

CAN Executive Meeting Minutes

12 July 2012 @ 10:30 am
London Borough of Camden Town Hall

Present:

Colin Anderson (Chair)	(CA)	CAN National Chair & Chair, South West CAN
Darsh Chauhan	(DC)	CAN National Secretariat & Vice Chair, East Midlands CAN
Peter Chisnall	(PC)	Climate Energy
David Colbourne	(DCo)	Chair, North West CAN
Rachel Jones	(RJ)	Chair, West Midlands CAN
Rob Leeson	(RL)	CAN National Secretariat
Karen Lond	(KL)	Chair, East Midlands CAN
Oliver Myers	(OM)	CAN Representative and Policy Advisor
Hilary Tanner	(HT)	LGA
Carol White	(CW)	Acting Chair, South East CAN

Apologies:

Abigail Burrige		LGA
John Kolm-Murray	(JKM)	Chair, London CAN
Paul Maplethorpe		Chair, East Pennine CAN
Jane Mears		Vice Chair, East Pennine CAN
Andy Stephenson		CAN National Chair (Meeting Chair)

Welcome and Introductions

CA welcomed the group and introductions were made.

CW is the Acting Chair for SE CAN, although she is also the Treasurer. If a new treasurer can be found then CW will take over officially as Chair of SE CAN.

1. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the Executive meeting and AGM on 12/04/2012 were approved as a true record.
- 1.2 Matters Arising from 12/04/12 minutes:
- 1.3 The accounts have been signed off and future Executive Meeting dates have been set.
- 1.4 Re item 8.2: RL has circulated an email update from Mathias Hessler at EEPB (Melonie Hedley has now left EEPB) on the LA guidance, which read:
"With regards to your query, I just spoke to Steve Ives who told me that the publication of the LA guidance is planned to tie in with the LGA's climate local web tool, which I understand is to come live in September. He also said that he'll be speaking at your 18 June conference and will cover some of that ground."
- 1.5 Re item 3.5: Regional activity reports for the CAN magazine will be sent for Chairs approval next week. This has been put back as the magazine publication deadline has now reverted to the original date because a new sponsor has not yet been confirmed so there is now no need to rush through publication.
- 1.6 Abigail Burrige and Steve Ives were both invited, however, neither were able to attend and sent their apologies. HT will be arriving after lunch to represent the LGA.

Action: RL to circulate regional activity reports for chairs' comments.

2. Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Guidance

- 2.1 As time was limited, it was decided to divert from the agenda and discuss the new HECA Guidance first, in preparation for the discussion with HT after lunch.
- 2.2 DECC has asked for responses by 4pm on Friday 13 July, so the discussions from today's meeting will be used to produce CAN's response for submission tomorrow. CA and RL will liaise to make sure this is submitted by the deadline.
- 2.3 CA stressed that HECA was, and is, a very important piece of legislation for CAN members, particularly as it was originally responsible for the creation of many of their posts and is the reason many are still in post. As it also provided a statutory responsibility, it was invaluable for attracting funding for work and reports as well as setting targets within LAs.
- 2.4 Government have said they are not going to establish targets for the new version of HECA. It was noted that the original first draft of the new HECA Guidance was apparently rejected by ministers as "too light touch".
- 2.5 The group felt that, overall, the Guidance was not a bad document but could be improved and required a few additions.
- 2.6 Abigail Burrige of the LGA, had kindly provided the Executive with notes on the LGA's position with respect to the new HECA Guidance. There have also been emails to the Executive from JKM, amongst others, prior to the meeting and it was felt that CAN's official position on the new HECA Guidance should be somewhere between the views expressed by the LGA and those outlined in JKM's email.
- 2.7 The CAN Executive also took into account the views expressed by members and delegates in the reports prepared by Louise Sunderland of ACE from the recent workshops on HECA held at the York and Chelmsford CAN Conference in March and June 2012, respectively, as well as CAN's 2011 members' survey results.
- 2.8 It was felt that AB had made some good points, particularly in regard to what the reports will be used for and what feedback LAs will receive, as well as questioning why it is not an annual report and the timescales imposed. It is possible that two-year reporting is part of DECC's "light-touch" approach, although it was noted that LAs are used to reporting annually.
- 2.9 Quality feedback from DECC was considered to be important. In the past, it was felt that Government responses to reports had just been copied and pasted with very little consideration of the content of individual reports.
- 2.10 Also there had been no consistency to the reporting format, as this was left to the individual ECAs, and hence comparison of reports or proper benchmarking had not been possible.
- 2.11 It was questioned why a "street-by-street" approach appears to be the only delivery method suggested in the Guidance.
- 2.12 It was asked if the old HECA report could be used as a pro-forma? Although the qualitative aspects are ok, it was felt that there were too many problems with the old HECA report.
- 2.13 It seemed to the group that there no clarity on objectives for CO₂ reduction, energy efficiency or fuel poverty to set targets by. It was suggested that each LA could provide targets under carbon reduction, energy efficiency and fuel poverty and state their priority and how this will be achieved. A pro-forma for each of these headings would also be helpful. This way, every ECA would have targets which could be compared. Although carbon emissions are counted anyway, this would allow figures to be published in a public-facing document.
- 2.14 It was noted that around 200 out of 350 LAs have published greenhouse gas emissions, with over a third not bothering as it is not a statutory duty. However, HECA is a statutory duty for Energy Conservation Authorities (ECAs).
- 2.15 It was felt that the example targets shown in the guidance were not realistic for the vast majority of LAs. Many LAs will just not approve targets on CO₂ and fuel poverty.
- 2.16 In the past, in some cases, LAs were known to use up to three different software packages for each HECA report and used whichever results came out the best, so there was no comparability even between their own yearly reports. The metrics used are not particularly important as long as they stick to them and highlight any potential flaws. For, example targets set in terms of KWh savings are very easy to achieve by moving households from gas to electricity, but this could actually increase carbon emissions.
- 2.17 It was noted that there used to be a target to increase domestic energy efficiency but currently none exists.

