

ALEO Executive Meeting Minutes

27 July 2016 @ 10:30 am
London Borough of Camden Town Hall

Present:

Colin Anderson (CA) - President, ALEO South West
Steve Barnard (SB) - National Business Development Manager, Park Home Insulations
Darsh Chauhan (DCh) - ALEO National Secretariat Manager & Vice Chair, ALEO East Midlands
David Colbourne (DCo) - ALEO National Vice Chair and Chair, North West CAN
Hazel Hill (HH) - Vice Chair, ALEO South East
Paul Hinsley (PH) - Chair, HECA East
Leanna Jones (LJ) - Vice Chair, CAN Cymru Wales
Rachel Jones (RJ) - Chair, West Midlands ALEO
John Kolm-Murray (JKM) - ALEO National Chair and Vice Chair, ALEO London
Rob Leeson (RL) - ALEO National Secretariat
Karen Lond (KL) - Chair, ALEO East Midlands
Martin O'Brien (MO) - Chair, ALEO London
David Shiner (DS) - Vice Chair, West Midlands ALEO
Carol White (CW) - Chair, ALEO South East

Guest, arriving after lunch:

Carolina Valsecchi (CV) BEIS (ECO Help to Heat Team)
Alan Roberts, Analysis, BEIS
Philippa Hulme - Ofgem

Apologies:

Jane Mears - Vice Chair, ALEO East Pennine
Emma Quest - Joint Chair, ALEO South West
Neil Short - Joint Chair, ALEO South West
Richard Cassells – Director, Park Home Insulations

1. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

- 1.1 JKM welcomed the group and introductions were made.
- 1.2 The minutes were approved. BEIS have not yet given their approval for the minutes of the afternoon session - RL to chase.

Matters arising from previous minutes (14 April 2016):

- 1.3 (Item 3.3) The role of Treasurer is not defined legally, beyond what is stated in a company's own Memorandum and Articles of Association. UK HECA's Memorandum seems to confuse KL's role with David Langman's. The Memorandum is currently being updated and the new version will clarify this. In the meantime, KL will be fine to check over the monthly accounts. RL will send KL the purchases and invoice spreadsheets to check, rather than using the Cash Flow Manager software, which is difficult to install and use.
- 1.4 (Item 4.5) RL has obtained a bank mandate form to change the company name to ALEO. This was signed by both company directors (RJ and KL) at the meeting. RL will submit this form, along with the form to change the name with Companies House.
- 1.5 (Item 5.3) The dates of the next Executive meetings are now on the ALEO website.
- 1.6 (Item 4.26) RL is still working on updating the Memorandum and Articles of Association and will circulate the proposed amendments soon.
- 1.7 (Item 4.30) RL will ask about charitable status at the 30 minute free consultation with solicitors on the Memorandum.
- 1.8 All other action points were carried out.

ACTIONS:

1.9 RL to chase BEIS for approval of minutes.

1.10 RL to send KL purchases and invoices spreadsheets to check.

1.11 RL to submit forms to change the company name.

2. Chair's Update

2.1 JKM has been particularly busy recently in his local authority role.

2.2 JKM attended Ofgem's recent meeting on consumer protection for prepay meter customers. There are particular concerns over entry warrants, and the treatment of pre-pay meter customers by suppliers, which were highlighted in a Panorama TV Programme in March.

2.3 Ofgem want a light touch on regulators and the want evidence of misconduct.

The End Fuel Poverty Coalition have relaunched following the demise of the Energy Bill Revolution campaign, which was largely unsuccessful outside of Scotland. There is no set agenda as yet.

The nature of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, following the referendum, is still unclear. There are concerns about securing funding. If we remain in the single market, it might still be possible to access funding.

2.4 It is difficult to get a sense of the new Prime Minister's green credentials. She was Home Secretary but we don't really know her take on climate change and energy.

2.5 The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has been merged into the new Department for Business Energy and Industrial Services (BEIS). This means that climate change has been dropped from the departmental name, but it is still a priority according to new Secretary of State, Greg Clarke. BEIS have not yet allocated roles to junior ministers. We don't know who's leading on Fuel Poverty and Domestic Energy Efficiency yet; it might be Nick Hurd or perhaps Baroness Neville-Rolfe. The Warm Home Discount regulations, which have just been through Parliament, were tabled by Nick Hurd.

2.6 There are concerns over what leaving the EU will mean, although most of the relevant environmental directives are already in UK statutes, with a few exceptions.

2.7 The plan is still to roll out smart meters by 2020. There is the issue of SMETS 1 and SMETS 2. With SMETS 1, you can't switch supplier without changing the meter.

