

ALEO Executive Meeting Minutes

19 January 2017 @ 10:30 am
London Borough of Camden Town Hall

Present:

Darsh Chauhan (DCh) - ALEO National Secretariat Manager & Vice Chair, ALEO East Midlands
David Colbourne (DCo) - ALEO Vice Chair and Chair, North West CAN
Paul Hinsley (PH) - Chair, ALEO East
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
Marie Jones - (MJ) Vice Chair, ALEO South East

Apologies:

Cliff Duff – Chair, ALEO North East
Hazel Hill - Acting Chair, ALEO South East
Leanna Jones - Vice Chair, CAN Cymru Housing
Jane Mears - Vice Chair, East Pennine CAN
Neil Short - Chair, ALEO South West

1. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

- 1.1 JKM welcomed the group and introductions were made.
- 1.2 The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record, subject to the change of the dates in paragraph 3.9 from 2016 to 2017.

Matters arising from previous minutes (14 April 2016):

- 1.3 Action point 1.24: RL has sent round a list of event dates for 2017 and will continue to update this.
- 1.4 Action point 1.25: ALEO could release a press release on ECO flexible eligibility (ECO FE) now there is a formal recognised role for LAs
- 1.5 Action point 1.26: KL has returned Cash Flow Manager to RL
- 1.6 Action point 1.27: RL has circulated NEA's emails on the Warm Homes Campaign and Fuel Poverty Awareness Day on 17 February 2017. RL asked for suggestions on ALEO activities to mark this. It was suggested that ALEO Asks LAs to send tweet suggestions we can use throughout the day.
- 1.7 Action point 1.28: KL to chase Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire report on their warm homes on prescription project, with statistically significant results showing impacts on health, including 100s of households.
- 1.8 Action points 1.29, 1.30, 1.31 and 2.24 are on the agenda for this meeting.
- 1.9 Action point 1.32: There were no volunteers for the NIA conference panel.
- 1.10 Action point 1.33: KL will draft letter to BEIS re client contributions. RJ to send KL central heating fund statistics on client contributions for KL to draft the letter.
- 1.11 Action point 2.23: NEA has released an improved version of its Get Warm Soon report. There are still some concerns on inactive council ratings. Baseline activity should not be considered adequate. The updated report had a soft launch and it is a live, updated document. RL to look for this and include in the e-bulletin.
- 1.12 BEIS have decided not to do an evaluation on the Green Deal Communities Fund.
- 1.13 Action point 3.11: RL has filed the change of company name form with Companies House. We have since received a certificate from them confirming The UK Home Energy

Conservation Association has been reregistered under the new name of The Association of Local Energy Officers.

- 1.14 Action 3.12: RL recirculated the company Articles of Association, and this is on the agenda to discuss.
- 1.15 Action point 5.9: RL has transferred the remaining funds from North East CAN to the new ALEO North East account.
- 1.16 DCo gave Cliff Duff's apologies. The first ALEO North East meeting, held on 1 November was well attended, with 30 to 40 attendees, including private sector involvement. There seemed to be good appetite for repeat meetings.
- 1.17 Mary Jones, Vice Chair of ALEO South East arrived and introductions were made.

ACTIONS:

- 1.18 RL to change dates in paragraph 3.9 of last minutes.**
- 1.19 ALL to continue to send event dates to RL.**
- 1.20 JKM and RL to liaise on a press release on ECO flexible eligibility.**
- 1.21 RL to ask members for tweet suggestions to use on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day.**
- 1.22 KL will ask her contacts about the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire report on their warm homes on prescription project.**
- 1.23 KL will draft letter to BEIS re client contributions.**
- 1.24 ALL to send KL any evidence they know of to support Action 1.23.**
- 1.25 RJ to send KL Central Heating Fund statistics on client contributions for KL to draft the letter to BEIS.**
- 1.26 RL to include updated NEA Warm & Well report link in next ALEO e-bulletin.**