- 2.18 It was felt that flexibility between different types of authority (e.g. rural vs metropolitan / unitary), was a good thing, although too much flexibility means it is not possible to compare reports across similar types of authority.
- 2.19 It was felt that the document was slightly “muddled” on the split between affordable warmth and carbon-reduction strategies, with a bit of adaptation thrown in.
- 2.20 It is likely that LAs who have not acted on HECA in the past will continue to do nothing.
- 2.21 CAN should be representing its members and looking at the guidance with a view to whether it will help safeguard members’ jobs and whether it is strong enough to make a difference to vulnerable people and carbon reduction. Many CAN members do not cover all three areas of energy efficiency, climate change and fuel poverty, in some cases fuel poverty officers’ roles are being deleted and climate change officers are expected to deal with all three areas of concern.
- 2.22 There is a moral imperative to carry out work to alleviate fuel poverty but many LAs will ask whether they have to do it and what are the penalties for not reporting. If the only threat is a letter from DECC to the Chief Executive, this is not enough of an incentive and many will not bother.
- 2.23 There was general support from the group for the proposed guidance, however, it was felt that funding for LAs would be necessary to carry out reporting as many LAs have no budget for this and some have even abolished their housing departments.
- 2.24 The group agreed with DECC that it would be good for LAs to have ambitious targets but that these targets are unlikely to be achievable without budget provisions.
- 2.25 LAs without a budget should not be unduly penalised and targets which are ambitious for some are not necessarily ambitious for others.
- 2.26 It was noted that when CESP was first rolled out, opportunities went to the highest bidder and the utilities just went for the “lowest hanging fruit”. A lot of LAs walked away because they had no budget available but now many schemes are 100% funded.
- 2.27 There is a potential that some works would not even be known about by LAs; although an LA representative has to sign them off, it is possible that many projects will be missed or hidden. HECA is an opportunity for Government to pick up on outputs outside of Green Deal and ECO. If the interest rate for Green Deal loans is set around 7.5%, as proposed, then it is anticipated that there will be lots of projects undertaken with alternative sources of funding, many LAs will use their own loans with rates of 0 to 4%, for example. EPCs can tell officers about work retrospectively but it’s not possible to know which were carried out under the Green Deal.
- 2.28 This is also a reason why HECA should not be too closely linked with Green Deal and ECO, as was pointed out to Steve Ives of DECC at CAN’s meeting with him in February.
- 2.29 DECC seem to believe that ECO will be funded by the utilities, however pilots show that there won’t be 100% funding available, with LAs expected to provide around 20% of funding.
- 2.30 It was noted that the utilities could ringfence anything between 10 and 100% of ECO funding for themselves. The one advantage LAs have could be that the criteria for the Affordable Warmth Element of ECO is so narrow that utilities might not be able to find clients.
- 2.31 It was noted that section 3.9, bullet point 4 states: *“The LGA will develop a Climate Local network that will be used as a forum to provide feedback to national Govt on what is required to help accelerate local progress”*. Concern was expressed that this network could be duplicating CAN’s role and it was questioned why another network is necessary. The group felt that this Climate Local Network will be formed anyway, with different objectives, although we should comment on this in our response to DECC and ask that the Guidance includes reference to CAN as an existing network of front-line officers based on the original HECA Officers’ Network.
- 2.32 It was felt that the layout of the guidance document could be better, with clearly defined sections on affordable warmth / cold weather plans, energy efficiency, carbon reduction / climate change mitigation and adaptation, for example.
- 2.33 Linking the reports with other departments would be welcomed.
- 2.34 It was felt that the March deadline for reporting, given in the Guidance document, was not realistic. LA budgets will not have been set by this date, LAs won’t have carbon emission figures until the end of July and there will not be enough time to report on Green Deal projects starting around January. A more sensible reporting deadline would be August. However, a short, one-page, bullet-pointed statement of intent could perhaps be produced for March, with a full report in August. There is an anticipation that the report will be public-facing.

