

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 4 SEPTEMBER 2014  
title: AFFORDABLE WARMTH BID  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the availability of grant for vulnerable households in Ribble Valley at risk from cold and damp houses.

## 2 INFORMATION

- 2.1 Lancashire County Council (LCC) is making funding available to district councils to deliver high impact affordable warmth interventions to individuals who are the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. The funding is subject to LCC approving applications. There is a commitment to fund affordable warmth interventions in 2015/16.

## 3 ISSUES

### 3.1 Aim of the fund

To enable delivery of high impact affordable warmth interventions over the coming winter 2014- 2015 to those most vulnerable to the harm that cold homes can have on health.

Ultimately, the funding aims to reduce levels of death and illness over the winter months and to improve people's wellbeing; as a consequence we also hope to see a reduction in hospital admissions and in demand for health and social care services. Supporting people who are experiencing a crisis situation is vital; we also encourage interventions that give people sustainable solutions that help to provide them with an improved quality of life.

### 3.2 Beneficiaries

The fund is aimed at the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. This could include a wide range of individuals who either are, or are at serious risk of, experiencing poor health and wellbeing due to a cold home. The evidence indicates the following groups to be particularly vulnerable:

- Older people
- People with long term illnesses or disability:
- Children and young people
- People with mental health conditions

### 3.3 Guidance on spend – including examples

This year the decision to committee funding has been able to be made much earlier than last year, it is expected that applicants can use this time to develop evidence based proposals that will make a long term contribution to helping people keep their homes warm in winter, and avoid its worst impacts.

Following on from 2013/14, proposals will be assessed against national evidence, it is expected that the majority of proposals will be within the following areas, although the examples given within categories are not exhaustive:

#### **Physical home warmth improvements**

Such as heating and boiler service & repairs, insulation measures, gas fire service & repair, draught proofing, radiator reflectors

**Emergency and temporary measures to provide relief from cold** (when appropriate these measures should be combined with long term solutions)

Such as emergency heaters, loan of oil filled heaters, fuel top up cards

#### **Advice**

Advice on keeping warm –including efficient use of heating systems, switching fuel tariffs and income maximisation, energy audits/warm homes checks

#### **Enforcement**

Increasing the capacity of private sector housing enforcement team's affordable warmth related work, has also been effectively used to improve the housing conditions for vulnerable residents of privately rented housing

#### **Additional Services**

Volunteer neighbourhood action, befriending/caring neighbourhood volunteers to contact vulnerable people ahead of weather warning to enquire about provisions/medicine supplies etc. and provide assistance in a preventative rather than reactive way, volunteer help to make homes accessible in bad weather

Warm home packs will only be funded where they are targeted at those that have an identified need for this type of intervention and where use of pack contents is acceptable to the recipient. Evidence must be provided to show how they will add value to high impact longer term interventions and how they form part of wider project delivery, to ensure that value for money is maximised. **If emergency/ warm home packs proposals meet the above we would not expect them to form more than 10% of a total proposal.**

Whilst keeping some flexibility to help services provide vulnerable citizens with the help they need in winter, proposals are expected to keep a focus on affordable warmth. Proposals that are not included in the above examples will need to provide evidence of effectiveness in reducing the health impacts of cold homes and monitor and evaluate their impacts. All proposals will need to **explain how they will be targeted at the most vulnerable individuals.**

Recent national and international evidence has considered the effectiveness of home based improvements (please see above), especially when targeted at vulnerable health groups, we expect applications to concentrate on these types of longer term interventions. Proposals also need to consider and compliment other services provided and decisions taken by commissioning partners. Again a concentration on

interventions directly related to helping people keep their houses warm and living well through cold weather, will help in this regard.

General community support such as luncheon clubs, hot meals, exercise, cookery classes and funding for extra transport services to medical appointments, are not expected to be sought from this funding.

Applicants are asked to consider the most appropriate funding sources for proposals. Proposals will also need to represent value for money and it is expected that additional or alternative sources of funding are sought wherever possible, including ECO funding, to ensure this fund can go as far as possible.

### 3.4 Monitoring

Monitoring requirements have been set out in the attached spreadsheet (*to follow*) which district councils will be expected to complete and submit on a monthly basis to monitor the effectiveness of the work done and to capture the learning and outcomes of the work. This is to enable us to continue to build evidence of the impact of affordable warmth interventions on the demand for health and social care services.

