

Outer Hebrides Fuel Poverty Action Plan (July 17)

THEME 1: IMPROVE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF HOUSING STOCK Strategic Political Lead: CPP Communities Outcome Group / Comhairle EPS Committee/ Housing MOWG Lead Officer: Iain Watson			
Outcome	Actions To Achieve Outcome	Who	Progress Update/Actions Arising (July 17)
Delivery of Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland (HEEPS) Area-Based Scheme.	Appointment of, and ongoing liaison with, managing agent regarding HEEPS implementation.	CNES	TIG reappointed as HEEPS Managing Agent for 2017/18. £1.3m awarded to Comhairle and programme progressing as anticipated.
Review impact of energy efficiency programmes and quantify future investment requirements and priorities.	Quantify what investment is required, and where, in order to maximise impact on fuel poverty levels.	CNES/All	At December meeting there was an action for the group to collate information on energy efficiency work and impact to local housing stock. However, there was a poor response to information request so further discussion required to see if it is possible and beneficial to progress this.
Ensure Outer Hebrides issues are reflected in the development of national schemes and policy.	Monitor national policy and research and respond to government consultations, requests for information, seek ministerial engagement at Scottish and UK level.	CNES	Letter sent to SG re 'Action Plan for Affordable Warmth in Rural Scotland'. Comhairle responded to Scottish Government Energy Strategy Consultation, and consultation on Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies. Also responded to consultation on BEIS consultation on CFD support for Island Wind, with positive impact in Conservative Manifesto. TIG responded to ECO consultations.
	Develop Outer Hebrides specific ECO Flexibility Eligibility plan for Affordable Warmth clients.	CNES/TIG	Initial discussions underway to set criteria. Only a small proportion of the programme will be influenced.
Increase deployment and uptake of new/additional energy efficiency solutions which are packaged and costed and categorised as simple/moderate/challenging.	Identify scope for external funding (e.g. EU) to implement additional or new measures.	All	TIG successful with NPP project which focuses on the development of Combined Heat and Power units at a domestic scale for off gas grid customers. Potential to fuel from separated waste and improve the local economy. The project will pilot up to 4 units. Comhairle's ESF Social Inclusion bid was successful and includes Fuel Poverty element which will be delivered by TG and will support home visits across the island chain to improve take up of measures and household energy efficiency. Comhairle is partner in Horizon 2020 application 'Power2People' which was submitted June 2017.
Support provision of energy information and advice through local advisory services, with particular focus on vulnerable households, the under 25's and families living in poverty.	Delivery of Affordable Warmth project.	TIG	SSE funded post due to conclude March '17. TIG, in agreement with SSE, has submitted a proposal for an industry initiative to support those in, and at risk of, fuel poverty. SSE is due to submit the proposal to Ofgem in July 2017. If successful this will commence around September 2017.
	Comhairle Grant Offer with delivery partner for energy information and advice.	TIG/CNES	Offer for grant 17/18 was issued in March '17.
Delivery of Hebridean Housing Partnership's Investment Programme	Delivery of heating programme – replacing solid fuel with Air Source Heat Pumps.	HHP	2015/18 programme. 468 programmed 2016/17 programme: 40 installed 2017/18 programme: 36 proposed
	Roll out of infra-red heaters in selected properties.		2015/18 programme. Included in ASHP figures 2016/17 programme: 24 installed 2017/18 programme: 45 programmes
	External wall insulation programme.		No funding available. Discussion to take place with SSE.
	Room in roof insulation programme.		2015/18 programme. 171 programmed 2016/17 programme: 118 installed 2017/18 programme. 98 programmes
	Completion of double glazing replacement programme.		All houses complete.
	Gas source central heating systems upgraded with high efficiency combi-boilers.		2015/18 programme. 228 programmed 2016/17 programme: 64 installed 2017/18 programme: 88 programmed

