

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 9 March 2023

Response to motion by Councillor Dalglish – Energy Efficiency Task Force

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Routine All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the information provided in this report on advice and information available for residents and businesses on energy efficiency; and
 - 1.1.2 Decide whether to proceed with the establishment of an Energy Efficiency Task Force.

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Executive Director of Place

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Response to motion by Councillor Dalgleish – Energy Efficiency Task Force

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report responds to an adjusted motion approved by the Council on [15 December 2022](#) in respect of an Energy Efficiency Task Force.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 15 December 2022, the Council approved the following adjusted motion by Councillor Dalgleish titled Energy Efficiency Task Force:
- To note that this winter and beyond would be extremely difficult for many people across Edinburgh, with a worrying amount of the residents, community groups and businesses facing financial challenges due to the cost-of-living crisis and pay not keeping pace with inflation. As a result of increased costs of gas and electricity bills, individuals may have to turn off their heating this winter.
 - To note that both council officers and elected members did their utmost as a matter of urgency to help the residents and communities during this winter period and beyond.
 - To note that Council had a primary duty of care as a landlord to assist Council house tenants and Council property users in ensuring their surroundings are comfortable and that any new support initiative must take that into account.
 - To support the call for a freeze on energy prices for the next six months, an end of the premium paid by nearly half a million households who have prepaid meters.
 - To request a report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee in one cycle which sought to establish a “Energy Efficiency Taskforce” with the aim of working alongside other relevant partners and stakeholders to give residents/owners, community groups and businesses information about insulation and energy efficiency renovations, including planning and building warrant requirements, as well as general advice regarding energy efficiency. The report should outline ongoing work related to this and detail clear objectives for the Taskforce and outline the feasibility of the City of Edinburgh Council

formally joining and/or working with Citizens Advice Edinburgh's 'EMPOWER' (Specialist Energy Advice) partnership which had established outreach and expertise in all localities.

- This Taskforce should set out the existing advice and information already provided by other parties including Home Energy Scotland and Changeworks. The aims of the task force should include:
 - Analysing the information already available and ensuring that it is accessible and well signposted to through a 'no wrong door approach';
 - Ensure that all relevant staff groups are trained to signpost to enable the above approach;
 - Review where there is a need for energy efficiency support but no resources available, by engaging with third sector and people with lived experience;
 - Review the approach outlined in the council's own net zero strategy and the Scottish Governments Heat in Building strategy; and
 - Produce an energy efficiency action plan with council specific outcomes which are achievable and do not duplicate the work of any other third party organisations.
- To agree a report should come back to HHFW which set out a realistic plan and deliverable outcomes before the task force was established. Any actions from the task force must be approved at the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee, or other relevant executive committees.
- To also agree that this report will set out:
 - The proposed membership of the taskforce, which should include at least one representative from each political group on the council;
 - The remit of the taskforce and the relationship between the taskforce and key partners and stakeholders in the fight against fuel poverty, including but not limited to Changeworks and Home Energy Scotland;
 - The progress to date on developing a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy for the city, and what the potential role of the taskforce could be with that development;
 - The current measures to target energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation at those in the greatest need, and what the potential role of the taskforce could be with ensuring energy efficiency is affordable to everyone and free to those on the lowest incomes; and
 - The potential for the council to support the creation of local advice and collective purchasing co-operatives such as Loco Home Retrofit in Glasgow, and what role the taskforce could play in that.

4. Main report

Climate Strategy

- 4.1 The [Climate Strategy](#) has a dedicated section on energy: Net Zero Energy Generation and Energy Efficient Buildings, with three key outcomes (eight associated Key Performance Indicators and 26 actions). Progress on the Climate Strategy and delivery of the actions is reported to the Sustainability Board with a full update expected to be presented to Policy and Sustainability Committee in August 2023.
- 4.2 Each action has a lead delivery partner and specific milestones.
- 4.3 Delivery Partners include:
- The City of Edinburgh Council;
 - Scottish Government;
 - Developers;
 - Registered Social Landlords;
 - The City Heat and Energy Partnership; and
 - Zero Waste Scotland.
- 4.4 The Edinburgh Infrastructure and Investment Programme Board (IIPB) has been established to support collaborative development of strategic city infrastructure.
- 4.5 This Board comprises a variety of partners and the City Heat and Energy Partnership is one of its subgroups. The Partnership includes Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN), National Health Service (NHS), Universities, Scottish Water, Scottish Gas Networks (SGN) and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESECRD).

Edinburgh Communities Climate Action Forum

- 4.6 Alongside the IIPB, the Edinburgh Communities Climate Action Forum has been established to support the development of net zero communities across Edinburgh. The forum is led by community, voluntary and third sector organisations and is facilitated by Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC). The Forum supports the work of community led retrofit, and with continued support from the Council, will continue to develop this programme over the next year.
- 4.7 The forum has four key objectives:
- 4.7.1 Supporting community capacity to deliver transformational Change;
 - 4.7.2 Supporting community leadership and inclusion in climate planning and action;
 - 4.7.3 Catalysing Net Zero projects between community, voluntary and third sector Organisations; and
 - 4.7.4 Working with communities to embedding Community Wealth Building Outcomes locally.

