

Minutes: London Fuel Poverty Partnership

Date: 9 October 2018
Time: 14.00 – 16.00
Location: Amber Infrastructure, 3 More London Riverside, London. SE1 2AQ

Attendees:

Shirley Rodrigues, Mayor's Office (Co-chair) - SR
Matthew Ryder, Mayor's Office (Co-chair) - MR
Martin O'Brien, Association of Local Energy Officers London - MOB
Dr Joanne Wade, Association for the Conservation of Energy - JW
Victoria MacGregor, Citizens Advice - VMc
Richard Mellish, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy - RM
Dan Alchin, Energy UK - DA
Hannah Slater, Generation Rent - HS
Cllr Claudia Webbe, London Councils - CW
Andy Hearn, London Fire Brigade - AH
Samantha Watkin, Residential Landlords Association – SW
Sarah McClinton, London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services - SMc
GLA officers: John Kolm-Murray (JKM), Ben Coombes (BC), Fiona Wright (FW), Emma Gray (EG)

Apologies:

Audrey Gallacher, Energy UK
Ruth Davison, National Housing Federation
Prof Yvonne Doyle, Public Health England
Adam Scorer, National Energy Action - AS
Ben Golding, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Dr Mari Martiskainen, University of Sussex
Dermot Nolan, Ofgem

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 SR welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2. Minutes of last meeting, 23 May 2018

- 4.1 No points were raised in respect to the Terms of Reference
- 6.3 The report on welfare was circulated
- 7.3 AS was not present to update on National Energy Action (NEA)'s campaign
- 7.3 JKM arranged a working group on the private rented sector
- 7.3 Outcomes and objectives of the Fuel Poverty Action Plan were on the agenda for this meeting
- 8.1 Minutes of the May meeting had been circulated

3. Progress update

3.1 JKM advised that a month after the last meeting the final Fuel Poverty Action Plan was published.

- 3.2 Warmer Homes has been running since the end of January. 700 applications so far and residents in 31 out of 33 boroughs have made applications. In November the scheme will be extended to the private sector on a trial basis.
- 3.3 Since the Fuel Poverty Support Fund programmes started in February they have assisted 950 households in 31 out of 33 boroughs
- 3.4 To date 23 boroughs have published Energy Company Obligation Flexible Eligibility (ECO Flex) schemes. The government has published draft regulations which would allow the GLA to establish a Londonwide scheme. If approved these will come into effect in late November/early December and JKM is currently working on a draft Statement of Intent.
- 3.5 JKM is working with colleagues in the GLA Equality and Fairness Team on establishing an income maximisation and procurement should begin before the end of the calendar year.
- 3.6 JKM recently met with AH and London Fire Brigade (LFB) colleagues. An energy advice presence will be trialled at LFB community events this winter.
- 3.7 AH reported that LFB and NEA will be hosting a joint safe and warm homes week in January/February. VMc asked that this and Big Energy Saving Week do not clash.
Action: AH to update on this event at the next meeting
- 3.8 AH discussed the Safe & Well pilots that are running in a few boroughs at the moment.
- 3.9 JKM has met with both Cadent and SGN gas networks to discuss maximising fuel poor gas connections in London

4. Revised work plan

- 4.1 The revised work plan for the Partnership for the group was presented and members were content with the changes.

Date	Items
23 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt Terms of Reference • Agree work plan • Energy for Londoners programmes overview • Local fuel poverty programmes • Maximising incomes
9 October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting boroughs' housing enforcement and improving standards in the private rented sector • Engaging the health and social care sectors and building the evidence base • Fuel Poverty Action Plan outcomes and objectives
January 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing fuel debt and disconnection • Using data and insight from experience to target the worst homes and those most in need • Engaging the health and social care sectors and building the evidence base
Spring 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making smart meters work for the fuel poor • Protecting vulnerable energy consumers • Working with government to enhance fuel poverty activity in London

5. Tackling fuel poverty in the private rented sector

- 5.1 KG presented on ACE's recent report, 'The Warm Arm of the Law'
- 5.2 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) came into effect in 2008 but not used efficiently. HHSRS now joined by the Domestic Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (PRS MEES).
- 5.3 The headline finding of the report was that local authorities are not doing enough to enforce minimum energy efficiency standards in the PRS.
- 5.4 10% of London's private rented sector is a Category 1 hazard, the most serious breach of HHSRS.
- 5.5 The requirement for most privately rented homes to have an Energy Performance Certificate is poorly enforced which undermines MEES in turn.
- 5.6 HHSRS is an evaluation tool and is not a required regulation.
- 5.7 From April 2018, it is illegal to rent out an F or G rated property unless an exemption is registered.
- 5.8 Some local authorities are using the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Excess Cold Calculator to quantify the negative health impacts of cold homes to strengthen their enforcement cases
- 5.9 JKM advised that the GLA is in favour of strengthening MEES as we believe that there are too many exemptions, that the government's proposed cost cap is too low. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) should also be brought into the scope of the regulations.
- 5.10 The Warmer Homes extension to the private rented sector will be going ahead in the next few weeks.
 - Action:** JKM to discuss provision of information and advice to private tenants with HS and VMc
 - Action:** JKM to follow up with the BRE on how the excess cold calculator could be used
 - Action:** JKM to discuss support for boroughs with GLA Housing Team and London Councils

6. Bringing the health sector on board

- 6.1 Due to injury NEA were unable to send someone to present on their 'Under One Roof' report so JKM delivered a short presentation on cold homes and health and the bulk of this item was deferred to the January meeting.
- 6.2 Between 2011/12 and 2016/17, there were just over 14,000 excess winter deaths in London and 4,200 of these could be attributed to cold homes
- 6.3 In 2015 the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published guidance on excess winter deaths and illness due to cold homes. Recent GLA activity has met some of the 13 recommendations in the guidance but the Fuel Poverty Action Plan calls for Health & Wellbeing Boards across London to adopt the guidance.
- 6.4 A culture of disconnect with preventive care, the supposed standard of evidence, inconsistent provision of fuel poverty support, and an under-resourced NHS were identified as barriers to health service engagement
 - Action:** Health item to be deferred to January meeting.

7. Fuel Poverty Action Plan indicators

7.1 The indicators in the Fuel Poverty Action Plan were circulated.

8. AOB

8.1 None raised.