receive a further paper following officers consideration of the Social Housing Decarbonisation competitive funding round due to open in late Summer;
- iii. Supported the submission of a grant application of approximately £4.6m for the Sustainable Warmth competition as detailed in the report; and

- iv. Subject to receiving grant funding following the Sustainable Warmth Fund application, a report to be brought to Executive or Executive Member Decision Session to agree acceptance of funding and the procurement approach and contract award of a partner to deliver the programme.

Reason: To tackle fuel poverty and to meet the ambition of York being carbon neutral by 2030, to reduce energy demand as well as switching to greener forms of energy across all tenures.

Cllr Craghill, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.23 am].

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