2.8 The ECO consultation is now out. There was an event last week in Charing Cross on this. There is also an Ofgem consultation of redress funding. These are to be discussed later in the meeting.

2.9 JKM has circulated an email regarding the private sector regulations. These are being revised by the Government, as they are currently dependant on the Green Deal, which is now defunct. A cap on landlord's costs might be introduced instead of saying that there should be no upfront cost to landlords. ALEO needs to engage with BEIS on this, and JKM is hoping for a meeting with the relevant team in August. The Housing and Planning Act contains relevant measures, including increasing the civil penalties that LAs can levy on landlords and in principal gives access to tenancy deposit scheme data. Free access to EPC data seems to be imminent – possibly from October.

2.10 It was asked whether this really means free or if there will be an admin charge? It is apparently saying "free" in the regulations, although it's hard to be sure at this stage. At the moment there are three different levels of access, and it is not clear which level of access will be free. ALEO should pressure for full access, as LAs have HECA returns in March, and we need EPC data in time for this. We need to find the right contact at the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for this.

2.11 There was a Cabinet Office consultation earlier in year on data sets, which ALEO responded to. Access to data is becoming more important. Resourcing could be tricky for LAs if required to trawl through lots of data.

2.12 There have been meetings on social housing and there are rumours that minimum energy efficiency standards will be introduced for social housing. One of the complaints from landlords has been that the government is setting standards for them but not for social housing. Government is trying to make private landlords, LAs and housing associations work together better. Just under half of social housing is still owned by LAs. The LGA hasn't been very interesting in engaging on this and there is no single body representing all landlords.

2.13 It was asked whether there is any insight into what the new standards would be. There seemed to be no clarity as yet. Wales has minimum standards of SAP 65, band D, but also has vague terminology, like "must provide an efficient and controllable form of heating". This

went a bit above and beyond the decent home standards at the time but it is a bit outdated now. The Welsh Government often seems to confuse the SAP 65 with an average, rather than a minimum standard.

2.14 ALEO would probably be in favour of a minimum standard, as this would make it easier to engage with LA social housing departments.

3. Secretariat update

3.1 The Secretariat has been particularly busy recently with rebranding, the new sponsorship with Park Home Insulations, and the conference in Wigan on 15 July. A new exhibition stand and pull up banner has also been printed. The First ALEO branded magazine has been published, sponsored by Happy Energy.

3.2 The UK HECA accounts for the period 2014-15 have now been filed with Companies House. The ALEO annual report and ALEO/CAN regional reports were included in the magazine.

3.3 ALEO's Wigan conference was very successful. Carolina Valsecchi from DECC / BEIS turned up despite DECC's abolition being announced the day before.

3.4 There were 75 delegates in attendance in total, which is not a huge turnout by the standard of previous conferences, but still plenty of delegates. There was representation from around the country, and there was only one no-show. However, there were only two exhibition stand bookings, which is worrying, as the exhibition fees help to offset the cost of running the conference.

3.5 The ALEO National Secretariat and JKM arranged an East Pennine CAN meeting, held on 17 June 2016, in the absence of a Chair and Secretariat for the region. At the meeting it was agreed to rebrand East Pennine CAN to ALEO East Pennine, but no one volunteered for the Chair or Secretariat roles. The regional Vice Chair, Jane Mears, is also likely to be leaving soon. One option would be to combine the North East and East Pennine regions.

3.6 In the next few months the National Secretariat will be planning the next ALEO Conference and working on the next ALEO magazine.

3.7 The next conference will host the ALEO Awards. Each region is to nominate its winner and there will also be an opportunity to nominate people for the ALEO lifetime achievement award, as previously with the CAN Awards.

3.8 NEA has offered ALEO an exhibition stand at their conference on 21 to 23 September in exchange for distributing a promotional email. This would still mean paying for a delegate place and travel and accommodation costs if the Secretariat is to attend, although at least three members of Executive will be attending the conference and could perhaps share time on the exhibition stand instead. It was agreed that it would be good for ALEO to be represented. The National Secretariat will negotiate with NEA on this, perhaps offering a reciprocal exhibition arrangement at ALEO conferences, as we have had in the past.

3.9 ALEO's finances are healthy now that we have a national sponsor, although the sponsorship doesn't cover the full costs of running the Secretariat and conferences for the year. ALEO has no debts beyond the monthly invoicing cycle and is chasing outstanding invoice payments.