2. Chair's Update

- 2.1 There has been lot of discussion around the ECO2 transition and ECO3. ALEO has responded to the BEIS Help to Heat consultation on this.
- 2.2 Ofgem have published a consultation which would prohibit LAs from collaborating by delegating to each other. BEIS and Ofgem have responded negatively to JKM's response to this, but hopefully they will see sense.
- 2.3 The previous obligations on social landlords to charge market rent has been dropped.
- 2.4 JKM is currently discussing with BEIS what ECO flexible eligibility will look like.
- 2.5 They seem to think LAs have ready access to much more data than they actually do.
- 2.6 There are differing interpretations on what data can be used for what. E.g. there are three different interpretations among LAs on Central Heating Fund data. Some LAs happily make full use of it, some only use it through their benefits department and some believe they are not allowed to use it at all. JKM has asked BEIS for new guidance clarifying this. BEIS say there are data sharing concerns about the free EPC data, although JKM is not sure what the concerns are.
- 2.7 KL was going to pay for data before it was free and had to get directors to sign off that they would only use it for energy efficiency in the private rented sector and nothing else.
- 2.8 At the moment we can't access the data as DCLG is still sorting out how they will release it. It could be useful for HECA but we can't access data when we need it. DCo will be writing to DCLG on this.
- 2.9 The Provisional Planning Act, should give access to good data to find the private rented sector fuel poor. This should be useful where LAs have the resources to act on this.
- 2.10 There are concerns about data sharing from LAs to contractors, which is surprising. The Data Protection act doesn't apply, but some LAs are saying they are not comfortable using the data, even with consent from customers.
- 2.11 There is concern that more data is collected than needed, e.g. do they need to give the address if contractors are contacting people by telephone? There is a very high level of scrutiny.
- 2.12 We need a consistent approach. We have the same laws but there are completely different interpretations. There needs to be unambiguous guidance.
- 2.13 It was expected that BEIS would publish a template on the ECO FE statement of intent in early January, which has not happened. The HECA guidance is out and it's impossible to write HECA reports before the BEIS Help to Heat response is published. Both have to be

signed off by chief executives so it would be good to do both at once. It also takes time for LAs in partnership to agree.

- 2.14 RJ's colleague spoke to Carolina Valsecchi from BEIS who didn't think the guidance would be out until March. Qaizer Sethi of BEIS said it would be out shortly.
- 2.15 Should we write to government as ALEO? We need well before 31 March for the HECA reports.
- 2.16 It was suggested that we should have a fuel poverty definition that applies across the whole of the UK. There is a two-tier approach as fuel poverty means different things in Wales and Scotland but ECO applies across the UK. Scotland is likely to receive the majority of the funding for External Wall Insulation.
- 2.17 BEIS were originally hoping to hold workshops on ECO FE by the end of January.
- 2.18 The ECO 2 transition 'year' could be up to 24 months long, although Qaizer Sethi said 18 months at the last ALEO East Midlands meeting.
- 2.19 The size of the pool for Warm Home Discount will either be limited or the discount will be cut in 2018. There are too many eligible people for the funding available. There has not yet been a decision on this.
- 2.20 There will be funding for a new scheme which will be something like the Industry Initiatives, but BEIS will have more control. BEIS will be consulting on this in January. LAs might be well placed to bid for this.
- 2.21 The feedback from Ofgem on redress funding is that they will consider letting LAs bid. Administration will be by a third party.
- 2.22 ECO FE will only be for measures. In terms of reaching people, referral and advice services cost money, and there isn't any at the moment. Maybe redress funding will be used for this.
- 2.23 Energy companies are concerned about how they will deliver and are considering just lofts, cavities and oil. Some are moving teams off of physical intervention to smart metering.

ACTIONS:

- 2.24 JKM to chase BEIS on Help to Heat consultation response and EPC data**

3. Secretariat update

- 3.1 ALEO is now looking for a new national sponsor. RL will be sending out proposals to as many potential sponsors as possible. Please let RL know if you have any useful contacts for this.
- 3.2 The latest issue of *ALEO News* was published in November. Articles have been requested for the next issue which is due out soon. RL has asked the 2016 ALEO award winners to contribute to this edition.
- 3.3 The ALEO e-bulletin has been circulated regularly. Please forward links to any news items you would like to be included in future editions to RL.
- 3.4 RL has created a list of relevant dates for 2017. RL will update this before each Executive meeting.
- 3.5 Our company name has now been changed at companies house from The Home Energy Conservation Association to the Association of Local Energy Officers.
- 3.6 The company's bank account details have also been updated. However, when a change to an account takes place, this is classed as a trigger point, which means the bank needs to undertake a review of the account - this includes the signatories, Directors, Board Members, transactions taking place and turnover. RL has forwarded most of the information requested by the bank, however, they are currently asking that every member of the Executive fills out a bank mandate form giving permission to fully verify their address and identity. This is based on the wording of our current articles of association which says that members of the Executive have a voting right. RL has pointed out to them that we are currently revising our Articles of Association, we don't have shareholders and that the voting rights are actually assigned to the regional bodies and not to individual members of the Executive. RL has suggested to the bank that forms for the two company directors as well as the bank account signatories (RL and David Langman) should be enough, although we could provide forms for the National Chair and Vice-Chair if required. RL has yet to hear back from the bank on this. We could consider changing our bank if they insist, although the bank has said that this is a regulatory requirement, so it might still be a problem if we change banks. We perhaps need to stress the separation between the national body and the regions, in the articles of association, as well as clarifying the voting rights to address this.
- 3.7 It was asked by the directors what the forms would be used for. RL thinks they intend to run credit checks as part of the process and will ask for clarification from the bank on this.
- 3.8 The Conferences in Bournemouth in October 2016 went well. Presentations, photos etc. are now on the ALEO conference website. Attendance was slightly down on the level of previous conferences, but around the same as the Wigan conference in July 2016. However, there are many factors which might have affected this, including location and timing.

