

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD**

**6 October 2008**

**Report of the Director of Health and Housing**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 LAUNCH OF ENERGY SAVINGS TRUST ADVICE SERVICE**

**Summary**

**This report informs members of the changes to the Kent Energy Centre and their service from the 6 October 2008.**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 The Energy Savings Trust (EST) was established to help people take action to reduce carbon emissions in their home and lifestyle. EST has to date provided expert impartial energy advice as well as directing people to available grants or discount schemes to promote more efficient use of energy. EST has done this through a network of local energy advice centres, the local centre being the Kent Energy Centre for the Tonbridge and Malling area.
- 1.1.2 EST piloted a sustainable energy network model, which was developed to provide a more efficient way of promoting energy saving in the domestic housing sector and deliver greater carbon savings. The model provides a more holistic approach to encourage carbon saving in the domestic sector, for example it includes looking at low carbon transport choices as well as housing, and aims to create 'low carbon citizens'. Following the successful pilot, EST launched an Energy Savings Trust Advice Service (ESTAS) in London using this model, and is now launching the model across Kent, Surrey and Sussex on 6 October 2008.
- 1.1.3 The ESTAS will replace the Kent Energy Centre as the local energy advice centre providing the first point of contact for advice on cost effective energy saving, renewables and low carbon transport choices. As well as customer advice delivered through an Energy Savings Trust Advice Centre it will provide supported mail outs, promotional materials, advice and targeted support to local authorities. These actions will be delivered through a research based marketing strategy. All EST funded projects including ESTAS work will be branded with a regional EST logo.
- 1.1.4 The new ESTAS will be available on free phone number 0800 512 012 during normal working hours. This telephone number will replace the existing Kent

Energy Centre number. Telephone calls to the Kent Energy Centre will automatically be transferred.

- 1.1.5 Creative Environmental Networks (CEN), who previously managed the Kent Energy Centre, successfully tendered a bid to manage the new ESTAS for a contract period of 3 years. Kent local authorities already have a successful working relationship with CEN through the Kent Energy Centre, Kent Action to Save Heat (KASH) and various Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership and local authority funded activity work. A local delivery team will still be based at CEN's office in Ashford to ensure links with key partners in the area including local authorities remain.

## **1.2 Implications for Tonbridge & Malling**

- 1.2.1 The Government has increased the emphasis on local authority activity through a range of policy measures which seek to deliver emission reductions and make provision for affordable warmth. This new focus is captured in a range of performance measures and indicators.
- 1.2.2 The new indicators will support and extend the policy drivers such as the Home Energy Conservation Act, the Sustainable Energy Act, the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and recent alterations to Building Regulations.
- 1.2.3 The national indicator (NI) set will be the measures by which central Government will measure performance outcomes delivered by the Council. The two relevant indicators that underpin the activities for carbon reduction and affordable warmth are:
- NI 186 Per capita Carbon Dioxide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the local authority area; and
  - NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating.
- 1.2.4 The partnership with the ESTAS will be essential in assisting the Council with its performance against these national indicators.
- 1.2.5 From 6 October 2008 the new ESTAS will be fully funded by the Energy Savings Trust and the Council will no longer be required to contribute £1,500 per annum towards the cost of the Kent Energy Centre call centre.

Background papers:

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Nil

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