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**ALEO East Regional Forum**

**Wednesday 22 April 2020**

**10.00 – 11.30 ALEO East Regional Meeting**

**Online through Microsoft Teams**

#### A g e n d a

10.00 **Arrival, Registration and introductions**

10:05 ALEO Update **David Walton**

                                                                   Chair, ALEO East

10:10 Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan **David Walton**

Strategic Development Suffolk County Council

10:45 Fuel Poverty Strategy in England **Kirsten Horton**

Energy Efficiency and Local BEIS

11:30 Close

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**Minutes of Meeting on 22nd April 2020**

* **Introduction**

David Walton who was the Chair of the meeting had technical issues and was unable to join the meeting initially. Peter Chisnall therefore took over as Chair explaining the format of this online meeting and welcoming 27 attendees to the meeting.

* **ALEO Update by David Walton, Chair ALEO East -**As David Walton was unavailable a brief update was given by Martin O'Brien (MB) - Chair, ALEO London
* Subjects covered:
* Redress funding is available to address fuel poverty. This cannot be accessed by Local Authorities directly but if you have a working relationship with a local charity you can work together on a joint project and apply through the charity.   
  Details <https://energyredress.org.uk/apply-funding>.
* ALEO National were in process of applying for Charity status.
* **Fuel Poverty Strategy in England by Kirsten Horton Energy Efficiency and Local BEIS**  
  - An update on how BEIS is proposing to change the Fuel Poverty Strategy. The way fuel poverty is measured may be updated following a Government Consultation in 2019. The updated strategy will also include an updated vulnerability principle and a new sustainability principle.  
  - The Conservative 2019 Manifesto included a Home Upgrade Grant programme which would deal with a range of energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues. Further details on fuel poverty and climate policies will be set out in due course.  
    
  - Jeremy Martin of Southend Council – raised an issue concerning the energy efficiency component of the new fuel poverty strategy and its effect on reducing carbon emissions. Customers in fuel poverty are generally not big users of energy as they cannot afford it and this strategy will have limited impact on reducing carbon emissions. However, carbon emissions in his district are produced by non-energy efficient properties owned by those who can afford to pay for their energy use. He suggests that with the long payback time of installing energy efficiency measures residents will continue to choose to pay higher fuel bills rather than paying to install energy efficiency measures unless energy prices are increased substantially or incentives to reduce the cost of energy efficiency measures are introduced. He suggested that the Climate Energy levy could be extended to all customers including domestic.   
    
  - Philippa Hughes of Cambridge City Council - has concerns over the sustainability / energy efficiency component as well, as she feels this will promote electric heating measures that will increase the fuel bills for those in fuel poverty as electric prices are currently 4 times the cost of gas for heating

**4 Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan by David Walton Strategic Development Suffolk County Council** (Full presentation available on the ALEO East website.)  
Ricardo Energy & Environment have been commissioned by the Suffolk Local Authorities to prepare a technical report in advance of wider stakeholder engagement and the publication of a Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan later in the year. It has not yet been completed but the presentation, provided with these minutes, covers some of the headline findings from the draft report. When the report is completed it will also be made available through the website.

Siobhan Mellon of South Cambridgeshire Council asked - what is meant by ‘working with industry on decarbonisation options’?

DW Answered - this could mean forming relationships with the larger emitters in our area, sharing best practice and supporting emissions reduction activity, for example.

**Buildings**

* Jeremy Martin of Southend Council asked if the proposals suggested had been fully costed. Using Energy Saving Trust and Southend Council data, an estimated cost of £996 million to upgrade the 81,000 properties in Southend to an EPC rating of C was derived. This would not be sufficient for all buildings to be readied for air source heat pumps.   
  DW said that, although a ball-park figure was used for modelling purposes, a full cost analysis was not costed in to the study at this stage
* Chris Pegge of CertaPartnership stated the competitive tendering process for buildings tends to deliver the cheapest option and is not designed to deliver high energy standards such as the Passivhaus standard. He also stated perhaps we need an old buildings scrappage scheme.  
  DW - answered. He appreciates the problem and they do not currently have the solution but queried whether the Passivhaus would be required.
* Peter Chisnall - stated he had recently received information from the Passivhaus Trust that these standards would be required to achieve carbon neutral status (slides available) and details will be circulated.
* Philippa Hughes of Cambridge City Council - asked if work has been done identifying the type of properties where retrofit of air source heat pumps is viable. She has concerns over air source heat pumps increasing energy costs which is a particular issue for the fuel poor. Running heat pumps can be very expensive (especially in older poorly insulated properties). And, using electricity to heat homes is currently 4 times more expensive than existing gas costs and the situation will not be changing anytime soon.  
  DW confirmed that this is currently an issue but Suffolk would be likely to concentrate on the 25% rural properties in Suffolk that are currently off-gas grid.

**Transport**

* Jeremy Martin of Southend Council asked why an increased grid demand of 30% is quoted, as he has seen figures closer to 10%.  
  (DW figures taken from Ricardo report).

**Power**

* Ben Plummer of Colchester Borough Council asked what ideas such as renewable tariffs, micro grids and producing energy on site are Suffolk looking at.  
  (DW) stated they are looking at investing in local renewable infrastructure, as for example Cambridgeshire County Council are doing. West Suffolk Council owns a 12 MW solar farm.
* Peter Chisnall stated he had seen a report from the Passivhaus Trust that states that decarbonisation of the grid is not on track. There will also be energy losses due to energy storage.
* Emma Bishop of Broadland Group requested a copy of the presentation slides and the Ricardo report.   
  (DW) stated the presentation slides would be available shortly and when the Ricardo report has been completed it will be made available through the Suffolk County Council website.

**5 AOB The way forward**

DW brought the meeting to a close and stated the online format felt like a success as we had more attendees (27) than our normal physical meetings

1. **Attendance – 21 to 27**

**7 Date of Next Meeting - TBC**