

AFFORDABLE WARMTH SCHEME	6th September 2016
TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR INFORMATION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities
Outcome	Improved Home Energy Efficiency
Lead Officer	Bryan Edgar
Cost: (If applicable)	Funded by DSD

The Affordable Warmth Scheme is a Fuel Poverty Programme funded by the Department of Communities. The scheme provides a package of energy-efficiency and heating measures tailored to improve the thermal comfort of households. A constituent may be eligible if they are an owner occupier or private renter with a gross annual household income less than £20,000. Where a constituent is privately renting they must be named on the tenancy agreement, their landlord must be on the Landlords Register and give consent for energy efficiency improvements to be done. Landlords must also contribute 50% towards works completed.

Those who reside in Housing Executive or Housing Association properties are not eligible for this scheme. However, these clients can avail of energy efficiency advice and guidance through Council's Energy Efficiency Advice service.

If eligible a number of energy efficiency measures are available but are dependent on the current condition of the property. Measures are also prioritised to ensure the most effective energy efficiency measures are upgraded first.

Priority rating	Conditions in existing property	Improvement measures available
Priority 1 - Insulation	No cavity wall insulation	Install cavity wall insulation
	Ineffective cavity wall insulation	Remove and replace cavity wall insulation
	No loft insulation or below minimum	Installation or top up of roof space insulation to 270mm

Priority rating	Conditions in existing property	Improvement measures available
	No hot water jacket	Install hot water jacket
	Ineffective or no draught proofing	Draught proof windows/doors
Priority 2 - Heating	No heating system exists	Installation of natural gas or oil heating
	Conversion of existing LPG or solid fuel system	Installation of natural gas or oil heating
	Conversion of Economy 7	Conversion to natural gas (or oil where natural gas isn't available) or conversion to high efficiency storage system
	Householder 65 or over, or with child under 16, or receiving a disability benefit and with a boiler over 15 years old	Boiler replacement and new radiators where required
	Heating system exists without controls	Add heating controls
	Heating system exists but radiators defective	Replace radiators as needed
Priority 3 - Windows	Windows in disrepair	Repair/replace windows with double glazing if draught proofing is not possible
Priority 4 - Solid wall	Solid wall with no insulation	Internal/external insulation

As you may recall from previous report items, the Affordable Warmth Scheme is a targeted scheme with list of addresses being provided to the Council from extensive regional research that had been conducted by the University of Ulster. This is still the case and 80% of all referrals made by the Affordable Warmth Team must be targeted.

As previously reported, this year has seen a change in how the scheme is being delivered with Council's now undertaking an additional 'enhanced role.' This role involves Affordable Warmth staff aiding in the completion of the Northern Ireland House Executive (NIHE) Affordable Warmth Application Form. This also requires Council Officers requesting, photographing and printing documents as proof of

ownership/tenancy, income and occupancy to satisfy the NIHE that the client is eligible. This new role has had a positive influence on scheme delivery with vulnerable clients submitting applications as they have been guided through the process. As staff are building a rapport with applicants they are able to assess their needs and signpost them to additional agencies for advice and support. For the months of May, June and July staff have made a total of 137 referrals to 7 local services/agencies.

During 16/17 Council are required to make 506 Affordable Warmth referrals to NIHE. This is a reduction from previous years but through undertaking the enhanced role we hope to have an increase in the percentage of homes that have measures installed. To ensure we are referring those most in need we are priority scoring clients. The budget allocated to Council to deliver the scheme has been reduced by 30% to £107,000 this has meant a reduction in staff.

As in accordance with the Service Level Agreement Council are required to refer 46 clients per month from May 2016 – March 2017. Due to NIHE not accepting referrals from Council until late May we have referred 102 clients up to 31st July 2016.

At present, from these 102 clients 57 have had a technical inspection to assess the needs of the property, 49 of these households were able to get improvements to their home with approval values totalling £225,917.89.