

ALEO AGM and Executive Meeting Minutes

20 April 2017 @ 10:30 am
London Borough of Camden Town Hall

Present:

Darsh Chauhan	(DCh)	ALEO National Secretariat Manager & ALEO East Midlands Acting Chair
David Colbourne	(DCo)	ALEO Vice Chair and North West ALEO Chair
Cliff Duff	(CD)	ALEO North East Chair
Paul Hinsley	(PH)	ALEO East Chair
Hazel Hill	(HH)	ALEO South East Acting Chair
Rachel Jones	(RJ)	ALEO West Midlands Chair and ALEO Company Director
John Kolm-Murray	(JKM)	ALEO National Chair and ALEO London Vice Chair (Meeting Chair)
Matt Lewer	(ML)	ALEO East Pennine Chair
Rob Leeson	(RL)	ALEO National Secretariat
Karen Lond	(KL)	ALEO East Midlands Former Chair
Martin O'Brien	(MO)	ALEO London Chair
Louise Ashton	(LA)	A&M Energy Solutions, Group Marketing Manager

Guest, arriving at lunch:

David Blakemore - Chair of the Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP)

Apologies:

Jane Mears - ALEO East Pennine Vice Chair
Leanna Jones - CAN Cymru Housing Vice Chair
David Shiner - West Midlands ALEO Vice Chair
Marie Jones - ALEO South East Vice Chair
Alexander Ross Laing, A&M Energy Solutions, Managing Director and Group Chairman

ALEO AGM Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

JKM welcomed the group and introductions were made.

2. Introduction to new sponsor

- 2.1 ALEO's new national sponsor is A&M Energy Solutions. The sponsorship contract started on 17 April and will run for 12 months. As national sponsor, A&M Energy Solutions will be taking up the option, provided in the sponsorship contract, of non-voting representation at ALEO Executive meetings.
- 2.2 Louise Ashton, who is Group Marketing Manager at A&M Energy Solutions was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to the ALEO Executive. It is hoped that Alexander Ross Laing, Managing Director and Group Chairman of A&M Energy Group will also be available to attend the next Executive meeting.
- 2.3 The head office of A&M Energy Group is based in St Helens near Liverpool, but has branches across the UK. A&M Energy Solutions is an installer but works directly with energy retailers and hopes to act as a go between for ALEO. A&M Energy Solutions plans to send branch managers to the ALEO regions. A&M Energy Solutions has recently recruited a new business development manager, Stephen Lang, with a remit of working with local authorities nationally. Stephen was previously a past Programme Manager with the Energy Saving Trust and also, more recently, a Business Development Account Manager with EDF Energy.
- 2.4 ALEO would like to thank A&M Energy Solutions for its support.

3. Minutes of last AGM and matter arising

The minutes of the last AGM, held on 14 April 2016, were approved as a true record, and it was confirmed that there were no matters arising.

4. National and regional annual reports and accounts sign off

- 4.1 ALEO's Financial Statement, prepared by Hayles Leicester Ltd on behalf of ALEO had been circulated to the Executive by RL, prior to the meeting. This will be filed at Companies House. The financial statement includes a directors' report, which will also be published in the next edition of the ALEO magazine.
- 4.2 The income for the financial year 2014/15 has been restated in the 2015/16 financial statement. This correction was necessary due to confusion, on behalf of Hayles, between invoicing and payment dates for sponsorship income near to the end of the financial year. However, this is just a correction and doesn't have any real effect on ALEO's finances.
- 4.3 The Executive confirmed that there were no changes they'd like to make to the ALEO Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2016.
- 4.4 RJ signed off the accounts for the year 2015/16 on behalf of the ALEO Board of Directors, which will be filed with Companies House, as well as the letter of representation, stating that Hayles Leicester Ltd is acting as our accountants.
- 4.5 As per the decision taken at a previous Executive meeting, the financial statement is an assurance report for the financial year 2015/16, rather than a full audit report, as this is slightly cheaper.
- 4.6 Regional reports will be produced by the National Secretariat based on regional updates given at the Executive meetings. This will be circulated to the Executive by RL for approval and will also be included in the next edition of the ALEO magazine.
- 4.7 **ACTION: RL to send signed accounts to Hayles for filing at Companies House.**
- 4.8 **ACTION: RL to circulate draft regional reports for approval by the Executive and inclusion in the next edition of the ALEO magazine.**
- 4.9 **ACTION: ALL to provide regular regional updates, as these are also used by the National Secretariat to produce the annual regional reports.**

