

SUSTAINABILITY PANEL

THURSDAY, 31 MAY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Marion Mills (Chairman), David Coppinger (Vice-Chairman), Nicola Pryer and Derek Sharp

Officers: Michael Potter and David Scott

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simon Werner, Lynda Yong and Martin Fry.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

The Part I minutes of the meeting held on the 8 March 2018 were agreed approved with the following amendment:

Councillor Sharp was not in attendance at the previous meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The Chairman welcomed Members and the public and gave a brief update on actions from the previous meeting.

Water refill stations – the Energy Manager stated there had been some progress in getting a scheme implemented and that would be covered in more detail in his report later on in the meeting.

The Energy Manager had also been working on the Sustainability and Energy Strategy which would be implemented over the next four years.

ECO FUNDING & THE FLEXIBLE ELIGIBILITY

Scott Davies of GHE Solar Ltd gave Members a presentation on Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Local Authority Flexibility schemes and Members noted the following key points:

- GHE were a Berkshire based company based in Newbury.
- They operated nationally
- They installed energy efficient measures on ECO and previous schemes. The vast majority of the work they carried out included Cavity and Loft insulation and replacement gas boilers under ECO.
- Non ECO-Solar PV, Solar Thermal (hot water), Air Source, heat pumps, ground source heat pumps, Biomass Boilers, smart heating controls were all carried out by GHE.
- They installed to around 15,000 households each year on ECO schemes.
- GHE were a British Gas partner and they were also talking to other LA's regarding potential scheme implementations.
- ECO began in 2013 and mandated energy suppliers with greater than 25,000 customers to join the scheme. They were obligated suppliers who must fund energy efficiency improvements to households.

- The Big 6 energy companies that ran these schemes did so through third parties such as GHE. GHE installed the equipment free of charge for the end user and received payment from the energy company.
- There were currently two categories of funding for ECO.
 - CERO was available to all households
 - HHCRO was available to those considered fuel poor – households needing to decrease costs and who were in receipt of certain benefits.
- ECO3 was only available to the fuel poor (HHCRO) and would start in October 2018 until April 2021.
- HHCRO was determined by qualifying benefits or by Local Authority Flex schemes.
- Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex) allowed LA's to designate a household as fuel poor.
- LA Flex allowed households that might struggle with energy bills but were not eligible for qualifying benefits to obtain funding for energy efficiency measures.
- LA Flex was highly relevant in the South East of England due to the high cost of living in the South East.
- Due to high living costs in the South East, vulnerable households had a higher income but lower disposable income than other parts of the UK; they might not be eligible for benefits but might still be fuel poor.
- Statement of intent:
 - To provide LA Flex the Council needed to publish a statement of intent.
 - Currently 133 Councils had already published their statements of intent. Templates were available and it was possible to adapt them for the Council's existing use.
- Currently Councils that have signed up to the scheme included the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, Barnsley Metropolitan Council, Basingstoke & Dean Borough Council, among others.
- Possible Routes:
 - Councils promote ECO to households.
 - Install firms promote to households.
 - Data analysis by install firms from Council data and promotion to households.
- Council promotion of the scheme:
 - Council promotes to householders.
 - Council takes enquiries.
 - Council provides details of enquiries to install firms.
 - Council signs off households as eligible (LA Flex).
 - Council is point of contact for householder
 - Required Council resources
 - Council promotes commitment to reducing poverty.
- Installer promotion:
 - Installer promotes to households
 - Can explain to householder that it is in conjunction with Council or not mention Council depending on Council preference
 - Installer collects details of eligibility
 - Installer supplies eligibility details to Council
 - Council signs off household as eligible.
 - Installer is point of contact for householder
 - Requires little resource from Council
 - Council can demonstrate commitment to reduction of fuel poverty.
- Data analysis:
 - Council provides housing data
 - Data anonymous and held securely – GDPR compliant
 - Data analysed to target possible eligible households
 - Promotion made to households by installer in conjunction with the Council.
 - Installer collects details of eligibility
 - Installer supplies eligibility details to the Council
 - Council signs off households as eligible.
 - Installer point of contact for householder

- Requires little resource from Council
- Data analysis funded by installer and the Council can access the results
- Smarter way to target eligible households.