ACTION:

3.10 RL to respond to NEA's exhibition stand offer.

Conference:

3.11 ALEO is planning to hold a second national conference this year, which will include the ALEO awards.

3.12 It was decided that the best timing for the conference would be the second week of October. Half term is at the end of October. Possible locations include London, Peterborough or the south coast – possibly Bournemouth. Friday is the best day to invite lords, ministers etc, although the next ALEO Executive meeting is on Thursday 13 October, which might have to be moved, if the conference is to be held the next day. Bristol and Exeter were also considered as venues.

3.13 It was decided that we should invite the council leader for the LA in which the conference is held, as with Wigan. Speaker suggestions also included ministers and shadow ministers. RJ might be able to inviting Sajid Javid MP for Bromsgrove, minister for DCLG. We could invite Baroness Maddock, who has spoken at previous HECA and CAN Conferences.

3.14 The Secretariat will be sending out nomination forms for the ALEO awards soon. The deadline for nominations will probably be about the middle of September.

4. Sponsor's Introduction Update – SB, Park Home Insulations

4.1 We are two months into the sponsorship and SB has spoken at ALEO / CAN meetings in most of the regions. SB said that Park Home Insulations has found this extremely beneficial, from an

awareness point of view, and that it is extremely refreshing that the general reception from all of the regions has been positive, and that we are all singing from the same hymn sheet regarding the issues that park-home residents generally face. SB thanked the Executive for the time they have given to allow Park Home Insulations to engage with them.

4.2 There is currently no funding for park home insulation measures, so there is little commercial gain for Park Homes at the moment, but hopefully if funding streams start to focus on the fuel poor and health problems, then people will realise that these are huge issues for park home residents, and that this needs to be addressed. Park Home Insulations will be able to help and advise on these issues, hopefully, right through to a solution.

4.3 Park Home Insulations carries out around 600 installs a years, and about 10% of those take Park Home Insulations' 0% interest finance option. This is offered to residents on a case-by-case basis, which has to fit the client and not put them under any undue financial pressure. This work is extremely important to tackling fuel poverty in park home communities.

5. Executive Away Day follow up

Media and Communications Plan

5.1 The Secretariat has looked into buying a media contact list, although they don't seem readily available and there might be data protection issues. It would be better to produce our own list of media contacts, although this doesn't need to be a comprehensive list, e.g. Damian Carrington at the Guardian, Roger Harrabin at the BBC, Emily Gosling at the Telegraph, and specific contacts for NGA, the LGC, Utility Week etc. We should concentrate on national contacts and large regional newspapers such as the London standard, North Wales has the Daily Post and South Wales the Western Mail.

ACTION:

5.2 RL to produce list of contacts, with input from ALL.

5.3 Press releases would then be sent to everyone on the list, and to the regions for distribution to their own contacts.

5.4 As ALEO we can say things that we can't as individuals and the Executive tends to agree on most issues.

5.5 We might have to approval press releases fairly quickly, in reaction to events.

5.6 Key things coming up are the consultations and follow up, as well as the Private Rented Sector Regulations. Human interest stories are usually good for making the press pay attention.

5.7 We have a press release template and a new section on the website. A written communications plan will probably be difficult, other than saying we will be reacting to events.

5.8 We could prepare responses to scheduled releases in advance, such as excess winter death figures (November), fuel poverty figures (June), Energy Saving Week and Gas Safety Week. We could also produce 'human interest stories' e.g. park homes not covered in ECO consultation.

ACTION

5.9 RL to produce list of important dates with input from ALL.

5.10 We could also send a Freedom of Information request to all LAs on prosecutions on EPC non-compliance. This is likely to be zero. We could then write a press release on this.

5.11 KL, SB and RL will liaise with Park Homes Insulation on a press release.

ACTION

5.12 ALL to follow up on their ideas for press releases, above, with RL, JKM and others as appropriate.

Letter to Government

5.13 Our follow-up letter to the Government, could be addressed to the new minister for Energy Efficiency and possibly the Housing Minister. This could be an open letter, as previously, with a press release issued.

ACTION

5.14 JKM to work on ALEO letter to government, for when Parliament returns from recess.

East Pennine and North East CAN

5.15 ALEO EP currently has no Chair or Secretariat and the Vice Chair is likely to step down soon. One solution is to merge the region with North East CAN. The North East region is small, with nine LAs and they are moving to combined authorities.

5.16 Cliff Duff is hoping to hold a meeting in the North East in September. It is likely that the North East would be open to East Pennine members attending their meetings.

5.17 No one from the Executive is able to attend the National Insulation Association's ECO meeting in London on 28 July. RL will send apologies.

ACTION:

5.18 RL to send the Executive's apologies for the NIA ECO meeting.

6. Representation, consultations and policy

Public Health Agenda

6.1 There is not much to report on public health at the moment.

6.2 Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire are due to publish a report on a warm homes on prescription project, with statistically significant results showing impacts on health, including 100s of households..