Working with partners to provide advice and information

- 4.8 A summary of the existing sources of advice, information and funding is provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.9 The Council works closely with all of these organisations, but in particular with Changeworks, Home Energy Scotland and Business Energy Scotland in order to ensure that residents can access the support that they need.
- 4.10 Due to the nature of the support available, it is not always possible to provide a ‘no wrong door’ approach, however the relationships are strong between each of the organisations and support is provided for residents and businesses to engage with the right services, at the right time.
- 4.11 This support also extends to ensuring that signposting and referrals to the relevant sources of funding is also provided.

Financial Support

- 4.12 There are a number of ways in which people and organisations can access financial support including through the Council’s [Advice Shop](#), which provides benefit and debt advice. This includes advice on [help with gas and electricity costs](#).
- 4.13 As well as a number of online tools to support residents to identify the support available, email and telephone contacts are also provided for people to access the information they need.
- 4.14 Advice is also available (from the organisations set out in Appendix 1) so that individuals do not need to fully understand the complexities of each scheme. For example, Home Energy Scotland can make referrals to the Scottish Government’s Warmer Homes Scotland programme as well as advising on the Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan funds.

Partnership Working

- 4.15 As part of the partnership work which the Council is leading on to ensure that there are warm and welcoming local spaces across the city this winter, information and advice has been provided to residents with information days and drop in events hosted by a range of partners.
- 4.16 There are also a number of community groups and partnerships working across the city to improve buildings and community spaces, through maintenance, retrofit and local heat and energy systems (including EdinBRIC and Porty Community Energy).

Net Zero Communities Pilot Programme

- 4.17 In the 2030 City Climate Strategy, the Council committed to pilot three net zero communities based on a whole system model in geographies with different demographic profiles, community capacity and common building typology; to scope a scalable approach to private housing retrofit.
- 4.18 Working with Changeworks and Dark Matter Labs, the three pilot areas identified across the city were Portobello/Joppa, Leith and Willowbrae. The areas were selected based on availability of common building typology, high owner occupier

residents, existing strong community alliance, alignment with 20 Minute Neighbourhood Programme and the potential for future funding.

- 4.19 With continued support from Changeworks, phase 2 of this project is underway and a final report is expected in Summer 2023. This will include detailed property typologies and will support the work of the community led retrofit programme led by EVOC.

Staff Training

- 4.20 In 2022/23, the Council's activities on poverty prevention and household support have included bespoke training on the Cost of Living to enable Council staff to support people by signposting to information and advice, resources, and support (including support provided by the third sector).
- 4.21 Home Energy Scotland also provided training titled 'How to save on your energy bills' to support staff but also to raise awareness of the support and services it provides.

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy

- 4.22 A Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) is a long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving energy efficiency across a local authority area. The central drivers of an LHEES are the statutory national targets of achieving net zero emissions by 2040 (with a 75% reduction by 2030) and so far as reasonably possible, eradicating fuel poverty by 2040.
- 4.23 The Council is in the process of preparing the LHEES for Edinburgh in line with the methodology published by the Scottish Government and Zero Waste Scotland.
- 4.24 Stages 1 and 2 of the LHEES have been completed and a consultant has been appointed to provide support with the technical analysis required to complete stages 3 to 6.
- 4.25 Concurrently, work is underway on stages 7 and 8 (the preparation of the strategy and delivery plan documents themselves). The Council is under a statutory duty to publish the LHEES by 31 December 2023 and the project management is focused on achieving this deadline.
- 4.26 Based on the current timeline, it is expected that the draft strategy and delivery plan will be completed by 30 September 2023 to allow for final consultation and Committee approval.
- 4.27 As noted, the focus of the LHEES is on long-term transformation of Edinburgh's building stock. However, if an Energy Efficiency Task Force is established, it may be able to assist with the delivery of some short-term actions (i.e. over the period 2024 to 2026) identified in the LHEES delivery plan (for example, raising awareness of existing and emerging support around energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation).

Current measures to target energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation

- 4.28 The Council currently support energy efficiency improvements to social homes (via its own retrofit programme) and to privately owned homes (via the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme delivered in partnership with Changeworks).
- 4.29 The Council also signposts households and businesses towards other support available, for example Warmer Homes Scotland, ECO4, and the Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan schemes.
- 4.30 Via its new housebuilding programme, the Council is delivering new affordable homes to net zero standard, with high energy efficiency and heat with no direct emissions. The Council is also developing net zero district heat schemes, including a proposed district heat scheme in Granton Waterfront that would supply new and existing homes.