5. Appointment of new Company Directors and Treasurer

- 5.1 At last year's AGM, the Chair and Vice Chair were elected on a three-year basis. There were no objections to JKM and DCo remaining in post and both are happy to continue.
- 5.2 KL has now stepped down from her role as Chair of ALEO East Midlands, and as company Director for ALEO. This leaves RJ as the only remaining Director. Although it is only a legal requirement for a company to have one standing director, it was felt that we should aim to appoint at least three directors in total.
- 5.3 DCo, JKM and CD expressed interest in becoming directors, but will have to confirm with their employers. It was suggested that RL circulate details of requirements of the role along with the paperwork for appointing new directors.
- 5.4 CD volunteered for the role of Treasurer and was approved by the group for the post.
- 5.5 **ACTION: RL will email details of the Director's role, including the bank mandate requirements, to the Executive, and volunteers will be appointed at the next Executive meeting.**
- 5.6 **ACTION: RL to confirm the requirements of the role of Treasurer with CD by email.**

6. Dates and venues of 2017/18 Executive meetings and AGM

- 6.1 Confirmed dates for future ALEO Executive meetings are as follows:
20 July 2017 – 10am to 2pm
17 October 2017 – 10am to 2pm
18 January 2018 – 10am to 4pm - N.B. Extended meeting to include Chairs Away Day

All meetings will be held at Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE

- 6.2 ACTION: RL to ask for meeting room dates from Camden for future meetings, including the next AGM, and circulate the dates to the Executive.**

7. AOB

- 7.1 ALEO's accountants, Hayles Leicester Ltd are offering insurance against the cost of an audit by HMRC. It was agreed that it would be worth considering this due to the potentially high cost of accountancy fees resulting from an audit. RL will confirm the full details of the insurance offered by Hayles and circulate to the Executive.
- 7.2 ACTION: RL to confirm details of Hayles' insurance offer and circulate to the Executive**

ALEO Executive Meeting Minutes

1. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

Matters arising from previous minutes (19 January 2017):

- 1.1 *Item 1.19 – ALL to continue to send event dates to RL.*
RL has circulated the updated list, and since then has also added the dates for the general election (8 June), dissolution of Parliament (3 May) and council / mayoral elections (4 May).
- 1.2 *Item 1.20 – JKM and RL to liaise on a press release on ECO flexible eligibility.* Due to JKM's workload this has not yet been actioned. JKM and RL to follow-up.
- 1.3 *Item 1.21 – RL to ask members for tweet suggestions to use on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day.*
RL received several suggestions, which he tweeted throughout the day, along with some general statistics about fuel poverty and retweets. This seems to have boosted ALEO's Twitter following, as well as the number of likes on our profile, and hopefully contributed to the efforts to raise awareness of fuel poverty.
- 1.4 *Item 1.22 – KL will ask her contacts about the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire report on their warm homes on prescription project.*
KL will follow-up on this.
- 1.5 *Item 1.23 – KL will draft letter to BEIS re client contributions.*
KL has not received any evidence from the rest of the Executive on this. Due to KL no longer being in post, RJ volunteered to take over this action from KL.
- 1.6 *Item 1.24 – ALL to send KL any evidence they know of to support Action 1.23.*
Please send evidence to RJ instead, as per item 1.5.
- 1.7 *Item 1.26 – RL to include updated NEA Warm & Well report link in next ALEO e-bulletin.*
NEA have updated the document but don't seem to have published any announcements, and therefore RL hasn't been able to include details of this in the ALEO e-bulletin
- 1.8 *Item 2.24 – JKM to chase BEIS on Help to Heat consultation response and EPC data.*
Both of these have now been published by BEIS so no further action is required.
- 1.9 *Item 2.24 – RL and DCh will circulate any proposed updates to the Articles of Association they consider necessary following their meeting with the solicitor.*
This was on the agenda for discussion. see item 4.1, below.
- 1.10 *Item 4.2 – JKM will send the FPEEG report to RL to circulate.*
JKM and RL to check whether this has been circulated.
- 1.11 *Item 4.3 – KL will be producing the ALEO East Midlands response to the Bonfield review and will incorporate the comments from the Executive.*
The ALEO East Midlands response has been produced and submitted to BEIS.
ALEO should register interest as a stakeholder.
- 1.12 *Item 6.1 – ALL to send examples of really good case studies in your local areas to RL, to build a bank for use in press releases at short notice. Particularly if it fits ECO Flexible Eligibility and has a human interest element.*

RL has received some case studies, with those appropriate for the ALEO magazine published in the last edition. RL will send round another call for case studies.