- 3.9 DC suggested that one of his EU projects might be able to provide funding to hold an ALEO conference, and ALEO has had interest from an exhibitor at the Bournemouth conference to sponsor an event, which RL will follow up.
- 3.10 RL and DC have a meeting scheduled for Wednesday 25 January with a solicitor to discuss the changes to the company Articles of Association.
- 3.11 RL attended the National Insulation Association (NIA) conference in December. RL made some useful contacts and there were some informative presentations.
- 3.12 ALEO responded to Ofgem's consultation on prepayment meters installed under warrant.
- 3.13 RL has had some time over the Christmas period to work on website maintenance, including web forum updates and bug fixes.
- 3.14 It was agreed that ALEO will request an assurance report from our auditors this year, rather than the full audit, as this is a cheaper option and we need to conserve funds until we secure sponsorship.

ACTION:

- 3.15 **ALL to send contacts for potential national sponsors to RL.**
- 3.16 **RL to ask the bank for clarification on what the bank mandate forms are for and forward any information to the directors.**
- 3.17 **RL and DC will circulate any proposed updates to the Articles of Association they consider necessary following their meeting with the solicitor.**

4. Representation, consultations and policy

Engaging with public health

- 4.1 JKM attended a scoping workshop held by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), to narrow research topics on public health. He is worried this will be derailed by focussing on issues like second-hand smoke and that ventilation and mould etc will not be addressed. There will be a NICE consultation on this soon, to which ALEO should respond. There is not enough we can do to encourage landlords to install extractor fans.

The Bonfield Review

- 4.2 The Bonfield review recommendations have been published. Unfortunately the committee did not ask ALEO for views before this was published, although they seem to have consulted with many other organisations. ALEO East Midlands discussed the report at their forum meeting on 18 January and will be submitting a response before the deadline of 31 January. For some reason, the recommendations seem only to refer to housing associations, although there is an acknowledgement that LAs still hold 1.7 million of the 4 million homes in the social housing sector, and there are case studies from Bristol and Nottingham Councils included in the report. At no point does it say what the role of LAs is, relating to this. There is not much detail in the recommendations yet, although it says that this will be developed further over the coming year.
- 4.3 The report seems to advocate reinventing EEACs or EST. Will LAs be able to access the information in the proposed data warehouses? The Government seems to consider a few active LAs as exceptions and do not give enough credit to the work of LAs in general.
- 4.4 We should highlight to the review committee that ALEO represents LA energy officers, who have probably been involved in the procurement of 25 to 30% of energy efficiency measures in the last year, and that we should have been consulted on this.
- 4.5 ALEO should ask for a place on the Bonfield Task Group.

Miscellaneous topics

- 4.6 There has been a lot of speculation recently about the launch of a successor to the Green Deal. Although nothing official has been said on this. An ombudsman is meant to be looking at issues around the green deal.
- 4.7 There is a big concern that fuel poor customers are self-disconnecting once they have smart meters installed. Energy companies are having problems getting databases to work with the national smart meter database.
- 4.8 Paul Massara of the Committee on Fuel Poverty (CFP) attended the last West Midlands ALEO meeting. It was a very productive meeting, and he seemed to taken on board the group's comments on the CFP's initial report. The minutes of the CFP's meetings are available online and he seems to have reported back on a lot of the points raised. It was suggested that we invite the Chair of the CFP to the next ALEO Executive meeting.
- 4.9 JKM has repeatedly asked LGA to get involved on ECO FE, but they refused. ALEO is the only organisation representing our sector on this.
- 4.10 FPEEG launched a prospectus for universal affordable warmth at their meeting yesterday. Making a case for what should exist in each area of England and Wales and highlighting key projects. There are recommendations on what MPs should be doing. JKM has had one referral in six years from an MP. DCo has had two referrals in eight years. JKM to send the report to RL to circulate.

ACTION:

- 4.1 **RL to invite the Chair of the CFP to the next ALEO Executive meeting.**
- 4.2 **JKM will send the FPEEG report to RL to circulate.**
- 4.3 **KL will be producing the ALEO East Midlands response to the Bonfield review and will incorporate the comments from the Executive.**

5. Regional Updates

5.1 Verbal update from DCo, Chair of ALEO North West:

Dco has been invited to attend the Core Cities Group meeting.