Councillor Coppinger stated the Borough had no housing stock of its own. Scott Davis confirmed the scheme was more about whether the Council had data on local social housing; did the Council hold additional information on housing. As the Royal Borough did not have their own housing stock, therefore, it might not be effective to use the data analysis model. David Scott, Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships queried what criteria the Council should be stipulating in their scheme such as boilers older than 2002. Scott Davis stated it was statutory for what could be submitted and be paid for. The Council needed to certify that the householder was in fuel poverty which allowed measures to be available to unlock energy efficient solutions. In order to decide on who qualified as fuel poor, the Council could make reference to local incomes, disposable incomes being below local average, but that would need to be evidenced. GHE were able to supply details of what other LA's were doing.

Scott Davis confirmed for the Panel that there were other organisations such as charities that were also implementing the scheme. Bristol, Somerset and Gloucester Local Authorities had all joined together and produced a statement of intent and partnered with a non-profit organisation. GHE had carried out the installation on their behalf. He added that the Charities charged a type of finder's fee as they produced the Statement of Intent used by the LA's. Scott Davis also confirmed that an innovation grant had been used in other areas to draw down on, in areas such as Rotherham which had been granted by Central Government.

Scott Davis stated there were other competitors offering a similar scheme, but he could help produce the Statement of Intent that was required to implement the scheme. The Borough could also have multiple installers working in the area. Scott Davis added that his company had carried out work in the Royal Borough which made him think there would be HHCRO fuel poverty homes in the area.

Members thanked Scott Davis for his presentation and for answering all of their questions on the scheme.

WORK PROGRAMME

David Scott, Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships explained to the Panel that it would be a good idea to have a presentation from one of GHE's competitors on LA Flexibility schemes.

The Chairman also requested to add an update on the Energy Switch to Save Scheme for later in the year, a report or presentation on waterless urinals and an update on Electric Pool Cars and Charging Points.

The clerk to the Panel noted the requests and confirmed she would add them to the Work Programme for future meetings.

ENERGY MANAGER'S UPDATE

The Energy Manager provided the Panel with a brief update on savings and progress made on reducing energy use. He stated that the competition on energy saving schools had ended and a prize awarded to the winner.

Energy monitoring data: Overall the data showed a total saving of 21% compared to the baseline year 2013/14. That meant that because the savings were likely to be maintained in March, that the saving target of 15% would be exceeded by at least 6%. The Energy Manager confirmed the good news on savings would be published in the Around the Royal Borough publication.

The energy Manager confirmed there had been a 22.5% energy decrease since the new LED street lighting scheme had been rolled out and completed.

The Energy Strategy that ran from 2014 – 2018 had now ended and so it was a good time to reflect on some of the key pieces of the energy and water saving work that had been carried out over the prior four years. The strategy started out with some work on gas, electric and water automatic metering. That was done to try and improve the accuracy of billing and to improve monitoring of the Council's energy supplies. The Council was now in a good position to start a new strategy which would consolidate all the work done and that would improve for the future. Michael Potter, the Energy Manager added that as he was now leaving his post at the Council, it was a good opportunity to allow the new manager to take the new strategy forward.

The Schools' Energy Competition ran from 23 April to 14 May and 20 maintained schools took part. The Mayor presented the prize to the winners, the Royal School. Oldfield Primary School were highly commended on the savings they had made. The Chairman stated the Royal School had said the weather had helped as they had taken classes outside which reduced their need to use energy.

Refill Scheme – the Energy Manager had received some information from City to Sea CIC about the scheme they ran. They were still not set up nationally and they did not have any posters or stickers for businesses windows but, they were gearing up to that. He added it was good to see residents leading the scheme by asking businesses if they could refill their bottles. There had been one resident very interested in water fountains being installed to refill bottles so the Energy Manager sent her the information he had and asked if she would go to businesses and ask them to sign up to the refill scheme. The residents contact details would be passed to Steph James, the Town Manager, to liaise over how best to approach local businesses.