ACTION:

6.3 ALEO could publish a press release on the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire statistics. KL will ask her contacts about this.

6.4 NEA have sent a letter out to LAs portfolio holders for health, checking which health and wellbeing strategies specifically mention public health. The problem is that a lot of LAs have nothing in their strategies but are very active on this, whereas others do mention this in their strategies but are doing nothing. It's not a very accurate measure. JKM has given feedback and comments to NEA that this is not the best metric. This could do more damage to their relationship with LAs than good. Naming the ones at bottom of the list could backfire, as many are very active, and the high-rated LAs might ease off as they might think they are doing too much.

Consultations

BEIS ECO Consultation: Help to Heat

6.5 See also CA's notes, which were circulated to the Executive before the meeting.

6.6 CA deals with many of the problems he has outlined in his notes on a day-to-day basis and is very concerned about what is proposed in the ECO consultation.

6.7 Modern properties are assumed to be insulated under RdSAP, but in reality many are not - a flaw that doesn't exist in SAP.

6.8 We are now at the tail end of the normal curve, with few properties left for cavity wall and loft insulation. CA questions the latest DCLG estimates of cavity walls. There are not many cavity and wall insulation jobs left to do, and those who refuse to have insulation are a high proportion of those left. Often two homes are so close together that you cannot insulate the cavity or they have conservatories or complex rear extensions. Taking these off the BRE statistics leaves a relatively small number of properties that can be insulated.

6.9 We will have to work as hard as we can on mopping up what is left. CA says that, in the past, he would have been the first to say we need to prioritise the fuel poor, but at the moment we do not have this luxury. BEIS' proposals mean that virtually no homes will get insulation, including the fuel poor.

6.10 Many insulation companies are closing e.g. Climate Energy and Mark Group went bust.

6.11 How do you find customers? This is usually through surveyors, employed by suppliers or marketing companies. This is very difficult as there are only a few pockets left (London is an exception to this). They are being paid on the basis of finding leads but they are lucky if they manage to find two properties per day, at around £45 each, which is why so many are leaving the industry.

6.12 If BEIS stick to its plans, we might be able to do one property in every three found. This won't sustain the industry. We are not in the situation we were ten years ago when there was plenty of work.

6.13 All have criticisms that there is currently no able-to-pay policy. BEIS might say that this isn't about the able to pay, just the fuel poor. We need a strategy for both, but there is no consultation on this.

6.14 CA believes that now is not time to remove CERO. We need to find customers from everywhere. With CERO they will find the fuel poor, but they won't if it is scrapped, as they will be nobody looking for them in the first place.

6.15 One wildcard in the consultation is the LA ability to extend the definition of the affordable warmth group. CA would strongly recommend to ALEO to push for maximising the proportion of funding available on this and encourage all LAs to make this definition as broad as possible. This is the only hope to make any success of ECO in this form. There is a high probability that those LAs who are active and have a board definition are the ones that the marketing teams will gravitate towards. Residents in those LAs that are unable to engage, with nobody working on fuel poverty and energy efficiency, e.g. South West rural authorities, will be left out.

6.16 There is an important role for ALEO in advising LAs to do everything possible.

6.17 At the consultation event last week, which JKM attended, there was a discussion of a potentially a formal or semi-formal role for ALEO to advise and support ECO 3 flexibility. We would probably need funding from the Government, as we have no resources for this ourselves.

6.18 We need some form of template, suggesting that LAs might like to engage on particularly areas, saying who we think we could have in the extended affordable warmth group. CAN did something similar in the past, with the National Indicators.

6.19 At the meeting, someone asked if BEIS would provide a template. They said that there would. ALEO should offer to develop a joint one with BEIS, as per templates for HECA reports. The format would depend on whether the LA holds housing stock. Those that transferred their stock should have put measures in place with funding they were able to access. If they still have F and G rated properties, then the Government should want to know what they have done with the money. There will be a roughly 50/50 split nationally; there will have to be different response to this question for both.

6.20 BEIS is not looking for housing stock to be included. We should be arguing for at least 25%. We should also argue to make it mandatory, although they are unlikely to accept that.

6.21 This will be the first time in long time that LAs will have a formal role, so this is progress.

6.22 There is a risk that the carry-over could just swamp the new funding.

6.23 If other organisations are in a position to certify people, their national representational bodies will be active in drawing up guidelines, we should be doing this for LAs.

6.24 LAs should have first preference, as they have statutory obligations, and any other national bodies that come into the LA's area have to get the LA's permission.