5.2 Verbal update from MO, Chair of ALEO London:

There is now funding from the GLA for a limited period for boilers for owner occupiers. There is no detail on their action plan for fuel poverty but they are talking in a positive way, suggesting that they will work with LAs to get something coherent across London as a whole.

The Warm Homes Industry Initiative has provided funding to allow Islington's Seasonal Health Interventions Network (SHINE) to continue to offer their service to all London boroughs.

An ALEO London forum meeting was held on 12 January 2017.

5.3 Written update submitted by MJ:

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

Wednesday 12 October 2016 at Kent County Council (Maidstone)

Thursday 2 February 2017 at Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

Wednesday 26 April 2017 at Eastbourne Borough Council (AGM)

Roundtable notes from ALEO SE meeting 12.10.16

Kent County Council are keen to understand the changes to ECO and the impact this will have on the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership's Warm Homes Scheme. They are able to provide a stopgap heating offer over the winter but are keen to find alternative funding

- One suggestion was to seek CCG funding through public health colleagues: they can also access Section 106 funding. Use the NICE Guidance on excess winter deaths to help make your case and add pressure.

Kent are also hoping to host a facilitated a workshop towards the end of November to launch and discuss their fuel poverty strategy.

East Sussex is developing fuel poverty policy/guidance, using the Kent fuel poverty strategy as a model. They are also targeting 600 homes with a Winter Home Check Service with advice, switching and small measures, funded through a blend of ECO, NEA and CCG monies.

Wealden District Council has funding from Smart Energy GB to promote smart meters. They are also involved in collective switching: savings on fuel bills collectively totals £55k so far. This is being promoted through Council Tax Bills and hopefully in the future through benefit e-bills. It is hoped the project will be self-sustaining through the referral fees.

Dover District Council (written submission): 'Delivering Affordable Warmth – A Fuel Poverty Strategy for Kent' has been finalised. An action plan workshop will be held on 30 November 2016: representatives of organisations/agencies across Kent have been invited to get a better understanding of the activity already happening in Kent and how we can enhance/contribute/link up to ensure we reach and assist vulnerable residents and tackle the wider inequalities of health and deliver a healthier county.

5.4 Written update submitted by KL, Chair of ALEO East Midlands

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

The last ALEO East Midlands meeting was held on Wednesday 18 January at The John Godber Centre, Hucknall, Nottinghamshire; the venue and lunch was sponsored by E.ON.

Presentations included:

- Chair's Update, Karen Lond

- Help to heat – presented by Justine Biggs, Jane McLardy and Jonathon Dyson – E.ON
- ALEO East Midlands feedback on the recently published Bonfield review; we considered each of the report's recommendations and general comments were also captured: once all feedback has been collated this will be submitted to EachHomeCountsReport@beis.gov.uk before 31 January 2017
- HECA reporting 2017 – Qaizer Sethi from BEIS started this session with a short presentation followed by questions from LA officers. This was followed by an open discussion.

The meeting was well attended with local authority officers from across the East Midlands.

Our next ALEO East Midlands meeting is planned for April 2017

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

The next **NEA East Midlands Fuel Poverty Forum** – will be on 9 March 2017 at Ellipse Energy in Leicester.

NEA - FREE TRAINING – Energy Awareness Half Day Course 31 January 2017 in Northampton. This half day course is running as part of our Warm Minds project which provides free training, energy advice and energy awareness-raising sessions to organisations working with individuals living with mental health issues, dementia and learning disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

Aimed at frontline practitioners and advocates to help them to provide basic energy advice to individuals, they give support to enable them to manage their energy and bills, access available energy efficiency measures, energy advice and other related utility services.

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

Offers of sponsorship for our ALEO East Midland meetings and free venues across the East Midlands would be appreciated: please contact karen.lond@west-lindsey.gov.uk or david.young@leicester.gov.uk, if you are interested in sponsoring us or have a room available for a future meeting.

5.5 Written update from RJ, Chair of ALEO West Midlands:

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

Regional meeting on 2 December and hosted by E.ON at their Coventry office. Focus of the meeting was a discussion/presentation given by Paul Massara from the Committee on Fuel Poverty. This was an excellent opportunity for LAs to feed into the committee and highlight key issues and concerns. One of the key areas highlighted was in relation to the private rented sector and HHSRS and the challenges of using enforcement etc.

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

On 6 December a number of authorities attended a meeting on ERDF linked to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP to discuss potential projects that could be delivered in partnership when calls for funding are released.

