



Report of the Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy and Service Transformation

Cabinet - 18 June 2020

Warm Homes Fund (WHF) Funding Application for First Time Central Heating in Swansea Private Sector Homes

Purpose:	<p>To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No.7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) - to commit and authorise the addition of new schemes to the Capital Programme.</p> <p>The Warm Homes Fund will be used to install appropriate first time gas heating to multiple properties that have been identified across Swansea that are within the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) areas for residents who are at risk of being or who are in fuel poverty and have electrical or solid fuel heating.</p>
Policy Framework:	Local Housing Strategy
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendations:	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Approval is given to accept a funding offer for qualifying homes from the Warm Homes Fund for first time central heating for 2020 & 2021 and this scheme is added to the capital programme.2) Delegated authority is given to the Director of Place, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy and Service Transformation to approve the required funding and contractual documentation.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 National Grid and Community Interest Company, Affordable Warmth Solution (AWS) have established a £150m Warm Homes Fund (WHF) designed to support local authorities, registered social landlords and other organisations working in partnership with them, to address some of the issues affecting fuel poor households which links to Council commitment of tackling poverty. This round of the scheme will operate over 2020 and 2021.
- 1.2 Due to the current Covid-19 situation and the timescales to accept the funding this report is seeking retrospective approval.

2. Proposed Works

- 2.1 To install appropriate first time gas heating to multiple private sector properties that have been identified across Swansea that are within the LSOA areas for residents who are at risk of being or who are in fuel poverty and have electrical or solid fuel heating.

3. Objectives of Scheme

- 3.1 In 2014 the UK Government introduced a statutory target to ensure fuel poor homes in England achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C by 31 December 2030, with targets in Scotland and Wales also set by the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly respectively. National Energy Action NEA's Annual Fuel Poverty Monitor reports that without additional investment and ambition the Government's target of reaching the desired EPC rating may not be realised.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.
- 4.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening tool confirms that a full EIA is not required at this stage. The WHF is a £150million fund administered by AWS across England, Wales and Scotland, to incentivise the installation of affordable heating solutions in fuel poor households who do not use mains gas as their primary heating fuel. It is

envisaged that the fund will be used to supplement local strategic plans and other funds available. The service will be available to eligible households regardless of whether they have a protected characteristic or not. The partner organisations will be made aware of the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty, and the work will be monitored by the Council

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 One of Swansea Council's procured energy partners, City Energy will undertake the work. There is no cost to the Council, the funding will be drawn down from the WHF by Swansea Council. When evidence of the completed work has been submitted and audit checks carried out funding will be released to City Energy. Funding draw down and payments will be made on a monthly or quarterly basis dependant on demand.
- 5.2 The total cost of the scheme amounts to £470,000 with an additional £380,000 being brought in via Energy Company Obligation ECO funding, The ECO element is not coming through the Council but via the Utility Company through City Energy. Details are set out in the table in Appendix A, including start and completion dates.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council will enter into a contract City Energy. This agreement will mirror the WHF grant agreement with Swansea Council to ensure that delivery and compliance risks and liabilities are passed on to the contractor. The planned commencement of the work has been delayed as a result of the Covid-19 situation. However, WHF have confirmed that they will re-distribute any unspent allocation. A sample check of applications, supporting paper work and installations will be carried out by the Council or a third party which will be paid for out of the scheme.

Background Papers:

NGA2

Appendices:

Appendix A – Financial Implications

Appendix B – EIA Screening Tool