- 2.35 It was also felt that annual reporting would be better than a two-yearly report. Otherwise it is in danger of falling off the radar.
- 2.36 Item 2.24 of the Guidance states that “*all ECAs can access the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) database from April 2012*”. However, if HECA reporting is a requirement, then this should be provided free of charge to LAs. Currently it can cost around £7,000 to purchase bulk data for an authority and an update cost also applies. The Department of Communities and Local Government own the data and they are effectively asking that LAs buy it in order to give it back to them.
- 2.37 There is no mention in the Guidance of Cold Weather Plans. HECA is a good opportunity to link with Health and Wellbeing Boards. LAs concerned about the health agenda want to steer Green Deal and ECO to the fuel poor and not the fuel rich. LAs should be involved in Green Deal and ECO to target resources to tackle cold-related medical conditions.
- 2.38 It was suggested that HECA reports could be counter signed by the Director of Public Health or a local authority’s Health and Wellbeing Board. This might not be possible for all LAs but reasons for this could be stated in the report.
- 2.39 Housing energy efficiency officers need to be at the table with health workers and HECA creates links to draw on health and NHS funding.
- 2.40 It was suggested that the HECA guidance should ask LAs to set targets for 2028 and 2050, with interim targets, although this should be down to the individual LAs to set, since it is much easier for some LAs to make significant improvements than others. The targets could be for Energy Use, CO₂ and Fuel Poverty and then decide which are the priority targets for the LA.
- 2.41 Over a third of councils haven’t published their green-house-gas emissions, which is not a statutory duty.
- 2.42 It was noted that the original Act requires a named HECA contact, however, this is not stated in the new Guidance. This would provide a focus for coordination of street-by-street rollouts, for example.
- 2.43 The Environmental Information Act should help in requesting data from utilities on Green Deal and ECO.
- 2.44 Climate Local, is referenced many times throughout the Guidance, although it was questioned why this should be so closely linked with HECA. It remains to be seen how many LAs will sign up to Climate Local. It is felt that many won’t be signing up to it, although Climate Local is useful in pulling everything together. It was felt that it was more important that Climate Local signatories be told about HECA, rather than vice-versa.
- 2.45 The group thought that the LGA’s opposition to HECA was at odds with the results from the recent HECA workshops held at CAN conferences in Chelmsford and York in June and March. The difference may be that the workshops represent the views of officers, whereas the LGA is representing councillors and higher level council officials. CAN should be representing its members’ views and, therefore, suggesting less of a ‘light-touch’ approach, although it was felt by the group that the conclusions from the HECA workshops were too prescriptive.
- 2.46 A carrot and stick approach was suggested - as with the original HECA, around £10,000 to £20,000 could be provided to LAs on completion of a HECA report. It was suggested that this money could come from the £200 million additional incentive funding, which has been announced to help launch the Green Deal, or potentially from the training budget. Without funding, ambitions won’t be very strong, despite best intentions. Similar punitive measures to those used under CRC were suggested, where a £100 a day fine is imposed if a report is not produced.
- 2.47 The lack of DECC consultation with LAs on HECA was noted and that there had not been an impact assessment.
- 2.48 Without funding and with so many cuts going on, LAs may want to support HECA and ECO Affordable Warmth but their ambitions are not going to be very strong.

