

ENERGY ADVICE CENTRE FOR ESSEX

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an introduction to the function of a possible new Energy Efficiency Advice Centre for Essex and recommends contributing towards funding a centre during 2001/2002.
- 1.2 All Local Authorities have a statutory duty to draw up strategies to improve the energy efficiency of housing in their District.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Essex has been one of the few areas in the Country not to have its own (EEAC). Government funding has now been made available and the Energy Saving Trust are currently assessing bids from parties interested in running an Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) in Essex.

3 FUNCTION OF AN EEAC

- 3.1 The core function of an EEAC is to provide tailored advice to householders in the area to help them to reduce their energy usage. Advice is normally given via a dedicated telephone advice line staffed by a qualified Energy Advisor. Advice may also be given by post in response to a completed Home Energy check. Information is given about local and national grant schemes and offers for energy saving measures.
- 3.2 Other services such as presentations to local groups, having an Energy Advisor available to visit people in their homes and bulk discount schemes for insulation measures can be arranged subject to funding.

4 BENEFIT TO THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT

- 4.1 Information about energy efficiency and grants/schemes available to households is constantly changing. It can only be a benefit to the Essex public to have a "one-stop shop" for up to the minute energy advice.
- 4.2 In addition to the benefits to households within the Rochford District, the EEAC would assist the Council in its responsibilities under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995. This requires local authorities to improve the energy efficiency of all homes and seeks to tackle the two very serious problems of fuel poverty and climate change. Information from the EEAC would also be used in the statistics reported back to the Government.

5 FUNDING

- 5.1 Whichever party wins the bid to run the EEAC is unlikely to have sufficient funding to run the centre for the whole year and is likely to approach Local Authorities in Essex to make up the shortfall.
- 5.2 Although the precise amount is not yet known, on the basis of similar schemes in the Country, it is likely that this Council would need to contribute up to £1100. It is likely that a similar level of funding will be needed annually.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An energy advice centre provides advice on steps householders can take to reduce heat losses from the home. This will lead to less energy being used, which in turn will benefit the environment, and will also allow people to heat their homes at an affordable cost. Less fuel poverty will lead to improvements in public health.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council's contribution for the year 2001/2002 is not likely to be more than £1100.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) To include the sum of £1100 in the draft 2001/2002 estimates for this Council's contribution towards the funding of an EEAC in Essex. (HHHCC)

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