14 December – LA consortium meeting for Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry. Meeting looked at becoming a white label energy supplier and included presentation from Dimplex on their new high efficiency storage heaters.

Details of any current projects:

- Throughout the west midlands there are a number of Winter Warmth / Boiler on Prescription Schemes. The majority of these have a funding source that ends at the end of the financial year. There are concerns of how ECO will pick up on any physical interventions in the new quarter of the year.
- A number of LAs with their own stock are continuing to deliver EWI projects with some (if limited) funding from energy suppliers
- Again several authorities will be undertaking Switch and Save Schemes building on previous successes. Savings per household of £200-300 are being achieved.
- The Worcestershire authorities have held a market engagement event with utilities to look at developing the local delivery element of ECO. The county will be looking at procurement of this in the next few months.
- To address potential gaps in funding currently four LAs have developed boilers schemes utilising DFG funding.
- LAs are starting to prepare HECA report.

5.6 Verbal update form PH, Chair of ALEO East

ALEO East is going from four meetings per year down to three. PH is still looking for a replacement Chair.

5.7 Written update form PH, Chair of ALEO East

Project updates and regional update

Fenland District Council:

- Completion of pan-Cambridgeshire Action on Energy Solid Wall project including fuel poverty element. Figures will be made available.
- assisting householders to access “free” boiler schemes;
- completing applications to the Stay Well Fund on behalf of fuel poor households;
- completing applications to the FDC Minor Works Grant scheme on behalf of fuel poor households;
- distribution of Stay Well packs with winter warmth advice;

Braintree and Uttlesford District Councils:

Work to install 1,600 PV Solar panel installations on 1,600 council homes in Uttlesford are ongoing. Secondary glazing successfully fitted to Braintree Town Hall (Grade 2 listed building).

Aran Services – has funding available for various heating installations

Scottish Power – has some ECO funding available for low cost solutions such as cavity wall and loft insulation which ends in March 2017. Warm Home Discount linked projects nationally providing remote access heating controls.

Essex County Council

Currently running an Energy Switch campaign with iChoosr, auction to be held on 15 February 2017.

Colchester Borough Council:

Energy

- CBC ran a ‘Building Resilient Communities’ event on 11 November 2016 for other councils, housing, education, businesses and community sectors. 150 people attended the morning seminar and afternoon workshops and speakers came from national and regional organisations.
- HNDU work is underway re heat mapping for Northern Gateway project. Viability work is completed so now onto the next phase of planning for heat networks.
- HNDI application underway for a second phase of heat networks (results pending) and still in process of supplying additional info.
- LACM Plan now being implemented up to 2020. Latest project in the plan to be implemented is to upgrade all lighting in Leisure World to LED.
- We are also looking at fitting a smart meter display in Leisure World so visitors can see energy being generated by the solar PV as well as the energy being used

Fuel Poverty

- CBC’s Big Community Switch continues to offer Colchester residents opportunities to switch energy providers - three auctions per annum, one of which coincides with ECC’s annual auction.
- CBC has a new Public Health Improvement Coordinator in place so we can work across services and with external partners on a new ‘stay warm’ campaign which links up with warm homes and other initiatives to help vulnerable residents stay warm this winter, a new webpage has been set up www.colchester.gov.uk/staywarm
- the ‘staywarm’ campaign was part of the wider ECC joined up ‘stay well this winter’ campaign to encourage CVS, district/borough councils and energy switch to work together to avoid duplication of resources.
- We also have a new staywarm 24 hr info line too.

Update from Private Sector Housing Manager

- The CBC Private Sector Housing team, through its enforcement activity, has removed Excess Cold hazards from 42 homes in the private rented sector since April 2016.
- Excess cold hazards are assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Of these 42, 35 constituted serious Category 1 hazards.
- Winter Warmth Roadshows will be taking place over the coming months. This will promote the work of the CBC Private Sector Housing Team to assist in keeping people warm in their homes, both through enforcement activity and the offer of financial assistance for home owners, for example, for replacement boilers and insulation schemes.

6. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

- 6.1 We don't yet know what ECO FE will look like. There are too many questions to ask and have answered before we can decide on anything. We need to push BEIS to release guidance because LAs need to procure.
- 6.2 There is concern for contractors, who have already had a hard time. This will lead to problems, and LAs will have to pick up the pieces.
- 6.3 Will it be like last time, with the money allocated almost immediately?
- 6.4 Some utilities will want to do some ECO flex pilots to inform them for bigger schemes the year after. Some are very nervous about achieving targets. FE has the potential to help them with this. Some energy companies don't need FE to hit their targets, but they will have to know what they are doing from 2018. The suppliers are thinking in the short term, and might not bother with FE. E.ON are forward thinking on this. The others seem to be more interested in delivering smart meters as it's a statutory risk.
- 6.5 It would help if there was a reduction in delivery cost. BEIS has sold it to suppliers this way, but it probably won't help. It's not easy to tell suppliers that LAs needs to cover their costs.
- 6.6 The plan doesn't align with interim targets for 2020. There is a £1 billion shortfall - £740m per year. Only a proportion of the money is going to the right people.
- 6.7 F and G properties are not being tackled because they are too difficult and too expensive.
- 6.8 We need to have a clear idea of where ALEO positions itself when the response comes out.
- 6.9 ALEO is the only representative for the sector.
- 6.10 Assumptions and understanding of data available is unrealistic.
- 6.11 Benefits is under ECO, FE is outside of this. BEIS seemed to have missed their own point in asking LAs what data we have available on benefits.
- 6.12 It is expensive to target people under the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) fuel poverty definition. Only 50% of HHCRO eligible people are fuel poor under the LIHC definition.
- 6.13 To deliver cheaply needs very simple criteria. If checks are needed it's expensive. We don't yet know what BEIS will allow.
- 6.14 Targeting COPD sufferers over age 70 would at least get measures installed.
- 6.15 There is no incentive for LAs to work on FE as this will require LAs to use their own resources.
- 6.16 BEIS need to stop piling money into the same areas and target areas where nothing is currently happening.
- 6.17 It's good that LAs have a formal role for first time, but there needs to be enough of an incentive.
- 6.18 We need more of a sense of how many suppliers are genuinely interested in this.
- 6.19 Knowing what percentage top-up is required would help. Many fuel poor will not want to take on debt. Low cost loft and cavity measures are free, but there will be contributions towards boilers and more expensive measures.
- 6.20 Energy companies are interested in oil and first-time central heating.
- 6.21 E.ON is considering its own able-to-pay finance scheme.
- 6.22 We need to wait until the FE statement of intent guidance is out. BEIS came to our meeting and asked for input, so it would be nice if they shared the results with us before launching the guidance.
- 6.23 One LA in the West Midlands is preparing a draft document to run past BEIS. RJ will share any response from BEIS.
- 6.24 Will it be OJEU eligible? What is the value of ECO? This sounds like conversation we had when ECO was first launched, but fewer people are in the market and there is even less certainty. Different LAs have different procurement rules. Some believe if there is no financial gain it is just facilitating and not really procurement, but they still have to go through a lengthy process for legal and procurement to decide if that's the case.
- 6.25 One option could just be to assign patches for energy companies, so there would be no need to procure. Procurement effort is disproportionate to return. New entrants to the market might be a problem, if patches are already allocated. Could help the issue with Scotland taking all the funding.
- 6.26 In the original ECO consultation, there was talk of a distributional safeguard. Delivery in London is far more expensive than in other areas. If there are regional targets there could be regional pricing.
- 6.27 We have made the point to BEIS that they should already work out what adheres to state aid rules, otherwise they are making all LAs do this rather than doing it once.
- 6.28 LGA could set up a framework contract. ALEO could possibly set one up if not, but we would need resources. There are consultancies that will do it if they can then charge a fee for it. They take the risk setting it up and in the process identify if it will generate money. However, if the facts change, then you could be in trouble legally.
- 6.29 F- and G-rated properties make up only around one per cent of social housing.
- 6.30 ECO has helped to improve costs of social housing, without that it will be challenging as there will be no work for industry to rely on. BEIS are quoting 60,000 F and G properties in the social housing sector, which is not very many, although some areas will have more than others e.g. conservation areas.

- 6.31 There were procurement hurdles with the Central Heating Fund. For example one fuel poor householder who was dying of cancer with six months to live, was told that the process would take nine months. Procurement needs to be simplified. Deemed scores should help.
- 6.32 We need a standard data-sharing agreement that all LAs can use.
- 6.33 When the consultation response is announced, we should put out a press release saying this is our role, with some example case studies. If you have really good case studies in your local area, send them to RL for the magazine and also to build a bank for use in press releases at short notice, particularly if it fits ECO FE, with photos, quotes and permissions to publish. Include quotes from the officer, or failing that, the regional Chair. We can then use these to explicitly make the case for LAs, and to say "it only happened because this person went to their local council and the council helped them". We do fuel debt and benefit take-up not just ECO. We should show how much people saved. The Human interest angle gets the press interested.
- 6.34 ALEO should be the partner of choice. Use ALEO for promotion.