Action: CA and RL to liaise to submit CAN’s response to the HECA guidance to DECC by tomorrow’s deadline.

3. Sponsorship update

- 3.1 The National Secretariat have had a very positive meeting with E.ON about potential sponsorship and have been asked to prepare a sponsorship proposal.
- 3.2 The proposal to E.ON is ready to be signed by the Chair and sent to E.ON. This outlines options for a two-year exclusive sponsorship contract, a one-year exclusive sponsorship contract or joint-sponsorship for one year.

4. Secretariat Update

- 4.1 The CAN National accounts have been registered with Companies House.
- 4.2 The last of the Climate Energy-sponsored conferences was held in Chelmsford on 18 June.
- 4.3 The National Secretariat has been doing some successful debt collecting of past conference fees.
- 4.4 Once sponsorship is secured, the Secretariat will start negotiating a plan of events for the year.
- 4.5 A foreign exchange student will be working with the Secretariat in August for nine weeks as an admin resource.

5. Conference Update

- 5.1 There was a good turn out of over 90 delegates for the June Conference.
- 5.2 We've had the most feedback for this of all the one-day events, most of which was very positive. The only real problem was that the lunch arrived late, for which we should get a reduction.
- 5.3 A meeting was held at the Conference to try to restart CAN in the Eastern region. In the interim, Peter Chisnall will be providing a secretariat function for the region. The next meeting date will be set soon; hopefully a Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at that meeting.
- 5.4 We will wait for confirmation of sponsorship before setting any dates, locations or themes for future events.

6. Sponsor's Update

- 6.1 As Climate Energy's sponsorship of CAN is ending, this will be the last CAN Executive Meeting that PC will be attending as sponsorship representative. The CAN Executive thanked PC personally for all his work with CAN, which has been very much appreciated, and for attending the Executive meetings. The CAN Executive would also like to thank Climate Energy, once again, for their sponsorship and support of the Network. An official thank-you letter will be sent to Andrew Holmes, Managing Director of Climate Energy, by the CAN Secretariat on behalf of CAN.
- 6.2 Climate Energy are aiming to be a Green Deal provider.

Action: RL to send CA a draft thank-you letter for Climate Energy, for approval.

7. Chairs' Away Day

- 7.1 A date for a Chairs' away day will probably be set for autumn. September was ruled out and October was considered to be a better time for this, preferably some time in the first two weeks. London was considered to be a suitable location.
- 7.2 It was suggested that this could be used to discuss the consultation on Fuel Poverty, which will be out around then, as well as further discussion on HECA

- 7.3 The away day will also be used to discuss CAN's aims and objectives. Do we need to concentrate back on housing now that we need specialism in areas such as solid wall insulation?
- 7.4 If we can afford an external facilitator this will be useful. Peter Woodward was recommended as a facilitator.
- 7.5 Oliver Myers and Andy Stephenson's presentation to DECC on the history of HECA and CAN was a useful introduction to the Network. This will be uploaded to the CAN website.

Actions: RL, DC will liaise with CA to set a date, venue and facilitator.

RL to add introduction to CAN presentation to the website.

8. Responses to Consultation and Representation at Meetings

- 8.1 RL was hoping that JKM would give a summary of the recent End Fuel Poverty Coalition (EFPC) meeting, which he is now attending as an official CAN representative, as well as Islington Borough Council. However, JKM has sent his apologies.
- 8.2 RL has forwarded notes from the EFPC meeting on the HECA Guidance to the Executive as well as the EFPC's response to DECC.

9. Discussions with guest Hilary Tanner of LGA

- 9.1 Both HT and OM were welcomed to the meeting during the lunch break.

Draft HECA Guidance:

