

**REPORT TO:** Climate & Environment Advisory  
Committee

04 February 2019

**LEAD OFFICER:** Director of Health & Environment Services

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## **Home Energy Conservation Act: Draft 2019 Update**

### **Purpose**

1. To inform the Committee on the subject of energy performance of homes in the district and invite comments on a first draft of the 2019 Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report.
2. This is not a key decision. It has been brought before the Committee in relation to the Committee's role providing community leadership on climate change and sustainability, facilitating and engaging public sector partners, businesses, community groups and the public.

### **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the Committee notes and comments on the draft report.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. As recognised in the HECA 1995 Act, local authorities are able to use their position to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in their areas and consequently make significant contributions in delivering national plans for carbon reduction and addressing fuel poverty. The HECA report provides an opportunity to consider the range of possible actions that council can undertake in this area, subject to resources.

### **Background**

5. The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) requires all 326 local authorities (LAs) in England to submit reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within that LA's area. This covers measures to improve properties in the owner-occupier, private rented sector and social rented sector. BEIS uses the data submitted through LAs HECA returns to inform policy thinking on energy efficiency and to build an on-going picture of local and national energy efficiency policy delivery.
6. Guidance issued by the Government in 2012 required a 'further report' setting out current and planned energy conservation measures to be published by 31 March 2013 and further progress reports to be published at two year intervals. Reports from 2013, 2015 and 2017 are published on the Council's website at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community/energy-saving/home-energy-conservation-act/>.

7. New guidance issued on 17 January 2019 requires that data is submitted online in the format of responses to specific questions (rather than in a format chosen by councils as previously). The 2019 report is required by 31 May 2019.

### **Considerations**

8. Appendix 1 contains a list of online questions and draft responses.
9. Data on type, tenure and age profile of properties in South Cambridgeshire, type of central heating, and estimated number and proportion of fuel poor households can be viewed in the 2017 HECA Report at Appendix 2. It was not possible to compile more recent data in time for this report, but it is intended that this will be available at the meeting.
10. Fuel Poverty in England is measured using the Low Income High Costs indicator, which considers a household to be fuel poor if:
  - (a) They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level), and
  - (b) Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
11. According to the latest figures available (BEIS 2016), an estimated 8.0% of the total number of households in South Cambridgeshire are in fuel poverty. Although this is lower than the proportion in the East region (9.4%), and significantly lower than the proportion in England (11.1%), it nevertheless represents an estimated 5,031 households who struggle to keep warm in winter.

### **Options**

12. It is recommended that the Committee notes and comments on the draft report.

### **Implications**

13. There are no significant implications.

### **Consultation responses**

14. No consultation undertaken.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

#### **Aim 1 – Affordable Housing**

15. Improvements in energy performance of residential accommodation contribute to the aim of Affordable Housing by lowering running costs.

#### **Aim 2 – Climate and Environment**

16. Improvements in energy performance of residential accommodation contribute to the aim of tackling climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

**Background Papers**

None

**Appendices**

- 1 HECA Report 2019 Online Questions and Draft Responses
- 2 HECA Report 2017

**Report Author:** Siobhan Mellon, Development Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713395