6.1 Action: 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.

6.2 RJ will share any response from BEIS on the West Midlands LA's draft ECO FE document.

7. Energy Performance Certificate data

- 7.1 We need to badger DCLG and BEIS for this. There is no timescale for EPC data. We need to get DCLG to start planning for that.
- 7.2 The Digital Economy Bill talks about public authorities, we need to clarify what this refers to.
- 7.3 In some properties, where the occupant is socially isolated, we only find out from the EPC that they are there, if they aren't claiming benefits.
- 7.4 Depending on how DCLG say we can use the data, we might not be able to use this for a press release with human interest stories.
- 7.5 There are data sharing problems with some LAs using the Egress software for secure data transfer, as you can only have one account for each email address.
- 7.6 BEIS and DCLG need to tell people what the standard data sharing approach is.
- 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.**
- 7.8 **Action: JKM to ask BEIS and DCLG to clarify what the correct approach to data sharing is.**

8. Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)

- 8.1 There is no up-to-date template for HECA returns. The old one asked a lot of questions on policies that no longer exist, e.g. Green Deal and Zero Carbon Homes. Qaizer Sethi said at the last ALEO East Midlands meeting that, although there isn't a template, we could use the last template but adapt it to the 2017 guidance. ALEO East Midlands did requested a template when Will Field from BEIS attended the ALEO East Midlands September meeting.
- 8.2 Qaizer said that this should be a bit of a progress report but not a full one, with a brief reflection on the last period and then saying what your plans are going forward. He said that we should identify what resources we need and say how much is needed, but there is no guarantee we will receive anything. He also said they'd like to know about the LA's relationship with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- 8.3 EPC data is withheld so we can't use it for HECA and we don't know about ECO FE yet. This will make the 31 March deadline difficult to meet.
- 8.4 Qaizer said to let BEIS know if you have a good reason why you can't submit your HECA report in time.
- 8.5 We need to tell BEIS that they should either delay the deadline for HECA or release details about flexible eligibility and EPC data now.
- 8.6 Chief execs could ask what will be the benefit of a report that requires resources to produce.
- 8.7 Qaizer said the reports would go on the .gov.uk website, which is good because people can't find them otherwise. There will be no feedback but there will be an acknowledgement from BEIS.
- 8.8 If LAs don't submit a report, BEIS will send a letter to their chief executive in April or May.
- 8.9 Qaizer was asked if LAs could update their reports after they are published. Although his response wasn't clear on this, he did ask ALEO East Midlands to submit a list of questions and he will respond.
- 8.10 If BEIS don't put copies of the HECA reports on their website, ALEO could download them so they don't get lost if links are broken. ALEO could create a list on our website if necessary.

- 8.11 How will HECA be taken forward? Quiser said to engage with Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- 8.12 It would be interesting to see if the same LAs that engage on Bonfield do a HECA report.
- 8.13 If an LA doesn't have a HECA report, why not ban them from ECO FE? We could suggest this to BEIS. It makes sense to have the HECA report and ECO FE statement of intent in the same document. However, it is not statutory in Wales or for county councils.
- 8.14 Will there be many LAs who don't submit a report? There is no named person with responsibility for HECA in many LAs. We need to point out that non-response is often a result of having no energy officer.

8.15 Action: 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.

9. Priorities for the year.

- 9.1 Supporting the position of LAs. E.g. in the Bonfield review, the role of LAs is not being appreciated. We need to circulate details of success stories not only to our own members but also circulate them wider, highlighting successes.
- 9.2 We should add MPs, council leaders, London Assembly members, devolved mayors and CFP members to the ALEO magazine circulation list. Email address should be on the .gov website.
- 9.3 We should respond to the CFP report highlighting things that have been missed out, and providing positive feedback where appropriate.
- 9.4 Should we be doing something ahead of the mayoral elections or should it come from their regions? If people are uncomfortable with regional politics, we can send from national ALEO. A national and regional flavour would be preferable, so both signatures would help. All mayoral elections are in May. JKM will circulate London mayoral before and after letters for use as a template.
- 9.5 We could also include the chairs of the LEPs, since they have been asked to engage through HECA. It was suggested that, if it's not a stated aim of the LEP, e.g. economic growth, they won't be interested. DCo managed to get the LEP interested by identifying that £130 million had been invested in three years from ECO, making it the third largest sector.
- 9.6 There will be a revised version of the minimum EPC regulations. We need to ask BEIS if the £5,000 cap is still likely. We could do a press release when this is released.
- 9.7 KL has received an email from the secretariat for the Gas Working Group. They are putting the group together again. KL has not heard anything since, so will ask who has been appointed and volunteer to sit on the group.
- 9.8 **ACTION: RL to add MPs, council leaders, London assembly members, devolved mayors and CFP members to the ALEO magazine circulation list.**
- 9.9 **ACTION: JKM to Circulate London mayoral before and after letters for use as template.**
- 9.10 **ACTION: 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.**
- 9.11 **ACTION: JKM to ask BEIS about the £5,000 cap in the PRS regulations**
- 9.12 **ACTION: KL to ask about the Gas Working Group and volunteer to sit on the Group representing ALEO.**