Role of an Energy Efficiency Task Force

- 4.31 The approved motion requested a report which sought to establish an Energy Efficiency Task Force with the aim of working alongside other relevant partners and stakeholders to give residents/owners, community groups and businesses information about insulation and energy efficiency renovations, including planning and building warrant requirement, as well as general advice about energy efficiency.
- 4.32 However, as shown in this report, the landscape for providing advice and information is complex and wide-ranging and there are a number of organisations already operating effectively in the city to support individuals, landlords and community organisations.
- 4.33 Council officers have developed strong working relationships with a number of organisations and the Council works effectively (leading and supporting) partners to ensure that information and advice is available at the right time, from the right source. This includes signposting, onwards referral mechanisms, and facilitating opportunities for partners to speak to residents and businesses about the services provided.
- 4.34 It is recognised that the information available on the Council website, and to customers contacting the Contact Centre, could be enhanced by signposting to other support available, including to EMPOWER (the specialist advice service established by Citizens Advice Edinburgh and Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)).
- 4.35 Based on the above and, recognising that there are already a number of forums already in place to signpost to advice and information, officers recommend that the Council does not establish an Energy Efficiency Task Force.
- 4.36 Instead, it is proposed that officers set up a briefing for elected members with partners to demonstrate the work which is on-going and to discuss ways in which improvements could be made to the information and advice available to strengthen the 'no wrong door' approach. This would be programmed in the run up to the August report on the Climate Strategy and would offer an oversight of the full work programme.

- 4.37 In addition, as noted in paragraph 4.33, improvements will be made to the information available on the Council website and when contacting the Council by telephone to ensure people receive the information they need at the point of contact.

Composition and remit of an Energy Efficiency Task Force

- 4.38 Alternatively, should Committee decide to proceed with the creation of an Energy Efficiency Task Force, it is proposed that the task force should preferably consist of Elected Members, with one member per political party.
- 4.39 The task force would be supported by Council officers, with a forward agenda prepared, and partners would be invited to participate. Partners could include, but not limited to, the organisations/groups mentioned throughout this report, charities, voluntary groups, third sector partners, Registered Social Landlords, and private sector organisations.
- 4.40 It is proposed that the first meeting of the task force should receive the briefing proposed at paragraph 4.35, with presentations from Changeworks, Home Energy Scotland and Business Energy Scotland.
- 4.41 It is not possible at this stage to set out a realistic plan and deliverable outcomes for the task force, however should Committee agree to proceed with establishing a task force, officers will develop a draft plan with detailed outcomes for the task force within four months.
- 4.42 This could include a role for the task force in supporting the development and implementation of emerging proposals to improve energy efficiency (e.g. supporting the delivery of short term actions arising from the LEEHS such as raising awareness of existing and emerging support around energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation).
- 4.43 If it is agreed to proceed with the creation of a task force, the aims will be developed based on those included in the motion to the Council on 15 December 2022.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Committee is asked to note the information provided on the support and advice already available and to decide whether to proceed with setting up an Energy Efficiency Task Force.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial impacts arising from this report. However, should a task force be established, and an action plan agreed, this will be costed, and a report will be presented to the relevant Committee. On the assumption that no additional resource is, or will be made, available, this would also address what existing

workstreams need to be revisited to create capacity to support the Energy Efficiency Task Force and its action plan.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 There are a number of partners and community groups involved in providing advice and information about energy efficiency, as set out in this report.
- 7.2 If a task force is established, partners and community groups will be invited to participate in the task force as appropriate.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 None.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Existing Advice and Information

Appendix 1 – Summary of Existing Advice and Information Available

The Council provides advice and information to residents and works closely with a number of organisations which provide advice and information on energy efficiency. This includes but is not limited to:

Energy Efficiency and Heating Advice for all Residents

For Council Tenants

The Council [website](#) provides details on energy efficiency and heating advice.

For Council tenants, an Energy Advice Service is provided by Changeworks. This service is free to access and provides telephone, email, and online advice by contacting:

Telephone: 0800 870 8800

Email: warmth@changeworks.org

Website: [Changeworks](#)

This service is currently being expanded to meet the needs of tenants.

For Residents

[Home Energy Scotland](#) provides free, impartial advice to householders (of any tenure) on saving energy, keeping warm at home, renewable energy and cutting water waste. Home Energy Scotland can also advise on funding including the Scottish Government's Warmer Homes Scotland programme and the Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan and signpost or refer to other third-party organisations.

Telephone: 0808 808 2282

Email: partnerships@se.homeenergyscotland.org

[Energy Advice Scotland](#)

[Energy Savings Trust](#)

For Private Sector Landlords

Home Energy Scotland offers free, expert, impartial support and advice for registered private landlords in Scotland who would like to improve the energy efficiency of their rental properties, as well advising on the Private Rented Sector Landlord Loan.

Telephone: 0808 808 2282

For Businesses

[Business Energy Scotland](#) provides free one-to-one support to help Scottish Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) reduce their energy use, cut carbon emissions and boost profits. Business Energy Scotland can also advise on the Scottish Government's SME loan and Cashback Scheme.

Telephone: 0808 808 2268