6.25 For those LAs that are not active, they should still have to certify the household as eligible.

6.26 There is a risk that this could damage LAs' reputations if they are putting just anyone forward for the affordable warmth group.

6.27 It says that an LA could endorse an area-based scheme. If we know there are, say, five people that are fuel poor among eight properties, but they want to do the non-fuel-poor houses as well, then they could. There is a fuel poor minimum.

6.28 Cosy Devon was supposed to install 100 boilers, but in the last 18 months they have only been able to install 10, as they can't find the eligible fuel poor or contractors. CA predicts that the £640 million will not be spent, or that it will be spent badly.

6.29 There has been a lot of external wall insulation installed in Scotland as it is free there. If we had proper devolution in England this could also be free, potentially. However, Scotland sees this as a priority. Area-based EWI schemes have also helped to find boiler replacements and cavity walls, etc. The consultation document does ask if Welsh and Scottish schemes have been detrimental to completion. We only cover England and Wales so we could say something about this. They want to use more high-level data, and could proportionally split money with Wales based on this. We should all be doing things the Scottish way but we're not.

6.30 This is effectively a consultation on ECO 2.5 rather than ECO 3, which is still to come next year.

6.31 We should perhaps suggest CERO is reduced to 30%, rather than getting rid of it, because of the state of the market.

6.32 Energy Suppliers often find the cheapest measures and move on. Why not take a whole-house approach, and do everything in a property, if the cost is in finding the property in the first place.

6.33 There is a target of one million homes. Many contractors concentrate only on a specific technology and don't share leads with others.

6.34 ALEO has always been in favour of a whole-house approach, perhaps the German model, rather than concentrating on low-hanging fruit. Energy companies will generally just spend the least amount possible. The Government guesses how much they spend, but they don't actually know.

6.35 We should answer yes to Question 37 which asks whether there is value in collecting and publishing more information on ECO costs.

6.36 The properties left might have carbon score of 9, for example. At £17 per tonne it doesn't even pay fuel costs for the surveyor.

6.37 LAs need to be taking a bigger role. We can't leave things to private contractors as they need to do things as cost-effectively as possible, rather than considering non-monetary benefits.

6.38 Guidance issued by government is critical. There is not much information in the consultation on this, and BEIS should work with ALEO to produce guidance.

6.39 There needs to be greater assurance and guarantee of works if we find someone. If LAs put referrals forward but are repeatedly rejected by the supplier, it's bad for an LA's reputation.

6.40 LAs will not endorse schemes that have a 'rip-off' customer contribution. This will not work anyway for the fuel poor.

6.41 What is the scope to prove that the scheme is working? Given the start-up times, will you be able to show the outputs by the end of the year? Will utilities care about working with LAs? It looks like it could be set up to fail. The carry-over will also have a big impact.

6.42 Households that had Warm Front boilers don't qualify even though they are still fuel poor. DECC's guidance says they could use plug in heaters until they can find the money. They should be replacing broken condensing boilers with working ones. Fuel poverty and carbon saving are very different things, from this point of view, but they still seem to be talking about boilers on the basis of carbon saving.

Ofgem voluntary redress consultation

6.43 The current arrangements have been running for some time. Companies have the option to pay money to the Treasury or a voluntary redress scheme. Most prefer the latter option as it gives them good publicity. There has been around £100 million in Ofgem fines, with only a small proportion having gone to LAs.

6.44 On the face of it, the consultation is a good thing. We need to make sure that LAs are able to compete on a level playing field in future.

6.45 Until now, everything has been carried out behind closed doors, with no monitoring of outcomes. This could have been public money, which was levied as a punishment and could have gone to the Treasury, but there is no accountability for how it is spent.

6.46 Ofgem are suggesting two options: Continue with the arrangement as it is with a few tweaks, with energy companies making the decisions, or give decisions to an independent third party. Ofgem's preference is the second option.

6.47 LAs should have access to the funding. We need to give good examples, taking about stuff like advice, debt relief, i.e. not capital works or things covered by ECO.

6.48 A third party should make the decisions, but not an existing one. In the past, it has often been NEA, but they rely on funding from energy companies. It needs to be a new independent, non-benefitting third party. You can't benefit from it and administer it. There will be time involved in setting this up, but it would be worth doing.

6.49 LAs should have equal access and there should be new body to administer funds. There is too much conflict of interest with existing bodies.

6.50 Ofgem talk about using a 'donor advised fund provider'. Is this like CAF, that delivers the Smart GB funding?

6.51 Every regions should receive a pro-rata allocation of the funds.

6.52 There should be no consideration of commercial confidentiality as this is levied as a punishment and the money could have gone to the Treasury.