- 1.13 *Item 6.2 – RJ will share any response from BEIS on the West Midlands LA’s draft ECO FE document.*
BEIS do not seem very interested, so RJ made the decision not to send this to them.
- 1.14 *Item 7.7 – Action: JKM to ask DCLG and BEIS about the timescale for EPC data release and to clarify what ‘public authorities’ refers to in the Digital Economy Bill.*
The EPC data is now available. JKM is still to ask about the Digital Economy Bill.
- 1.15 *Item 7.8 – Action: JKM to ask BEIS and DCLG to clarify what the correct approach to data sharing is.*
JKM is still to ask. It was suggested that we could run a conference workshop with BEIS on this. There is a current consultation by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport on General Data Protection Regulation: Call for Views - deadline 11:59pm on 9 May 2017.
- 1.16 *Item 8.15 – JKM to write to BEIS saying that they should either delay the deadline for HECA or release details about flexible eligibility and EPC data now.*
The HECA reporting deadline was 31 March, and ECO Flexible Eligibility guidance was published by BEIS on 11 April. BEIS have said they would allow LAs to submit HECA reports after the deadline, if there is good reason. Those who have submitted a HECA report have not yet received an acknowledgment from BEIS. Before the General Election was called, BEIS said they would start sending letters to CEOs around in May.
The recent ALEO members survey asked for links to HECA reports. RL will add these to our existing spreadsheet of HECA report links and recirculate to members.
- 1.17 *Item 9.8 – RL to add MPs, council leaders, London assembly members, devolved mayors and CFP members to the ALEO magazine circulation list.*
RL has added MPs, and London Assembly members to the circulation list. JKM suggested contacting LGA for a list of council leaders email addresses.
- 1.18 *Item 9.9 – JKM to Circulate London mayoral before and after letters for use as template.*
These have been sent round but JKM will recirculate.
- 1.19 *Item 9.11 – JKM to ask BEIS about the £5,000 cap in the PRS regulations.*
JKM attended a meeting on this. We are long way from any detail on PRS regulations. The General Election won’t help. Things won’t be in place for April and the existing version is still relying on the Green Deal, which is effectively dead, despite claims of resurrection in the private sector. Stephen Ryman is still working on this at BEIS. The regulations are due to come into force in 2018, although it looks likely that BEIS might miss the deadline.
Landlords will have to declare on a register and say why if they are not improving their property. HHSRS still exists, which exceeds these regulations. Alignment is quite poor.
A lot will depend on who wins the General Election.
JKM will keep chasing BEIS on this.
- 1.20 *Item 9.12 – KL to ask about the Gas Working Group and volunteer to sit on the Group representing ALEO.*
KL asked who was represented. There is an LA representative from Cornwall Council.
RL and KL will look for the email and recirculate.
The CFP sits above this group so we will ask the Chair in the afternoon session.
It would be useful to have a representative who feeds back to ALEO.
CD could possibly represent ALEO at these meetings
- 1.21 All other points have been actioned.
- 1.22 The minutes of the previous Executive meeting, held on 19 January 2017, were approved as a true record.
- 1.23 **ACTION: JKM and RL to liaise on a press release on ECO flexible eligibility.**
- 1.24 **ACTION: KL will ask her contacts about the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire report on their Warm Homes on Prescription project.**
- 1.25 **ACTION: RJ to draft letter to BEIS re client contributions.**
ALL to send RJ any evidence they know of to support this.
- 1.26 **JKM to check whether the FPEEG report was circulated and resend to RL.**
- 1.27 **RL to register ALEO as a stakeholder for the Bonfield Each Home Counts review.**
- 1.28 **RL to circulate another call for case studies.**
- 1.29 **JKM to ask BEIS to clarify what ‘public authorities’ refers to in the Digital Economy Bill.**
- 1.30 **JKM to ask BEIS and DCLG to clarify what the correct approach to data sharing is.**
- 1.31 **RL to liaise with JKM and BEIS re a potential conference workshop on data sharing.**

- 1.32 RL to send details of Department for Culture, Media & Sport - General Data Protection Regulation: Call for Views to JKM to decide if it's worth responding.
- 1.33 RL to recirculate updated HECA reports list and ask members to add any that are missing.
- 1.34 RL to ask LGA for an email list of council leaders, ask the CFP Chair for details of CFP members and add Welsh Assembly members to ALEO magazine email list.
- 1.35 JKM to circulate London mayoral before and after letters for use as template.
- 1.36 ALL to use the London template to produce a letter to their mayoral candidates and LEP chair (since they have been asked to engage through HECA). Consider including both JKM's and regional Chair's signature on the letter.
- 1.37 JKM to keep chasing BEIS on the PRS regulations.
- 1.38 RL and KL will look for the email re the Off-Gas working group and recirculate.
- 1.39 CD to offer to sit on off-gas-grid subgroup.