- 9.2 HT gave a brief update of the LGA's position on HECA, noting that the final call on HECA rests with LGA Board members. The LGA do not endorse HECA but, if it is to be introduced, then they believe it should be as "light-touch" as possible and fully funded.
- 9.3 HT said that the LGA is lobbying DECC for funding for HECA reporting. The response from DECC has been positive and funding could be included in the formula grants from DCLG, but this would be in the next financial year. The group was concerned that this money could end up being taken by the LA's corporate centre and might not be used for HECA. HT said that DECC aren't allowed to ring fence this money for HECA. LGA are continuing to lobby.
- 9.4 CAN supports HECA, provided that it is fully funded, but agree that the draft guidance is a bit muddled and could be improved. The difference in opinion between CAN and the LGA, probably stems from the fact that CAN is looking at things from an officer's perspective, whereas LGA will in principle argue against additional, unfunded burdens on LAs. Having supported the proposed repeal of HECA, when the National Indicators were introduced, CAN feel that HECA is now needed again, as the obligations of the National Indicators have gone.
- 9.5 It is felt by the CAN Executive that the Green Deal and ECO won't do much at all for the fuel poor. A budget is needed to maximise uptake and steer schemes towards the fuel poor and cold related health issues. Without obligations, officers can't argue for budgets, therefore HECA is needed.
- 9.6 LGA think that strategic approaches are bringing funding together (such as from the Green Deal, ECO and Renewable Heat Incentive and Feed-in Tariffs) so why does it need enshrining in law as it is in councils' interest to do this anyway? However CAN feel that LAs will deprioritise anything that is not a statutory duty, although many LAs are even ignoring statutory duties and prioritising based on the penalties that are involved for non-compliance. If penalties are felt to be "absorbable" then they won't act. The more "light-touch" HECA is, the less likely it will be complied with and residents will suffer.
- 9.7 Since DECC are likely to go ahead with HECA, discussions focussed on the many other areas where CAN and LGA are in agreement.
- 9.8 CAN agree with the LGA's stance that financial support is needed. DECC seems to be ignoring the financial obligations HECA imposes on LAs.
- 9.9 It was noted that money had to be put in by LAs to deliver Cold Weather Plans and the same will be true with HECA.
- 9.10 CAN and LGA agree that HECA reporting should be annual rather than every two years, as proposed by the Guidance.

- 9.11 “Ambitious targets” are mentioned in the Guidance, however, DECC seem to want LAs to set their own rather than imposing any.
- 9.12 CAN and LGA agree that the proposed March reporting deadline is too ambitious, Green Deal schemes will not be established until around April and Carbon figures will not be ready until the end of July. An autumn report would be feasible, (which would be in line with the old HECA deadline). There will also be a high workload for officers around the proposed deadline.
- 9.13 CAN consider it likely that, if things are left to market forces, the Green Deal will draw down ECO money to support the fuel rich and excess winter mortality and cold related medical conditions will get worse.
- 9.14 HT confirmed that Climate Local has been given a “low-key” launch and some LAs have already signed up. It will be interesting to see take-up levels will be on this. Climate Local has a lot of political support as a council led initiative to address climate change. If Climate Local is not taken up by LAs, then we could end up with Government trying to “micro manage” again, although it was noted that there doesn’t seem to be an appetite for Government to micro manage at the moment. It will be interesting to see whether this political support, that is seen on the LGA boards, will be reciprocated across the wider body of LAs.
- 9.15 It was suggested that some of the money from the £200 million set aside to kick-start the Green Deal could be used for data gathering. It was felt that this would be worth proposing, however, DECC seem keen that the money should go to households, to help uptake.
- 9.16 CAN believe that free access to EPC data should be made available to LAs for HECA reporting.
- 9.17 It was suggested that the HECA guidance could ask LAs to set their own targets for 2028 and 2050, perhaps. CAN feel that some targets would be useful and asked HT for the LGA view on this. While the LGA do not oppose targets per se, they think LAs should have a choice on what they sign up to. The LGA supports targets and benchmarking as long as they are useful and meaningful to LAs and residents. It is the imposition of targets and additional burdens from central Government that is not acceptable. .
- 9.18 CAN has always believed that the original 30% target to increase the energy efficiency of homes was flawed, as LAs are all at different starting points. When benchmarking, it is important to compare like with like, e.g. unitary authorities with other unitary authorities. It would be very easy for DECC to put all LAs in the same table, making it natural to draw artificial comparisons.
- 9.19 LGA and CAN agree that HECA shouldn’t be too focussed on the Green Deal and should bring in RHI and FITs, for example, as well as fuel poverty links with public health and wellbeing boards.
- 9.20 It was felt that the draft guidance misses the opportunity to stress links with the public health agenda. It was suggested that HECA reports could be signed off by health boards as well as chief executives. There is a lot of potential for accessing funding through the Department of Health and the NHS, so these links need to be strengthened, although sign off by public health boards would not be appropriate for all types of local authority.
- 9.21 It was suggested that the energy helpline numbers be given to GPs, although many GPs won’t make referrals without being paid.
- 9.22 The Department of Health have recognised that for the Cold Weather Plan to work and to be taken forward, then funding was required. This was provided through the Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) funding. The same is true for HECA. The Guidance should point out to LAs, particularly those who didn’t apply for WHHP funding, that HECA is an opportunity to lever-in ECO money.
- 9.23 There is a need to educate many public health authorities on LA structure and that a two-tier structure exists. HECA is an excellent opportunity to oblige LAs and health authorities to work together and, potentially, jointly finance schemes. HT pointed out that Climate Local could encourage joint working.
- 9.24 Previously, HECA had required a named HECA contact. This was considered extremely important, as often opportunities are missed because no one knows who to contact. This creates a liaison point between health & well-being boards, NHS etc.
- 9.25 The new draft Guidance does not require HECA reports to be signed off by Chief Executives. CAN feels this is a mistake as it is a very simple way of raising the profile of HECA. If the Chief Executive is involved, it means that HECA reports are less likely to become “politicised” where councillors, etc, don’t see energy efficiency and fuel poverty as a core priority.
- 9.26 The importance should be stressed of including a mention of HECA in the new Cold Weather plan which will be issued in the middle of October.