6.53 It was suggested that, whatever Ofgem sets up, organisations that have disproportionately benefited in the past should be barred from future funding, to redress the balance. They have been adding on 12.5% for admin costs. What does admin cost mean? Everything could be considered admin according to the guidance. Ofgem's cap is 15%.

ACTION:

6.54 RL will send out requests for members' comments on both consultations.

6.55 JKM will sign off when he gets back from leave on 15 August.

6.56 There is also a heat networks capital funding consultation, but this is very specific and we don't have resources to respond. LJ will be drafting a response on this anyway, and will send something round.

7. Regional Updates

7.1 South West

Bournemouth and Dorset have had tremendous success on public health, including funding and the sharing of positions on important bodies. The next ALEO South West meeting will focus on this, with senior public health officials attending.

Public health should be on the programme for the next ALEO national conference, if it is to be held in Bournemouth.

Plymouth is still quite active, but there is very little going on in Dorset, Somerset or Cornwall. The agenda has largely collapsed, apart from public health. Bristol is in the doldrums since Climate Energy disappeared. Swindon is the only active area in Wiltshire. There are a few rays of light.

CSE have won the tender for Bristol Council's tenants advice service.

The South West needs to get things going again to make a success of ECO 3.

7.2 Written update from: MO, Chair of ALEO London

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

- AGM held 22 April 2016.
- Executive Committee meeting held 24 June 2016.
- Autumn meeting planned for September/October.

AGM on 22 April adopted new constitution including rebrand to ALEO London. Presentations included:

- Freehold/leasehold barriers in flats (David Weatherall);
- Robots fighting fuel poverty (Q-Bot);
- Bristol Energy (David White).

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

- Survey of local authority members currently in progress.

Details of any current projects:

Attempt to expand membership of ALEO London through additional associate members.

Sadiq Khan elected as Labour Mayor of London in May 2016. His Manifesto included:

- Committing London to become a zero carbon city by 2050;
- Energy for London a not for profit company providing energy services and promoting local and community energy enterprise;
- Support for investment in older homes, solar energy, smart meters, district heating, options on bulk purchasing energy;
- Support for London as a National Park.

Groundwork London with 11 London Boroughs delivering *WARMTH* a programme funded with £0.5m from British Gas Energy Trust to undertake a minimum of 2,600 visits to vulnerable households before the end of 2016. 11 participating boroughs are: Camden, Ealing, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Lewisham, Sutton, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. Barking and Dagenham completed a 2 year NEA Community Action programme, reaching 2000 households.

Enfield have NEA money to run a WHHP project with three other Boroughs. They have installed England's first social housing external wall insulation and ground-source heat pump in four tower blocks and are looking to repeat this. They are also developing community benefit solar schemes.

Islington's SHINE project has reached its 11,000th referral.

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

Restructures and cuts to public health and other local authority funding continuing to impact on capacity across the London boroughs.

Additional items discussed at the meeting:

It was asked what the relationship is between the GLA and the London LAs and ALEO?

JKM has contacts with them. They come to ALEO meetings if invited. There is not much interaction with boroughs but this depends on what's going on, e.g. they wanted to do a warmth-on-prescription scheme, but it didn't go anywhere, unfortunately. They wanted to evaluate the outcomes, to help with future funding. They had a boiler scrappage scheme, which went well. It is hoped that the new administration will be more collaborative.

RE:NEW will be winding up next year. This was the previous Mayor's partly EU funded scheme, which has been repeatedly criticised by the boroughs.

Party politics probably had a role. They have to realise there are things that the boroughs are better at doing either with or without the GLA.

7.3 Written update from: PH, Chair of ALEO East**Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:**

HECA East held a meeting on 12 April 2016 in partnership with NEA. Our next meeting will be held in Cambridge at which a new Chairman will be voted in.

Details of any current projects:

Suffolk: Suffolk are continuing to deliver the DECC Central Heating Fund. £1.6 million was awarded to install first time central heating systems into low income households. The scheme has a target of completing 274 installs. The biggest issue facing the scheme is installing new gas connections within the timescales of the project.

Suffolk County Council currently have a tender out to procure installers onto a framework to include all energy efficiency measures. This will allow the county to respond to funding opportunities without the added time pressure of running project specific tendering exercises.

The Councils of West Suffolk has been successful in securing funding from DECC's Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU). £47k has been awarded to research the opportunities at two new public sector developments in Bury and Mildenhall.