2. Chair's Update

- 2.1 DCLG has now provided access to EPC data via the Open Data Communities website at <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org>. There are limitations on what can be done with the data but we can now start using it. Once registered you can access data in bulk for areas. It's not as convenient as when it was in Excel format, but it's easy to transfer it over. A lot of it is poor quality and inaccurate, and the validity of data that's 10 years old is questionable.

ECO Flexible Eligibility

- 2.2 BEIS guidance on ECO Flexible Eligibility (ECO FE) was published on 11 April. It is not dramatically different from expected.
- 2.3 In theory, LAs can now issue declarations, and statements of intent (SOI) need signing by the LA's Chief Executive. Declarations are made under your LA's code, even if they are on behalf of another LA.
- 2.4 There is more detail on LA officers being consulted on measures before they are installed, although we are not sure of the benefit of consulting at that point. In theory, LAs generate a referral and send it to whoever they have chosen to deal with. They assess the property and then, at that point, issue a declaration.
- 2.5 SOIs also include info on what to do if LAs come across people in other boroughs. The SOI can be changed whenever the LA wants, but this needs version control, and an LA should only publish the latest version on its website.
- 2.6 The SOI just needs to say how the LA intends to identify people. This doesn't mean you have to have criteria, as the whole point of ECO FE is not to limit things to specific groups. However, you do have to say how you'll find and identify people. If you write it too tightly some people will lose out. Some LAs are writing very basic SOIs, so things are as flexible as possible. LAs could deem anyone eligible they like, but it would not be advisable to refer anyone not in, or at risk of, fuel poverty, or with health conditions that could make them at risk.
- 2.7 There are conditions on in-fill work, but these relate to the building not individuals.
- 2.8 It is unlikely there will be many referrals for solid wall insulation.
- 2.9 Ofgem will monitor statement of intent and URN. If Ofgem carries out an audit, it will be on the declaration and the URN; they won't check whether an individual is on benefits, for example.
- 2.10 LAs don't have to specify what measure a person should receive; that's down to the supplier / contractor.
- 2.11 DCo suggested that, in order to stop cold calling, the LA could specify that it is only contractors the LA chooses to engage with that will be used in ECO FE.
- 2.12 Even though an LA has referred someone via ECO FE, there's no guarantee they will receive measures. This could potentially lead to negative publicity, for example people might say things like "I could have a new boiler but the council won't let me".
- 2.13 Some reporting is required but it is light touch.
- 2.14 MOB and JKM will send their template SOI to RL, to circulate to members.
- 2.15 A job title, not the LA officer's name, it included as a contact.
- 2.16 LA now have a formal role in ECO. It's a small percentage, but we want to prove we can get the 10% as we need it to be successful, and we need early indications that we're engaging. It

won't look good, for example, if there are only 50 SOIs in six months. LAs seem to be interested, but haven't done much yet, which is concerning.

- 2.17 Energy UK is speaking at the next London meeting on 16 May, on approaches to ECO FE.
- 2.18 There are a few SOIs in the West Midlands. RJ offered to present at the ALEO London meeting.
- 2.19 The ALEO South East forum is on 26 April. JKM will be attending to talk about what's happening in the ALEO London region.
- 2.20 Transition periods between ECO 2 and 3 are worrying.

Minimum EPC standards

- 2.21 There is not a lot of social housing left needing measures, although there might be some older properties and quite a lot of off-gas, no-fines, single brick or timber properties. West Midlands has highest number E, F and G-rated social-housing properties. One figure suggests that there are no more than 60,000 properties in social housing. Conservation estates are included in this figure. In some areas the only properties left needing measures are where tenants have refused. The approach should be from the perspective that all tenures should meet the standards. Presentations on the London Mayor's fuel poverty action plan say highest standards are in the social housing sector. Housing association properties are often better than council because they're newer.
- 2.22 Scotland's target of SAP 65 by 2020 is being reviewed this year – possibly to a higher standard. There is no similar standard in England, but we should be lobbying for one.