District councils are encouraged to gather additional local evidence that could demonstrate the potential benefits of the programme, including client case studies.

### 3.5 Process for agreeing proposals

Once initial proposals are submitted by the specified deadline, feedback will be given, if elements of proposals are not approved, it is envisaged that there will be an opportunity to adjust applications, before final approval which is likely to be part of grant agreement letter and invoices are accepted.

## 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – Essential the Council submit a bid to be able to support households during winter.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
- Political – Ribble Valley is ranked 76<sup>th</sup> in terms of households in fuel poverty.
- Reputation – During 2012/2013 there was a reported 20 excessive deaths.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

## 5 CONCLUSION

### 5.1 That Committee accept the contents of the report and the bid submitted for Ribble Valley attached as Appendix 1.

RACHAEL STOTT  
HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 4567.

REF: RS/EL/040914/H&H

## Lancashire Affordable Warmth Funding 2014-15

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<b>Activity/intervention Proposal</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>	<b>What will it achieve?</b>	<b>Who will deliver it? (identify partners)</b>	<b>Who will benefit from the intervention and how will those most in need be targeted?</b>
Hospital discharge- warm home check. Any older person who lives alone or who is at risk of going home to a cold home to be offered a home visit. The home visit with a family member will assess the property and give advice on energy efficiency and insulation. If required a top up energy voucher to ensure the property can be warm on the discharge date.	£6500	Reduce hospital readmissions. Prevent older people leaving hospital to go to a cold home. Improve energy awareness amongst older people.	LA energy officer NHS hospital staff. Health and Well-being board.	Older vulnerable people leaving hospital.
Vulnerable Household assistance. Available for families with children under 5 yrs and older households over 65yrs on an income related benefit. To offer funding for fuel top up, essential insulation measures to the property up to a maximum of £300 per application.	£6000	Ensure household are better equipped to keep their property warm.	LA energy officer NHS Home safety assessor Health and well-being board. CAB	Vulnerable families and households.

<b>Activity/intervention Proposal</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>	<b>What will it achieve?</b>	<b>Who will deliver it? (identify partners)</b>	<b>Who will benefit from the intervention and how will those most in need be targeted?</b>
Emergency heaters and dehumidifiers	£2000	Ensure households who find themselves without any heating have access to emergency oil filled radiators or dehumidifiers if required.	All housing staff and environmental health staff. CAB Help direct	Any household at risk due to lack of heating in an emergency.
Rural household assistance	£2500	Support rural households to operate an oil buying cooperative or options to prevent reliance on unregulated fuel sources.	LA energy officer Rural parish councils LA partnership officer Help direct	Households in rural communities in fuel poverty.
Boiler repairs and/or replacement. Available to vulnerable households in receipt of an income related benefit.	£4000	Provide repair or replacement grant funding for vulnerable households in receipt of an income related benefit.	LA energy officer Help direct	Vulnerable families or households.

**Total funding requested (up to the amount shown in appendix 1): £21000.**

## Appendix 1

### Number of households in fuel poverty and funding distribution for 2014/15

LA Name	All Households	Fuel Poor Households <sup>1</sup>	% Fuel Poor	Percentage of Lancashire's Fuel poor households	Funds 2014/15 divided by number of fuel poor households assuming total fund £500,000 (£)
Burnley	37,143	5,013	13.5	9.5	47,435
Chorley	44,414	3,654	8.2	6.9	34,576
Fylde	34,490	2,795	8.1	5.3	26,447
Hyndburn	33,972	4,483	13.2	8.5	42,420
Lancaster	57,170	6,869	12	13.0	64,998
Pendle	36,924	5,552	15	10.5	52,535
Preston	56,931	7,397	13	14.0	69,994
Ribble Valley	23,754	2,317	9.8	4.4	21,924
Rosendale	28,733	3,080	10.7	5.8	29,144
South Ribble	45,583	3,604	7.9	6.8	34,102
West Lancashire	44,888	4,057	9	7.7	38,389
Wyre	46,749	4,019	8.6	7.6	38,029
	490,751	52,840		100.0	500,000.00

<sup>1</sup> 2012 fuel poverty data: Low Income High Costs Department of Energy and Climate Change published 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014.