10. Sponsorship

- 10.1 Suggestions were made on companies and organisations to approach for sponsorship.
- 10.2 We need to say we're getting more engagement from government and that LAs have a formal role on ECO FE. We can help delivery across England and Wales.
- 10.3 We could ask all obligated energy companies to contribute together, or ask them to sponsor a conference each throughout the year.
- 10.4 We could bid to carry out project work, as long as we're not stepping on members' toes.
- 10.5 We could provide national training programmes, although this might clash with NEA depending on what we did.
- 10.6 We could ask BEIS to facilitate HECA for a fee or to run workshops on ECO FE, perhaps as part of our conferences.
- 10.7 Three Local Enterprise partnership managers have to engage with 300 LAs. We could create an LA link for them through the regional ALEO fora. We are most effective way to reach LA energy officers.
- 10.8 We could charge for associate membership? We would have to delineate clearly what it entitles you to.
- 10.9 We could ask companies to pay for a conference workshop, but we would have to guarantee attendees.

10.10 We could consider charity status. Although we could always partner with a charity instead, if we needed to.

10.11 ACTION: ALL to send RL email addresses and continue to look for sponsorship opportunities.

10.12 ACTION: JKM to ask BEIS about facilitating workshops, role in administrating HECA or other opportunities.

10.13 The possibility of a formal partnership agreement with LGA was discussed. JKM might ask the elected member lead for a meeting.

11. Members survey

11.1 Item 1.10 from the last Executive meeting minutes suggested we ask LAs if they are providing EPC enforcement.

11.2 Item 2.19 said "A members survey would be good for highlighting that active LA energy officers are the glue that make schemes work, and leads to more ECO work and a greater return". This could be related to questions on the Green Deal Communities fund.

11.3 DCo suggested producing a league table of the 50 most active LAs, showing how much ECO money has been drawn in.

11.4 BEIS is revamping HECA guidance. We could tie this in with the survey.

11.5 We could limit it to a useful information collection exercise. It would be nice to have input on what LAs think, but it's more useful to have data on what they're doing. What proportion of time is spent, etc. E.g. ask about responsibilities and find out if roles have been reduced.

11.6 Instead of one contact, LAs often now have three or four people, but they are spending less time collectively.

11.7 We could ask members if their LA will be reporting on HECA. If not, why not? Options could include 'don't have enough money', 'priorities different' etc.

11.8 The survey could ask for the name of the person responsible for submitting the HECA report.

11.9 Ask what bids has the member's LA has applied for and what they have been successful on.

11.10 Ask if their LA is going to take on ECO FE.

11.11 We should take the survey results to BEIS.

11.12 We should aim to produce the survey before the HECA report deadline.

11.13 The survey should help prove the level of penetration ALEO has into the right levels of LAs.

11.14 We need to make the point to BEIS that we should have dedicated resources.

11.15 We could ask each LA if they have someone who works on domestic energy efficiency at least 60% of the time. Is there someone responsible for writing the HECA report and also is there someone responsible for delivering.

11.16 We could use an FOI request.

11.17 We could put in an Eaga Charitable Trust bid to analyse HECA reports.

11.18 Perhaps HECA report authors should have an obligation to review two other reports.

11.19 We should ask if they have engaged in other schemes such as the Green Deal Communities Fund. We need to use the survey to give our side of the story.

11.20 Some LA schemes are being run without government funding.

11.21 ACTION: RL to liaise with JKM and DCo to produce surveys questions. Aim to circulate in mid-February.

12. AOB

12.1 The National Insulation Association (NIA) has asked if we would like to become an associate member. As we need to conserve funds, we will decline for the time-being and look at the possibility again once we have secured sponsorship. NIA have proposed that they could provide a reduction in membership fees or possibly even pay us a small referral fee for each LA that joins. It was decided that this might affect our impartiality and it was not considered that this had the potential to generate much income, so RL will thank them for their offer but decline.

12.2 ACTION: RL to inform NIA of the Executive's response to their membership offer.

13. Dates of Next Meetings

13.1 The next meeting will be held on 13 April 2017 at Camden Town Hall, London.

Further meeting dates:

- Thursday, 20 July 2017
- Tuesday, 17 October 2017 (N.B this is different from the date given at the meeting of 16 October.)
- Thursday, 18 January 2018 - N.B. room booked until 4pm for possible combined Executive meeting and Away Day

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