Letter to Government

- 2.23 The General Election will be held on 8 June 2017.
- 2.24 ALEO wrote to party leaders last time and we could write a follow-up letter to all parties in England and Wales.

Letter to Ofgem

- 2.25 DS has produced a draft letter to Ofgem expressing ALEO's concerns regarding LAs being excluded from bidding directly from redress funding without partnering with a charity, which RL has circulated to the Executive for comments. ALEO members are delivering work that is the same as charities, so why are we excluded?
- 2.26 DCo suggested that the letter should ask direct questions in order to encourage a response on key points. The letter should also be copied to BEIS. DCo is prepared to send the letter in his name directly from his office.
- 2.27 **ACTION: MO and JKM will send their template SOI to RL to circulate to members and add to the ALEO website in the same place as the HECA report list, and include in the next ALEO magazine.**
- 2.28 **ACTION: JKM to write follow-up open letter to party leaders.**
- 2.29 **ACTION: DCo will add his amendments to the letter to Ofgem and sent it, also copying in BEIS.**

3. Secretariat update

- 3.1 ALEO has entered into a new national sponsorship contract with A&M Energy Solutions for the next 12 months. This should ensure the continuation of the ALEO National Secretariat service over that period, and means that we are able to start planning the next conference. Sponsorship of ALEO East Midlands and ALEO East Pennine is also included with the national sponsorship, as these secretariats are run in-house by the Leicester City Council, where the ALEO National Secretariat is based.
- 3.2 The latest edition of the ALEO magazine was published in March, containing reports on all of the 2016 ALEO Award winners. The e-bulletin has been sent round as usual.
- 3.3 The ALEO members survey has been published and received 92 responses. This is slightly down on the 108 responses received for a similar CAN members survey in 2013. Responses were received from all regions except the South West. RL has circulated the anonymised results summary to the Executive.
- 3.4 Answers to question 16 of the members survey include links to 2017 HECA reports, which RL will combine with the old HECA report links list and circulate to members for additions.

- 3.5 The next edition of the magazine will be published in summer, although exact dates will depend on when the next conference is held.
- 3.6 It was suggested that a mention of the SOI templates could be included in the next issue.
- 3.7 RL has carried out some maintenance on the ALEO website, including updating the forum software and converting the site to https. This was necessary as Google chrome has started marking non-https sites with password entry fields as 'not secure'.

ALEO Conferences

- 3.8 It was decided that the next ALEO conference should take place in early July, in York, and a second conference should be held in London in autumn, which will also host the ALEO Awards.
- 3.9 The Park Inn was used as a venue last time we held a conference in York.
- 3.10 ML suggested that the York council offices might have a room available that could be used for the conference.
- 3.11 RL is using the working title of 'A Flexible Future for Fuel Poverty and Home Energy' for the conference theme, and developing graphics based on this.
- 3.12 **ACTION: RL to include links to 2017 HECA reports, from the members survey, in ALEO's HECA report list and recirculate to members for additions.**
- 3.13 **ACTION: RL to include details of the SOI templates in the next issue of ALEO News**
- 3.14 **ACTION: RL and ML liaise re conference venues in York.**

4. Executive Away Day Follow Up and Items for Discussion in Afternoon Session

Company Articles of Association

- 4.1 DCh and RL met with a solicitor for a free half-hour introductory consultation on ALEO's Articles of Association, and were advised that the best approach would be to adopt model articles of association, available on the gov.uk website, and separate out anything not related to the legal responsibilities of the company into a separate constitution document. DCh has been working on this, and RL will circulate the draft documents to the Executive when they are ready for comments.
- 4.2 Separating out the legal requirement from the constitutional requirements should also help the situation with the bank, which wants to run identity checks on all Executive members.
- 4.3 As the directors will officially hold voting rights for decisions affecting the company, it was agreed that we should aim to have at least three company directors in post at any one time.