Braintree District Council:

- Working with Aran Services on energy efficiency programmes promoting insulation, replacement boilers etc
- Offered residents an additional opportunity to register for Essex Energy Switch for May's auction.
- Completed solar panel installations at the Discovery Centre, Great Notley, Unit 9, Lakes Road, Braintree and Witham Leisure Centre, Witham. Making a total of 6 BDC owned installations
- Signed up and submitted Strategy/Action Plan on Climate Local and featured in their latest update!
- Targetting fuel poor, low income households using data from House Condition Survey completed earlier last year

Uttlesford District Council:

- Working with Aran Services on energy efficiency Programmes promoting insulation, replacement boilers etc
- Currently promoting Essex Energy Switch
- On-going programme of external wall insulation installations on housing stock, completed another 60 by April 2016

Watford Borough Council: Watford BC is currently completing a second phase of external wall insulation to 127 private properties funded via Green Deal Communities. Have been highly successful in completing phase 1 of the programme.

Epping Forest: Implementing an Environmental Charter within the Authority.

Essex County Council: Successfully ran round 3 of its Community Energy Switch. This round has focused upon those in fuel poverty by engaging with CABs and promotional material in Doctors' Surgeries. Are working with Chelmsford, Braintree and Maldon CABs to promote British Gas's Healthy Homes: Active Advice Programme.

Date of Next Meeting:

Exact date still to be decided but will be held in Cambridge – looking for a new Chairman to take the position of the current Chair.

7.4 North West

Three or four areas are focusing at sub-regional level, rather than regional. There is a lot of activity in Lancashire and Merseyside and others are doing their own thing. The region is a bit unconnected. Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHIL) has received a lot of attention. Lancashire is one of the few two-tier structures that work well.

There was a forum meeting in May where the name was changed to ALEO North West.

SB gave a presentation on park homes.

ALEO NW is still looking for a sponsor

7.5 West Midlands

The name change has been used as an opportunity to restructure, with DS coming on board as Vice Chair. It has been agreed that there will be two to three meeting a year for LAs only, with others invited where appropriate. There will also be one to two forums per year with housing associations and the wider group.

DECC's Fiona Booth was invited to the last meeting – Fiona has an LA background, and discussed the future of HECA. HECA is a really important tool for the existence of officers. She is looking at redesigning and rejuvenating HECA but it won't change much for this March because of timescales. The health agenda will be reintegrated. The HECA guidance was heavily depended on the Green Deal, so there is a need to redo the guidance quickly as March is not far off.

Fiona thought it was a useful and constructive meeting.

There was a workshop last week on Coventry and Oxford Councils' targeting of fuel poverty with data, using the Ricardo funding to develop the EDIS system and looking at using data in smarter, more sophisticated ways.

JKM noted that Debbie Haynes' workshop on this at the ALEO national conference was interesting.

There was also a sub-regional get-together to look at a tower block with external wall insulation and a new boiler in Solihull. The cost of the work was £1 per tower block, which is not likely to happen nowadays.

West Midlands ALEO is using SmartSurvey to gather responses to the ECO consultation. This was trialled with the Warm Homes consultation and they had about 12 responses. It makes life easier as it collates the results automatically.

This might be an option for national ALEO.

7.6 East Midlands

There was a regional meeting in early June.

SB presented, as well as Ofgem on their consultation on deemed scores and redressing the balance, before this consultation was out.

The ERDF funding contact for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire gave a useful talk, relating to PA4 and PA6.

NEA asked to come along and gave an update.

ALEO East Midlands are planning the next meeting for after the next ALEO conference.

There is a bit of money left, but no sponsor.

A couple of LAs bid successfully for Central Heating funding.

Nationally, 11 out of 20 of these schemes are behind schedule.

This ends in August. DECC had previously given an assurance that this would be extended to November, but there is nothing in writing.

Match funding can be a problem with departments repeatedly reissuing the contract. It is necessary to go back to the EU every time.

7.7 Wales

There were Welsh government elections in May. This was overshadowed by Brexit. The Cabinet is all Labour except for one Liberal Democrat.

Some departmental names have changed. The Natural Resources Minister is now the Minister for Environment and Rural Affairs.

Wales still has its own energy efficiency scheme, NEST. This has been extended from F and G-rated properties to E, F and G properties. It has largely become a boiler replacement scheme. There are some other measures from ECO, but it's not very transparent. The scheme is run by British Gas.

Arbed is still going but there are no opportunities to bid this year. There have been rumours but nothing has happened yet.

Wales still uses the 10% fuel poverty definition, as well as a 20% definition, under which households are even harder to find.

Funding for a few of the schemes has been cut off pending more information about the EU, but most seem to be going ahead.