- 9.27 Warm Homes Healthy People is a funding opportunity for HECA, if DECC will not fully fund HECA. In the long-run, fuel poverty programmes save the NHS money.
- 9.28 It was felt that the 1996 HECA guidance had been very good. The phrase: “inform, mitigate, advise and promote” energy efficiency has been taken from this. Marketing (i.e. Education, promotion, advice and information) is another important role for LAs.
- 9.29 With such a short deadline for response to the guidance it is unfortunately not possible to consult fully with CAN’s members on this. DECC also said that they envisaged the draft guidance would just be discussed by the CAN executive and not all CAN members. The group felt that a proper consultation by DECC with LAs on HECA would have been better.

Green Deal and ECO

- 9.30 The group believe that the recently announced Green Deal interest rate of 7.5% is likely to be detrimental to uptake. It has been said that it would be better to use the ECO Carbon money that is required to just pay for the insulation up front.
- 9.31 DECC are now saying that LAs are “vital” to the success of the Green Deal.
- 9.32 There is also an important role for LAs to observe and report on none Green Deal work.
- 9.33 Some LAs are running pilot schemes with LA loans and looking at loan providers other than the Green Deal. It is possible that some LAs will ignore the Green Deal altogether. Green Deal could act as a marketing mechanism, which some LAs and companies might then undercut.
- 9.34 An NEA pilot in Plymouth has demonstrated that there are serious problems with ECO. £100,000 covered approximately twelve houses and there is not as much money for ECO as had been thought. Energy companies have no idea what proportions of funding they will meet for measures and they do not know how much money needs to be spent for a £100 per year reduction in heating bills, for example. Therefore, a lot of piloting is needed.
- 9.35 All of the “big 6” are offering “pilots”. However, most are not really pilots, just mini schemes. They are not asking questions such as:
 - What size budget is needed to pull in ECO money?
 - What can be done for £100,000?
- 9.36 We need to encourage as many LAs as possible to engage in “true” ECO pilots.
- 9.37 If residents on pension credit need £8,000, and £6,000 comes from ECO Affordable Warmth, then LAs will presumably have to provide £2,000.
- 9.38 CESP schemes were on RSLs, whose properties are fairly well maintained. Many private sector properties will need rewires, etc. These incidental costs will not be met by power companies and vulnerable residents will miss out.
- 9.39 Excess winter deaths could be catastrophic if there is a cold winter, with Warm Front gone.
- 9.40 ECO affordable warmth is put forward as a replacement for Warm Front. However, the group feel that it will be inadequate.
- 9.41 Warm Front has an underspend because of the criteria change. Why can’t they put that underspend towards ECO?
- 9.42 Under the £30 million WHHP fund there was a £10 million underspend.
- 9.43 There had been problems with remortgaging properties with FITs, because of the lease requirement for 25 years, as many mortgage companies were not keen on this. Might the same be true for the Green Deal as they will not want people to take on an extra debt? Mortgage companies will take a market decision on this.
- 9.44 There will be an ECO brokerage consultation in September, which will be critical. CAN should look at responding to this. It is likely that there will be a very short consultation deadline for this.
- 9.45 There is concern that under the brokerage system, once a utility meets its obligation, they could stop funding schemes.
- 9.46 Every LA should want a relationship with ECO providers in order to ensure not all the money goes to the fuel rich.
- 9.47 It was asked if anyone thought there are likely to be procurement problems? Some felt that procurement should not be an issue as it is a “concession”. It is only technically a procurement if you have the money, although some LAs don’t see it like that. If the LA is providing a platform for someone else to make money, then it is considered to be a procurement by some. However, many companies will walk away if asked to tender. SW CAN will have a speaker on procurement at their next forum meeting at the end of September.

