
THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY BILL 2003

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report recommends that Members support a Private Members Bill, sponsored by Brian White MP (Labour, Milton Keynes N.E.) which provides for the development and promotion of a sustainable energy policy and the setting of energy efficiency targets. A copy of the Bill is appended. The Bill is backed by a cross party group of Members of Parliament.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council had previously supported the Home Energy Conservation Bill 2001 which was a Private Members Bill aimed at delivering warm, safe, energy saving homes.
- 2.2 This Bill was withdrawn after the Government concluded that it would lead to costs amounting to hundreds of millions of pounds a year.
- 2.3 New measures were, however, introduced to address fuel poverty and improve domestic energy efficiency. These included the Energy Efficiency Commitment which puts a duty on gas and electricity suppliers to achieve significant energy efficiency improvements in the domestic sector and new building regulations which set tougher standards for new homes and for renovation and improvement work. The Government has also committed £50 million in grants to support community heating and combined heat and power (CHP) schemes.
- 2.4 In February 2002 the Government published the Energy White Paper in response to the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution Report “Energy – the Changing Climate”. The White Paper set out policies for delivering major carbon savings and recognised the crucial role that energy efficiency had to play.
- 2.5 Although the Paper set targets for CHP and aspirational targets for renewable energy it omitted to set targets for energy efficiency. The Sustainable Energy Bill is intended to address this.

3 THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY BILL

- 3.1 The Bill requires the Secretary of State to report on measures to achieve three medium term targets, namely:-
- the achievement of 25% of electricity being generated from renewable sources by 2020
 - 10 Gigawatts (GW) generated by CHP by 2010 and a further 10GW by 2020

- a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2020.

3.2 The Secretary of State is also required to take reasonable steps to achieve a 20% improvement in domestic energy efficiency by 2010. These steps include issuing guidance to Energy Conservation Authorities (such as Rochford District Council), raising the efficiency standards of boilers, promoting improved heating controls and insulating cavity walls.

3.3 Energy Conservation Authorities will have to take all reasonably practical steps to implement the energy efficiency measures set out in their Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) reports. The Secretary of State will be able to set targets for improving domestic energy efficiency for Energy Conservation Authorities, after consultation with local government representatives. The authorities would then be under a duty to implement measures to achieve the targets set.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The aims of the Bill will lead to improved health and higher standards of living and will help counter global warming

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Bill could have resource implications for the Council particularly if duties are imposed to meet specific energy efficiency improvements. The Council's support should be conditional on adequate funding being made available to meet the aims and objectives of the Bill and any obligations that are imposed.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That a letter be sent to the local Members of Parliament
 - (i) Asking them to sign House of Commons Early Day Motion No 148 in support of domestic energy efficiency targets and Early Day Motion No 910 supporting the Bill, provided that adequate funding is given to authorities to enable them to meet their obligations.
 - (ii) Asking them to write to Ministers in support of the Bill and of retention of targets in it and to provide adequate funding to authorities to meet their obligations.
- (2) That a letter be sent to Ministers asking them to support the Bill with the targets retained in it and to provide adequate funding to authorities to enable them to meet their obligations.

Graham Woolhouse
Head of Housing Health and Community Care

Background Papers:

Letter from the Association for the Conservation of Energy dated April 2003

For further information please contact Steve Neville on:-

Tel:- 01702 318046
E-Mail:- steve.neville@rochford.gov.uk