Wales still doesn't have HECA.

Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan appointed EST to run their energy helpline. This ran three times over all of Wales, but it is probably not going to run again. There were the usual tariff-switching problems.

There has been a bid for NEA Healthy Homes funding, and some money was received. This is run by Flintshire, and is the only partnership scheme in Wales.

The new Chair of the Welsh Assembly's Climate Change Committee is from UKIP.

7.8 South East

This will be CW's last meeting. The group thanked CW for her hard work and commitment to ALEO.

CW has asked members for updates and will send these to RL.

CW has a Green Deal Communities fund project involving nearly 400 Ex-Ministry of Defence homes. The properties are all solid wall and all electrically heated. The project is looking at gas connections and air-source heat pumps. The landlords for the rented properties don't want gas connections, because of certification requirements, so they are looking at heat pumps and biomass.

CW also started a healthy homes project with public health funding. This has identified a couple in their 70s whose water and heating have been cut off. They have been buying bottled water and clothes from charity shops because they can't wash. They are hoarders and funding has been found for the removal of their affects to access the boiler. This has opened up opportunities for public health funding. The man is in hospital but they can't release him because they can't house him. Hostel's are mostly drug rehabilitation centres so not appropriate. Something might be possible with Healthy Homes funding. CW is talking to social services about this.

There is a Hampshire Council scheme set up in 2012 with Central Heating Fund and Warm Home Healthy People funding. This is doing well and has met its targets.

Lots of good things are happened in Whitehill and Bordon, which is an eco-town. CW had hoped to arrange a visit but this has not happened.

Kent has issued its Fuel Poverty Strategy.

There is a lot of work in Runneymede and Eastbourne on park homes.

DECC came to the ALEO South East meeting to run a workshop on heat networks.

Fiona booth was meant to come to the meeting to discuss HECA, but declined when she heard that others from DECC were already coming.

HH has finished a Green Deal Communities project, which won the regional large project of the year award.

ACTION:

7.1 ALL to send written regional updates to RL for this and future meetings.

8. Discussion of questions for BEIS meeting

8.1 The ECO Consultation proposes to scrape CSCO: Rural. The argument given for this seems reasonable if you follow the logic in the consultation document, but KL believes that they are interpreting the data incorrectly. If suppliers have no incentive to go into rural areas they won't go, as it is more expensive to find people. If BEIS are taking funds out CSCO:Rural, they need to put funds in elsewhere to encourage suppliers to consider rural areas.

8.2 In Wales, CERO is often used instead of CSCO:Rural, as there is a greater price per tonne, which skews the statistics, as many households wouldn't be found in the first place with just CERO.

8.3 It is good that they are maintaining the rural non-gas uplift and that they are taking out most gas boiler replacements, as this will benefit off-gas rural areas.

8.4 On Question 4, we should say that there needs to be a rural focus in some shape or form.

8.5 It is harder to match fund in rural areas. There is a customer contribution. Do we want oil and LPG if we can now install heat pumps?

8.6 Simplifying the criteria is a good thing. We need some way to decide who is poor based on income thresholds - re the table on page 13 in question 5 to 7 and annex A. Removing savings credit as a qualifying criterion is ok, subject to them being eligible through the flexible criteria.

They are proposing to remove all means testing for social housing so it's just if the property is E,F or G-rated, but only for insulation measures. New build homes are not eligible. See CA's notes.

The private rented sector threshold is raised each time to 2025. We should argue for ECO 4 that thresholds should be raised to D, in line with fuel poverty targets for 2030. Tenants in social housing are more likely to be poor, but rent is lower, although the difference isn't so dramatic outside London. Why are they not putting the poorest people in A,B and C-rated properties?

E, F & G properties are often rural and in conservation areas. There will be a few in band E, with the majority F and G-rated. On the basis of equality, all E, F and G properties should be targeted.

What doesn't make sense is that timescales aren't aligned for social housing and the private sector.

Social housing always has EPCs, but this is not necessarily the case in owner-occupied properties. So this is an extra cost to ECO.

They should also include MOD properties, many of which are very poor quality.

9. AOB

9.1 There was no further business.

9.2 See also minutes of meeting with BEIS which followed on from the Executive Meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

10.1 The next meeting will be held on 13 October 2016 at Camden Town Hall, London.

11. Meeting with the BEIS and Ofgem

Following the Executive meeting, the ALEO Executive held a further meeting with the following representatives of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), to discuss ECO flexible eligibility, among other topics:

Carolina Valsecchi (CV) BEIS (ECO Help to Heat Team)

Alan Roberts, Analysis, BEIS

Philippa Hulme - Ofgem