- 9.48 It was asked if CAN could do more to help support members with solutions and models for the Green Deal. However, it was felt that this would be too complicated as we don't yet know how it will work at this stage. The finance model is the main problem.
- 9.49 Birmingham are about to appoint their Green Deal provider. Once this is settled, hopefully they will be able to release information to other LAs.
- 9.50 It was suggested that Climate Local could bring forward case studies on Green Deal and ECO for CAN to disseminate.
- 9.51 The partners model of the old HECAAction loan scheme could have useful analogies to the Green Deal.
- 9.52 EST have a Finance Innovators Group which is a useful source of information.
- 9.53 There is a good paper aimed at Scottish LAs on the Green Deal, which could be circulated to members.

Action: HT will send a link to Scottish Green Deal paper for RL to circulate to members

Hills Fuel Poverty Definition

- 9.54 DECC should be consulting and making a decision on the new fuel poverty definition, probably in September. DECC will hopefully come up with a practical application of the Hills fuel poverty definition. It remains to be seen whether the goal will be to lift the worst cases (bottom left of graph) above the threshold, those in less severe fuel poverty above the threshold, which requires less money or effort, or move everyone below the threshold up a bit on the graph?
- 9.55 The Hills' definition could be a topic for discussion at the next CAN Chairs' away day.
- 9.56 Professor Hills has stated that unless 50% of ECO goes on affordable warmth, it will be regressive. This is why the £190 million Carbon Saving Community Obligation (CSCO) money has been allocated. CSCO will be like the new CESP.
- 9.57 Although the new Hills' definition of fuel poverty gets to the heart of the issue better than the old definition, it is considered to be hard to explain and communicate. It is hoped that any new definition will be given a snappy name. However, it was suggested that it might be better not to worry about communicating the precise definition. We just need to be focussing our resources on the bottom left quadrant of the Hills' graph.
- 9.58 The 2016 target to eradicate fuel poverty still exists although it is unlikely to be met and Government are unlikely to set any new national targets as the emphasis is on localism. Many consider the definition to be meaningless without a target, as the point is to use this to measure progress. It is unlikely that the consultation will revise the 2016 target.
- 9.59 The Hills definition is good, in that it can be used to test policies and the graph can be used to identify targets. Previously documents were just a list of current energy efficiency and fuel poverty programmes; however, the Hills' definition can be used to compare programmes and determine their impact on fuel poverty.

10. Regional updates

- 10.1 Due to lack of time, full regional updates were not given at the meeting. Three regional updates were received by email; these are included below.
- 10.2 It should be noted that it is still useful for regions to provide written updates after the meeting has taken place, if they have not been able to submit an update beforehand, as these help greatly with minute taking and will be used for future regional annual reports in the CAN Magazine as well as sharing knowledge amongst the Executive and CAN members.

10.3 East Midlands CAN

Karen Lond, Chair

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

EMCAN held its last meeting at the Corby Cube, Corby on 14 June 2012: attendance was much improved from our February meeting with 30 attendees. Darsh had secured £300 of sponsorship from CEF which meant we were able to offer lunch. Speakers included Arnout Andrews about East Midlands Green project; Vincent McCabe from Yorkshire Energy Services about their Green Deal aspirations: CEF (City Electrical Factors); Gavin Macauley from Carillion – Warm Front update.

The next EMCAN meeting will be held on Thursday, 20 September at Leicester Adult Education Centre, Leicester.

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

NEA East Midlands Fuel Poverty Forum was held on June 26 in Nottingham.

Details of any current projects:

Lincolnshire - HELP insulation scheme installed 15,000 measures over an 18-month period: the scheme is now suspended.

Derby City Council - CESP schemes, CERT insulation scheme and a private sector solid wall insulation scheme. Secured ERDF funding to provide energy efficiency advice to SMEs.

Rutland - Rutland Energy Action project, 200 energy audits conducted in a two-month period by Change Agents. The project was jointly funded through their LSP and from the Department of Health's Warm Homes Healthy People Fund. The majority of recipients needed help to understand their heating controls. The project also helped to train 30 frontline staff to provide general advice.

