



To: Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Jas Lally Head of Environmental Services
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 01/07/10
Wards affected: All

Retrospective approval of Project Appraisal for Landlord Accreditation Energy Grant scheme

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) invited local authorities to bid for grant funding from the regional Housing Pot to support the Private Sector Renewal, Regeneration and mixed communities programme. In consultation with Executive Councillor for Housing, a bid was made to provide financial assistance to those private sector landlords who are committed to improving the standard of their properties and are members of the Councils Landlord Accreditation scheme. An additional benefit of the bid was to act as an incentive to join the Councils Landlord Accreditation scheme. The bid was successful and the Council received a grant of £50,000 for 2009/10 and £50,000 for 2010/11 from East of England Regional Assembly. Although the project documentation was included in the Council's capital plan, Officers had not gained approval from Asset Management Team and the Executive Councillor for Housing. To address this, Officers have taken a report to Asset Management Team and are now seeking approval from the Executive Councillor for Housing.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:
To retrospectively approve the project appraisal for Landlord Accreditation Energy Grant Scheme, which is included in the Council's Capital Plan

3. Background

- 3.1 Cambridge City Council operates a Landlord Accreditation scheme for the private rented sector housing, where properties have to meet a minimum standard for health and safety, fire safety, and thermal comfort/ energy efficiency. Legally many of these measures are statutory and legally enforceable however the accreditation scheme encourages landlords to exceed this level.
- 3.2 Although the Landlord Accreditation scheme is successful with 417 properties been accredited in the City, some landlords do not sign up to it due to the costs of the energy efficiency measures required through the scheme.

- 3.3 In 2009 the Housing Condition Survey for the City indicated that the less energy efficient dwellings are older dwellings (pre 1919 and 1919 to 1944) and private rented dwellings. The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is a government rating for energy efficiency it is based on the calculated annual energy cost for space and water heating. A SAP of less than 35 would indicate that statutory action might need to be taken due to excess cold. 12.6% of the private rented stock show a SAP of less than 35. The average SAP for the private rented sector is 50 whereas owner occupied is 52 and housing association properties are 54.
- 3.4 Improving energy efficiency within the private sector housing supports the previous medium term objective (MTO) to “ Promote Cambridge as a sustainable city, in particular by reducing carbon dioxide emissions and the amount of waste going into landfill in the city and sub-region. It also supports the new MTO “A city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution.” This is through the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy, which requires additional household carbon reduction measures by extending the City Councils work programme to improve the energy efficiency of private, rented housing.
- 3.5 East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) invited Local Authorities to bid for grant funding from the Regional Housing Pot to support the Private Sector Renewal, Regeneration and Mixed Communities Programme.
- 3.6 Using the results of the previous and recent Housing Condition Survey and in consultation with the landlord accreditation steering group, a bid was made to EERA. The bid was approved and sought to provide financial assistance to private sector landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties and support the landlord accreditation scheme.
- 3.7 The Energy Grant Scheme offers an incentive grant of up to £1000 per property to ensure that home energy efficiency are installed, and the landlord would then be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the improvements. The scheduled work will bring the property up to at least a D rated and therefore will also be accredited and issued with an Energy Performance Certificate.
- 3.8 So far we have received 25 applications for funding and approved 6 grants for upgrading heating systems and insulation works Although the pick up of the scheme is slow we are planning to put together a marketing strategy to promote both the Landlord Accreditation scheme and the energy grant scheme this will include targeting specific types of landlords such as letting agents, and increasing the publicity of these schemes.
- 3.9 Quarterly reports have been submitted to EERA throughout the year to monitor the progress of the scheme. From April 2010 East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) have replaced EERA and will continue to work with Go-East in order to monitor the progress of the project. They are fully aware from the quarterly report submitted in April that there is a significant variance in the spend of this project. They have sent a letter to all Local Authorities who have received grant funding, indicating that they expect all projects to be delivered by March 2011 and they aim to provide support to identify appropriate remedial actions, where issues have been raised, to deliver the agreed outputs.

4. Implications

A) Financial

There is no direct costs to the Local Authority, however the Local Authority has received £50K for 2009/10 and £50K 2010/11 from EERA. There is significant variances in the spend of the project, however this is being monitored and measures put in place to increase the spend

B) Staffing

There are no staff implications other than additional work for the Landlord Accreditation Officer and the Home Energy Officer.

C) Equal Opportunities

No implications.

D) Environmental

The amount of carbon emissions from homes is reduced through energy efficiency improvements and the amount of energy required to heat the home is also reduced. This scheme, if successful, would result in Carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) savings of approximately 1400kg per home per annum. Energy savings of approximately 6200kWh per home per annum.

E) Community Safety

No implications.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Project Plan for EERA
Project Appraisal

6. Appendices

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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