Items for discussion in the afternoon session

- Ofgem redress funding
- PRS regulations
- HHSRS has been reviewed but the data used to calculate scoring goes back to the 1990s
- BEIS have said that a 40% take-up is expected for boilers for ECO because of customer contributions
- Reviewing and accountability of the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) Fuel Poverty definition
- Holding the government to account on its Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Engaging with public health
- 4.4 **ACTION: RL to circulate the new version of the Articles of Association and the new Constitution document for comments from the Executive.**

5. Regional Updates

- 5.1 There was not sufficient time available at the meeting for updates from all regions, however CD gave a verbal update from ALEO North East:
- 5.2 The last ALEO North East meeting was cancelled as BEIS dropped out at the last minute. CD was told that BEIS had new local representatives, so the North East representative was invited to speak at the meeting. However, after he dropped out, CD was told that this regional structure had been abolished and everything is now based in London again, as previously.
- 5.3 The ALEO North East meeting has been rescheduled for June.
- 5.4 A&M Energy Solutions have an ECO director who is on the steering group for BEIS, and could be a valuable go-between with BEIS.
- 5.5 **North East**
Written update from: CD, Chair of ALEO North East

Details of any current projects:

Warm up North is a partnership of nine Local Authorities in the North East Region including:

- Northumberland County Council
- Durham Country Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Darlington Borough Council
- Redcar and Cleveland Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Gateshead Council
- Hartlepool Council
- Sunderland City Council

Warm up North are working with the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to deliver the Central Heating Fund £6.5m project to provide first time central heating measures for low income households. To date the project has installed a total of 1,419 new central heating systems which includes 987 gas central heating systems, 373 oil systems and 59 air source heat pumps.

5.6 East Midlands**Written update from: DCh, Acting Chair of ALEO East Midlands****Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:**

So far this year, two East Midlands ALEO meetings have been held. The first was on Wednesday 18 January (update already provided by KL) and the second was held on Wednesday 5 April. Both meetings were held in Hucknall, Nottinghamshire and both were sponsored by E.ON.

At the April meeting, there were 17 attendees from across the region. The speakers were:

- Chairs update – developments from ALEO national
- E.ON – open discussion around Help to Heat
- Community Energy – community energy projects in the EM
- NEA – policy update

The April meeting was also the AGM. Karen Lond, who has been our Chair and an active member of the network for years announced that West Lindsey have deleted her post. She will be leaving West Lindsey at the end of the week. The meeting thanked KL for her years of service and dedication.

Darsh is Acting Chair until elections will be held later on in the year.

Most East Midlands authorities reported that they will be submitting a HECA report. Lincolnshire has a common template and Notts/Derbyshire will also be using a common template. Many report are expected to be submitted after the 31 March deadline but BEIS seem happy with this.

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

The NEA annual conference will be held in Nottingham this September.

Details of any current projects:

The Home Energy Lincs Partnership is still going strong, and helping with the Affordable Warmth Strategy. They have recruited a fuel poverty co-ordinator for the county. Community Lincs has received £30,000 from Scottish power to continue with their work around the county. A new Save and Warm project has recently been launched.

Leicester City Council is looking to launch an energy white label with Leicestershire County Council in the summer. The Health Through Warmth project run by Leicester City Council is about to go countywide. Leicester City Council is also working with E.ON on external wall insulation in the city. There is a battery storage project being launched in the city for the car parks.

Any other comments, e.g. issues or barriers:

LAs are disappointed that LAs are not able to directly access redress funding.

LAs are disappointed at the HECA and the fact that there is no resource for it and there is no enforcement power associated with it.

We are pleased to announce that, as of 17 April 2017, East Midlands ALEO will be sponsored by A&M Energy Solutions for a period of 12 months.

5.7 East Pennine

Written update from: ML, Chair of ALEO East Pennine

Until recently the position of Chair of the East Pennines ALEO has been vacant. This issue was raised by Darsh Chauhan, when he attended a NEA Fuel Poverty Forum in York on 3 March 2017 to present on the Homes Energy Conservation Act Reporting requirement. Following the session I was talking to Darsh when he asked me to consider taking on the role of Chair. The region already has a very experienced Vice-Chair in Jane Mears but she does not have the time available to take on a more active role than she already plays. After some consideration and encouragement from a handful of colleagues working at different local authorities, I agreed to accept the position.

I am the Principal Housing Policy and Development Officer in the Housing Strategy and Development team at East Riding of Yorkshire Council. My current role includes being the strategic lead for affordable warmth and domestic energy efficiency. Prior to this I managed a not for profit company, called Yorkshire Energy Partnership, which was owned by all of the local authorities in North Yorkshire. I have also previously managed the North Yorkshire and Humber Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre and have been chair of both the North Yorkshire Fuel Poverty Officer's group and the North Yorkshire Climate Change Officer's group.