Northamptonshire - Northants Warm Homes insulation scheme provided through the Snug Network is now free. Northants Warm Homes continues to keep a watching brief on Green Deal.

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

EMCAN is currently seeking sponsorship for its regional meetings.

10.4 East of England CAN

Peter Chisnall, Interim Coordinator during period of reinstatement of regional network

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

Workshop held at National CAN conference in Chelmsford on 18 June, to discuss resurrection of dormant East of England network, approximately 30 delegates attended.

Delegates decided to investigate the development of a new network and set up an inaugural meeting in August/September to decide on possible format, constitution, officers etc.

Peter Chisnall volunteered to be main contact in period before new body is set up.

smartLIFE Centre Cambridge will be venue for the meeting, exact date and time to be confirmed.

10.5 East Pennine CAN

The three reports, below, were forwarded from the EP CAN Secretariat from various LAs under EP CAN, prior to the meeting:

From: Tom Shepherd, Project Manager, Community Energy Solutions - Yorkshire and Humber

Sent: 9 July 2012

Please see suggestion below for the CAN National regional network update report:

New research into the use of air source heat pumps has highlighted the technology's potential health benefits, as well as its well-publicised capabilities for helping tackle fuel poverty. Since 2008 Community Energy Solutions (CES) and East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) have been working in partnership to install over 200 air source heat pumps in a mix of private and social housing properties. Earlier this year, they commissioned Newcastle University to carry out research into the effectiveness of the scheme through face-to-face interviews with numerous householders who'd been using a heat pump for a minimum of 12 months. The results of this study have just been revealed with researchers concluding that: "The clean, whole house, constant heat supplied by an air source heat pump had a measurable effect on the quality of life of the respondents, especially those with reduced mobility or those that are housebound. It enables them to heat their home to a temperature that is better for their health and allows them to remain independent longer. It is also very likely that the installation of this easy to use heating has enabled some of the respondents to remain in their homes instead of having to go into care homes or hospital."

For further details or a copy of the report, please contact: Tom Shepherd at Community Energy Solutions. Tel 0113 237 2722 tom.shepherd@ces-cic.org.uk

From: Hooton, Mark, Team Leader Sustainability, Wakefield Council

Sent: 14 June 2012

In Wakefield we have a number of projects on-going and planned as follows:

- Affordable Warmth Action Plan – recently reviewed for 2012/13, this will delivered coordinated cross-partnership activity to reduce domestic carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty.

- Wakefield Low Carbon Communities – in its fourth and final year this ‘area based initiative’ is will target all private households in four wards offering free loft and cavity wall insulation.
- Wakefield Energy Savers Scheme – in its second year of the four year programme, Energy Savers will continue to provide district-wide free and discounted loft and cavity wall insulation to private households.
- Wakefield Fuel Poverty Fund – a new scheme, the Fuel Poverty Fund will provide emergency heating repairs and installations in vulnerable private sector properties.
- Lupset CESP Heating Scheme – a new scheme, this will provide free central heating and boiler replacements to private households to fuel switch them from coal to gas.

From: John Mallinder, Home Energy Efficiency Officer, Barnsley MBC Strategy, Growth & Regeneration

Sent: 31 May 2012

Barnsley are involved in the following:

Working collaboratively with Green Deal officer groups at both Sheffield and Leeds City region, both are evaluating of the scope / value of the Green Deal ECO business opportunity ultimately putting together a business case. Includes a recommendation as to whether the regional approach will be effective or individual authorities / sub-regions may carry this forward more effectively.

Discussion with Rotherham MBC and SIG Energy Management with a view to a Green Deal Provider Partnership, initially to focus on solid wall insulation measures.

Working with Barnsley College, Berneslai Homes, Barnsley Development Agency and Green Gain to offer a Green Deal Awareness event on 28th June for local SMEs

Developing a definitive Green Deal position statement expected by the end of June, which needs input from DECC following recent consultation.

Building a CESP programme with Keep Moat and EDF Energy in Thurnscoe, focusing on solid wall / whole house measures to around 1800 mainly private sector properties.

Working with Doncaster MBC and Cosyhome to deliver a CERT funded free insulation scheme for the Borough which has just received cabinet approval.

11. AOB

- 11.1 It was suggested that the next executive meeting be combined with the Chairs’ training day with a longer day.

12. Date of next meeting

- 12.1 The next Executive meeting will be held on 12 January 2012 at London Borough of Camden Town Hall.