Melissa, a local resident commented that she was starting discussions with local groups to try and remove plastics from the streets. She stated people used to be able to hand in bottles at local pubs and off licences and get refills. Supermarkets were now starting to offer similar schemes. But it was manufacturers that needed to be held accountable for producing so much plastic. The Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships stated that glass bottles were more efficient to recycle than to reuse them as they were. He suggested Melissa had discussions with the Waste Manager who would be interested to hear ideas on reducing waste/ the Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships added that 50% of what went into rubbish bins was recyclable and then 60% of that could be dealt with through existing systems.

The Energy Manager informed Members that the refill scheme had an app which showed where people could refill their bottles. He had also been looking at Council sites where refill points could be installed; however, sadly both cafes in the Town Hall and Maidenhead Library had closed. He added Maidenhead Library were installing a coffee machine and they also had a water cooler in situ. He had asked them to move it to a more prominent position. The Energy Manager was also looking to find out where other libraries had placed their water coolers.

Braywick Leisure Centre – the Energy Manager confirmed the solar panels on the roof had not been part of the original costings for the build of the leisure centre and that there was no funding for them in place as yet. He was looking for private funding from businesses or sponsorship. The Chairman stated the funding was a must as they were part of the project from the beginning. She added the lack of solar panels was raised prior to planning permission as the Panel had been adamant the leisure centre needed solar panels and it was cheaper to install them at the time of build than once construction had been completed. The Energy Manager confirmed planning permission was in place with solar panels but, they weren't initially part of the leisure centre project. Councillor Sharp stated it was a very big disgrace and if the Council could not rely on its own people to ensure they were installed, how would that encourage other people and residents to install their own. The Council needed to

lead by example. The Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships confirmed the additional costs for the solar panels were not part of the build design but, the capacity to install them was there. The Council needed to attract additional funding to incorporate the panels; while other energy efficiency measures had been incorporated into the scheme. The solar panels were not within the initial costings but were an additional cost. The Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships was unable to provide an answer as to why they were not part of the initial costs. The Chairman believed solar panels were part of the project from the beginning, so she would have a word with the Lead Member to see if any funding could be found.

The Energy Manager confirmed he had been talking to three companies that were putting together proposals; if no funding was forthcoming, a capital bid could be submitted. There were green funds and cooperative lending schemes that could be looked at. He added an EPC was required for a Feed in Tariff but the Council would not receive one until the building was complete. The Chairman stated it was an urgent item and it needed to be sorted.

Councillor Sharp stated three buildings stood out which had increased energy usage, the Guildhall had an increase in gas. The Energy Manager confirmed there was a problem with the controls and problem with the boilers. Councillor Sharp stated biomass boilers were very polluting, they produced similar levels of pollution as wood burners which London Councils were trying to ban. He added that the Oak Bridge Centre in Windsor also saw a big increase in energy use. The Energy Manager confirmed that had been flagged as a maintenance issue.

Councillor Sharp stated he was not happy the Council did not meter LED lighting. He had asked for a monthly report on how much the Council paid for street lighting compared with how many street lights were converted to LED. The Head of Communities Enforcement and Partnerships confirmed 14,000 lights were changed and the scheme to change them had been completed. He understood that a meeting with the agency that determined the cost per unit of street lighting had taken place, but the resultant figures had not yet been confirmed. He did not believe the Borough could change supplier to reduce the unit cost further, as the unit price was set nationally.

Councillor Sharp explained to Members that he was looking for the television which showed how much energy the Borough had saved but, the figures displayed were for those in August 2017 and he had to wait quite a while for the figures to display again on their loop. He stated it was not an effective way to show how well the Borough was doing and he wanted to show residents how much energy had been saved. The Chairman stated the figures were published in the Around the Royal Borough publication and she had also asked Maidenhead Library to switch the television on.

The Chairman wished to record her thanks and the thanks of the Borough and residents for all the hard work the Energy Manager had put into saving energy and keeping costs low. She thanked the Energy Manager for all the ideas he had brought to fruition and said he would be greatly missed.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....