As Chair I have the following priorities:

1. Organise two regional meetings per annum, to share best practice, support networking and discuss energy related issues.
2. Increase the membership within the region, especially where there are local authorities without anyone registered

Over the next few weeks I will be developing an action plan, so would welcome any suggestions/advice.

5.8 South East

Written update from: HH, Acting Chair of ALEO South East

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

Forthcoming AGM to be held 26th April – Eastbourne

To elect Chair, Vice chair and Treasurer, including amendments to the constitution

Presentations:

- Minimum energy efficiency standards, Oxford City Council
- Solar PV and Battery storage, North Stat Solar
- John Kolm-Murray with discussion on L/A flex

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

Last meeting held in Basingstoke, Feb 2nd. Details and presentations uploaded onto ALEO website

See [https://www.aleo.org.uk/se/meetings/ind ... 0704224011](https://www.aleo.org.uk/se/meetings/ind...0704224011)

Details of any current projects:

Bracknell - current project looking at EU funding under Climate Berks with East Berks, Wokingham, Reading – two possible one on Renewables and one on housing T.B.C.

Any other comments, e.g. issues or barriers:

Staff changes and loss of experienced HECA officers.

6. Discussion with Guest, David Blakemore - Chair of the Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP)

6.1 DB gave a presentation on the work of the CFP. Please see presentation slides.

Discussions:

- 6.2 ALEO: Has the CFP included park home residents in the category of disadvantaged by circumstances and energy suppliers, as the don't buy their energy directly from suppliers?
- 6.3 CFP: The CFP did make a recommendation that park home residents needed to be treated more fairly e.g. by including them in the Warm Home Discount. However the CFP have not specifically made a recommendation that park home residents should be able to select their energy supplier. DB will follow this up, as it is correct that they are disadvantaged.

- 6.4 ALEO: Because the planning act and building regulations don't apply to thermal efficiency of park homes, they therefore often have very low SAP ratings. The government could legislate that park homes be brought up to standard. Park homes are often rebuilt every few years, so it could be mandatory that new park homes are built to a better standard of thermal efficiency as well as insulating existing park homes. DB noted this point and will raise it with the committee.
- 6.5 ALEO: Houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) could also be considered to be 'non-standard' properties. There are increasing numbers of HMOs, partly because of changes to housing benefits for under-35s and increasing housing cost. They are often of poor quality and they aren't required to have EPCs, as the government has interpreted the EU regulations in this way. This is quite contentious as the EU regulations could be interpreted otherwise. There is still a no up-front-cost requirement for landlords to improve their properties and we are running out of time to get the proposed cost cap of £5,000 in place before 2018. Even if the regulations and cost cap comes in as expected, this still won't cover HMOs. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a strong regulatory power for LAs, but it needs updating - the data to calculate scoring dates from the 1990s. LAs are also not adequately resourced to enforce it. Tenants are often scared to complain as they could be evicted by the landlord. There is not a free market, as a property is often the only one in the area that is suitable for a tenant with family considerations, for example. The private rented sector is very complex, and just having minimum standards doesn't go far enough.
- 6.6 CFP: The CFP recently discussed the private rented sector, HHSRS and enforcement with the DWP and Cabinet Office. There seems to be reluctance in government to set up a landlord registration scheme, possibly because of the potential cost burden on landlords. The CFP were asked to look into the cost of such a scheme. A non-mandatory registration scheme in Northern Ireland cost around £70 to register, which, given the potential advantages of being able to identify all landlords, is not a high cost for landlords.
- 6.7 ALEO: Taxi drivers have to register with their LA, why shouldn't landlords? There is no real downside and might even help to advertise their properties.
- 6.8 CFP: DB asked the group to send him any evidence from similar examples, e.g. the cost of registering black cabs in London.
- 6.9 ALEO: Only a third of landlords have EPCs, and these are usually the good ones, so the statistics are skewed to make the private rented sector appear better than it is. The cost of enforcement is not covered by the cost of fines for not having an EPC, so the Health and Safety Executive don't prioritise this. If there were high on-the-spot fines, say £500, then it would be cost effective for landlords to have an EPC.
- 6.10 ALEO: The Regulatory Powers Act allows the Secretary of State to provide LAs with data from the tenancy deposit scheme. However, LAs don't yet have access to this. Compliance with the tenancy deposit scheme is high. It would be very useful for LA fuel poverty and energy officers to have access to this data. We often know where social landlords are, but not where privately let properties are. It would be very useful if the CFP could ask the Secretary of State to allow access to this data and for clearer guidance on how data can be used. We could then use this to find out where these properties are and cross reference this data with what we know about the energy efficiency of the property.
- 6.11 CFP: DB asked the group to send him notes on these points for follow up with the committee.
- 6.12 ALEO: HHSRS is a strong power but we don't have enough officers in post, and it's mostly a reactive approach. With better funding and access to data, there could be a more proactive approach. Penalty fines for noncompliance with HHSRS should be in the region of tens of thousands of pounds. Licencing schemes often become self-funding after a few years. We need data and money to start. Things could be tweaked to allow this without requiring new legislation, although new legislation is required in some areas, such as retaliatory evictions. It is currently too easy to evict people.
- 6.13 ALEO: Local delivery partnerships are important. BEIS and the Department of Health, need to work together better, e.g. on ECO Flexible Eligibility, vulnerable clients are often hard to find. GPs could help facilitate this, e.g. by writing to patients. Is this progressing and can the CFP consider how they could help with this? This has been talked about for a long time but there seems to be very little progress.
- 6.14 CFP: The committee is working with the various Government departments to help them see that cooperation is required across many departments to effectively tackle the issue of fuel poverty. The CFP are currently recruiting for someone with LA health and social services expertise as they realise that it is important to integrate health and social care into tackling fuel poverty.
- 6.15 ALEO: It was suggested that a practitioner with front line experience rather than a senior manager would be best for this role.
- 6.16 ALEO: FPAG used to have several working groups, e.g. the LA Warm Front group and the installer group. Meetings were informal but very useful for facilitating dialogue between key stakeholders and for highlighting issues.
- 6.17 CFP: The CFP does have the power to form subgroups but they wanted sub-groups to be task-orientated rather than standing groups. DB: They had set up an off gas grid subgroup to advise on how best to upgrade the SAP ratings of off gas households. DB agreed that the CFP could consider setting up a sub group on engaging with the health sector. Too many subgroups could become unmanageable.