THEME 2: INCREASE THE INCOME OF THE POOREST HOUSEHOLDS			
Strategic Political Lead: Economy Outcome Group			
Lead Officer: Highlands and Islands Enterprise			
Outcome	Actions To Achieve Outcome	Who	Progress Update
Increase employment levels in the Outer Hebrides.	Deliver action plan for key sectors as set out in the OH Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-20.	HIE	Ongoing through HIE and CNES, and will be progressed through CPP's LOIP priority group for the Economic Priority Strand.
	Implementation of training programmes to support young people into employment.	Job Centre Plus/Cnes/SDS	Outer Hebrides Skills Investment Plan is now in place and will be the focus for these actions.
	Identify support routes into employment for long term unemployed over 25yrs.		
Increase average incomes in the Outer Hebrides.	Encourage the growth of sectors that pay higher wages and provide sustainable longer term employment.	HIE	Ongoing through HIE and CNES, and will be progressed through CPP's LOIP priority group for the Economic Priority Strand.
	Support a living wage campaign including commitment as employers to paying a living wage.	OHCPP	OHCPP partners all committed to paying living wage in 2013. No further action has been taken.
Deliver a range of benefit maximisation initiatives.	Raise awareness of access to benefits and support to apply /challenge decisions through WICAS / CnES / Macmillan Benefits Services	Welfare Reform and Poverty Officers Group	Main consideration going forward will be the impact of PIP.
Ensure joined-up and comprehensive access to crisis support.	Awareness raising and support for Foodbank throughout the islands.	Welfare Reform and Poverty Officers Group	
Undertake actions to address levels of debt in the Outer Hebrides.	Awareness raising of the support and advice available from Western Isles Citizens Advice Service	WICAS	Intention was to seek an additional staff post at WICAS through the Outer Hebrides ESF Poverty and Social Inclusion bid. However, as match funding was required, WICAS were unable to make a bid to undertake the Project as we did not have the financial resources required. We will continue to identify other funding that may become available.
Support local Energy advice agencies to offer advice to Priority Assistance clients to improve income and manage debt.	Development of services with TEAS to support clients in financial hardship with utility bills.	TIG/TEAS	Through the ESF Poverty and Social Inclusion project TIG will focus on identifying and assisting those customers in financial hardship due to high utility costs.

THEME 3: REDUCE THE COST OF FUEL Strategic Political Lead: Energy MOWG Lead Officer: John Cunningham			
Outcome	Actions To Achieve Outcome	Who	Progress Update
Explore local opportunities for SMART metering and demand-side management initiatives.	Pursue pilot opportunities for SMART metering through energy companies and lobby for prioritised roll-out in fuel poor areas.	Comhairle	SSE has confirmed SMETS 2 roll out in the Outer Hebrides is closer to 2020.
Support micro-generation for domestic and non-domestic customers.	Ensure information and advice on micro-generation is available and promoted locally.	Home Energy Scotland/CES	Ongoing through work of CES (community groups) and HES (domestic customers). From community perspective, decreases in FiTs make the installation of micro-renewables less viable, but work on local energy supply, smart controls, and the possibility of receiving grant-funding rather than FiTs mean that groups are still interested in micro-renewables; particularly wind turbines, solar panels and heat pumps.
Highlight inequality in electricity costs in the Outer Hebrides and seek to address this.	Lobby electricity energy companies, OFGEM/DECC to address issues related to competition and pricing in the local electricity market.	All	Comhairle monitoring extent to which recommendations in CMA investigation into the UK Energy Market are progressed. One of the most significant impacts has been the price cap on pre-payment tariffs. In context of increase in standard variable tariffs, this has meant these are now more in line with customers on credit meters. Removing the 4 tariff rule is also potentially beneficial to introduction of community tariffs in certain geographical areas. TIG & HHP attend HIHAAW group which is lobbying on these issues.
Support and promote energy switching among local consumers.	Identify the resources available to support Electricity Supplier switching and the service these resources provide Consider how the Action Group can promote switching (general awareness raising, working with target groups etc).	TIG/All	Information on local support for switching was collated, and meeting held to identify options for promoting these. TIG are developing on-line switching platform for local consumers (using same platform as Citrus Energy) so all partners in the Action Group can play role in supporting promotion of the energy and advice available through this. The platform is live but TIG is working with the operators to ensure accurate information can be given to gas customers in Stornoway.
Pursue creation of a community tariff for the Outer Hebrides.	Engage with electricity suppliers to invite proposals for community tariff as first stage in ESCO.	Comhairle	Procurement exercise and subsequent discussions with potential partner to see if other opportunities for community tariff exist. Comhairle are also now in dialogue with Orkney, Shetland and Highland Councils who are all looking at similar opportunities.
Pursue local electricity supply opportunities through creation of Outer Hebrides Energy Supply Company.	Improve links with local generators in order to develop local electricity supply as further development of ESCO.	Comhairle	Hebrides Energy CIC starting to look more proactively at these opportunities, including opportunity to directly invest in renewable schemes.