

# **Proposed Decision to be made by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health on or after 31 January 2019**

## **Approval to Submit External Bid to Warm Homes Fund**

### **Recommendation**

That the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health approves the submission of a Grant Funding bid to the Warm Homes Fund on behalf of the County Council in connection with the Warm and Well in Warwickshire programme of work, with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) leading on a collaborative bid with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Coventry City Council and Worcestershire County Council.

### **1.0 Outline of Bid**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a bid to the Warm Homes Fund for approximately £600,000 to support the Warm and Well programme of work, with Warwickshire County Council taking the lead on a collaborative bid with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Coventry City Council and Worcestershire County Council.
- 1.2 The proposed bid is broken down into:
  - £80,000- project management costs
  - £480,000 Staff costs for recruiting 6/7 affordable warmth engagement officers and additional specialist support
  - £30,000 Marketing costs
  - £20,000 Emergency Fund – for heating repairs and emergency heaters

The proposed bid will cover 2 years, starting September 2019.

- 1.3 It is proposed that Act on Energy, WCC's current provider for the Warm and Well in Warwickshire programme would act as a managing agent for this project and employ the engagement officers as they have both experience and knowledge of running similar schemes working with a variety of project partners and delivering outcomes for residents who are at risk of or in fuel poverty.

### **1.4 Warm and Well in Warwickshire**

The Warm and Well in Warwickshire programme is delivered by our commissioned provider Act on Energy to enable Warwickshire residents to be safe and well during cold weather. They provide advice, information and guidance to all Warwickshire residents around fuel bills, tariff switching, and energy efficiency via a Freephone helpline. They also work with vulnerable citizens who are experiencing fuel poverty, the elderly and those with long

term health conditions to look at benefit maximisation, and where eligible, provide physical measures to move people out of fuel poverty and into a warm home. There is strong evidence that shows living in a cold home can exacerbate existing health conditions, increase pressure on health and care services and lead to excess winter deaths.

- 1.5 Act on Energy also have experience of delivering a 'Boilers on Prescription' work stream, along with the Warm and Healthy Homes Scheme with partners in Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Solihull. This sought to evaluate the health and wellbeing benefits of providing efficient boilers to eligible residents with long term health conditions, assessing them pre and post installation. They have also been successful in accessing £1.25 million worth of Energy Company Obligation money between April and September 2018, for the provision of heating and insulation measures to vulnerable residents across Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Solihull. They are experienced with working with a wide range of partners both locally, regionally and nationally and have the knowledge to ensure that we are delivering a programme that support local and wider national policy such as the England Fuel Poverty Strategy, and the Clean Growth Strategy
- 1.6 The Warm Homes Fund is a partnership between National Grid and Affordable Warmth Solutions with £150m in funding to distribute to Local Authorities, Social Landlords and Third Sector partners working to address fuel poverty. Act on Energy are currently working with Worcestershire and Solihull councils on delivering a physical interventions fund under the same Warm Homes programme but in a different category and are therefore used to working with the requirements and reporting required of the programme
- 1.7 We are seeking to bid for approximately £600,000 from the fund for:
  - The recruitment of 6/7 affordable warmth engagement officers who will work for Act on Energy and aim to work within developing social prescribing programmes, alongside wider social care to enhance and increase work with health, care and wider frontline staff, including general practice, care providers, care navigators, hospital discharge teams, district nurses etc.
  - The role of the affordable warmth engagement officers will be to support frontline staff to recognise people experiencing fuel poverty, and to increase referrals into affordable warmth service. The engagement officers will be crucial in training staff, developing referral pathways and ensuring those pathways become embedded within the local health and care economies.
  - This bid comes at a crucial time of development of Warwickshire approach to social prescribing, and in the development of integrated care systems, and the workers will be a fundamental part of that model. This is also relevant to Coventry, Worcestershire and Solihull who are continuing to develop these processes. It will be ensured that workers are appropriately trained, in order to develop the skills to signpost and refer to other services within the social prescribing network of providers.

- Increase the information and advice element to people referred who are experiencing fuel poverty, including access to funding for physical measures and debt advice and benefit maximisation.
- To ensure that once referrals are received in to the service we will provide addition staffing support for specialist energy advice and support for income maximisation to ensure that the additional work volumes into the Warm and Well service are managed and households supported.
- The project will included a emergency budget that will provide funding to enable hospital discharge for example emergency heating to allow a patient to return to a warm home this would be followed up with longer term solutions.

## 2.0 Financial Implications and Risks

- 2.1 There are no inherent financial implications for the County Council in terms of submitting the bids other than the officer cost of working up and submitting the bid, and also the requirement to receive the funding, should we be successful. This would then be paid to Act on Energy on a quarterly basis. The cost of activity will be met from within existing resources, and any match funding will come from within already approved existing budgets.

## 3.0 Equalities

- 3.1 This scheme, alongside other schemes allied to the Warm and Well in Warwickshire programme, will support some of our vulnerable households (many using health and income/benefit criteria for eligibility). The scheme will be open for all (and is expected to rely on health and care provider referrals) irrespective of protected characteristic status, but the vulnerability criteria will apply to certain programmes they may be eligible for (e.g. heating and insulation schemes), to make sure that resources are targeted appropriately, and according to need. Further, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken at the outside of the programme of work in order to maximise the positive impacts of the scheme and also identify any barriers to access.

## 4.0 Links to Background papers

Bid documentation: <https://www.affordablewarmthsolutions.org.uk/warm-homes-fund/overview>.

Contract WCC will need to sign should the bid be successful:  
<https://www.affordablewarmthsolutions.org.uk/warm-homes-fund/contract-documentation>

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Nadia Inglis	<a href="mailto:nadiainglis@warwickshire.gov.uk">nadiainglis@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 07980501941
Head of Service	John Linnane	<a href="mailto:johnlinnane@warwickshire.gov.uk">johnlinnane@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Strategic Director	Nigel Minns	<a href="mailto:nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk">nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> Tel: 01926 412665
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Les Caborn	<a href="mailto:lescaborn@warwickshire.gov.uk">lescaborn@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

This document has also been circulated to the Head of Service and Corporate Board members for consultation, as well as having been shared in draft format with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health.