- 6.18 ALEO: It was noted that ALEO represents all LA energy officers, whereas representatives from individual councils are only really able to represent their own LA, so it is useful to consult with ALEO and to invite us to sit on sub groups.
- 6.19 ALEO: When the CFP looked at the size of the funding requirements, to what extent did it look at funding for the health side of things?
- 6.20 CFP: As there is currently no common view across Government departments on the extent and value of health benefits of warmer homes, BEIS is working on a model for this, in term of savings to the health service from investment in upgrading properties. Although there were definite health-related benefits, given the stretched health budgets, the CFP are working to ensure that the fuel poverty strategy is fully funded from other sources. However, cooperation with the health and social care sectors is important.
- 6.21 ALEO: BRE are able extrapolate the savings to the health service of improvements to housing stock.
- 6.22 ALEO: We are concerned that LAs are being excluded from applying for redress funding from Ofgem fines to energy companies. For example, the recent tender document for the organisation that will administer the redress funding says that only charities can access the redress funding. LAs are more than capable of delivering energy saving programmes. The largest and strongest programmes in the country on this are run by LAs. We are concerned that ECO is only funding the capital costs, whereas the broader costs of engagement to assist people aren't covered, which is why LAs have to be able to bid for money like redress funding. When LAs have to partner with charities to access funding they are essentially paying a managing agent fee to the charity, which is money that is not being spent on measures. DB noted this point.
- 6.23 ALEO: Previously, under FPAG, KL represented ALEO on the off gas grid working group. She applied to sit on the new group but was told that there is already an LA member. However, this member doesn't represent ALEO, just their own LA, and ALEO is no longer able to input into and feedback from these meetings. ALEO would represent all LAs if they had a seat on this subgroup, which would benefit from the combined experience of the ALEO Executive and members. DB said he would discuss this with the subgroup leader.
- 6.24 ALEO: Will there be a chance to review the LIHC fuel poverty definition now that it has been in place for some time? There are many people that should be considered fuel poor but aren't under this definition. Just because you're not classed as fuel poor doesn't mean you aren't suffering. It is essential to target the right people and there is a conflict between who we want to help and who the definition says should be eligible.
- 6.25 CFP: The CFP will probably look to review this in year three, once we have a bit more history of using the definition.
- 6.26 The group thanked DB for attending and DB invited the group to send comments and suggestion to him.

7. AOB

- 7.1 There was no further business.

8. Date of next meeting

- 8.1 The next meeting will be held on 20 July 2017 at Camden Town Hall, London.