

REPORT TO WEST AREA PLACE/PEOPLE BOARD

14 & 16 November 2016

West Supporting Communities to reduce energy costs and carbon footprint

1.0 Background

1.1 The West Area Committee has a Place Board Priority of supporting communities to reduce their energy bills and their carbon footprint and a People Board priority to work with the West VCS to strengthen their position and long term delivery. At the September West Area VCS Network meeting the Reps introduced an agenda item to enable discussion about how the VCS can be more sustainable. The network discussed various topics such as pricing policies, volunteers, equipment and skills sharing. The topic covered the most was how they could reduce their energy costs, which is the biggest expense next to any salary costs. Suggestions were made such as changing supplier, reducing temperature, closing doors. The network also discussed LED lights, efficient boilers and draft proofing.

2.0 Purpose of report

2.1 To consider options to support the community facilities within the West Area to become more energy efficient and in doing so become more sustainable. Consideration should be given to the various options that could improve energy efficiency such as but not limited to

- Lighting upgrades such as LED
- Heating system upgrades (in particular improved heating controls)
- Insulation
- Draught proofing
- Minor repairs (for example to door and window frames that will have a positive effect on the energy efficiency of the building)
- Energy efficient appliances (replacing older/inefficient appliances)

2.2 The benefits for improving any of the above energy options within our community facilities include reducing carbon emissions, reducing energy costs, making the centres more inviting, residents seeing the benefits to improving energy options and reducing costs.

3.0 Energy Saving research

3.1 The West VCS are keen to be involved in energy saving opportunities and have discussed how without investment they can reduce their bills and make themselves more energy efficient. Ideas for reducing bills have been to check suppliers and tariffs, to reduce the temperature of the heating, close doors to rooms not in use, to turn off lights, close windows and repair broken or cracked windows, turn off appliances. Supporting the VCS to make these changes can impact on the local community by showing residents how they too can save. For initial research we know that each of the community buildings in the West are different some with new heating systems some with LED lights.

3.2 In order to understand what changes could be made to community facilities and how much impact this could have on the costs energy audits would be carried out and would clearly show what changes could be made and how much impact would be made by making the changes.

- 3.3 In order to support all community facilities/buildings within the West the Place board would need to consider each energy audit and the individual impacts that improvements could make, seeking best value and investment.
- 3.4 Any investment made by the West Area Committee would be subject to key outcomes such as a commitment from the organisation to make changes to their energy habits such as regularly checking tariffs, checking the temperature and carrying out regular building checks. Another key outcome would be to actively encourage residents to make the small changes to their homes to reduce their carbon emissions.
- 3.5 Research has shown that the following areas should be considered when looking at improving energy consumption and reducing carbon emissions.
- LED (Light Emitting Diodes) shows an almost immediate return with very little disruption. LED are much cheaper to run can use upto 80% less electricity, they are also cheaper to maintain as bulbs last longer. The light produced is bright and fresh and creates an improved environment.
 - Light sensors, introducing light sensors and timers can reduce the energy used in buildings.
 - Installation and improved draft proofing. Depending on the building and the layout around a quarter of heat can be lost through the roof. An effective way to reduce this loss is to insulate the loft space.
 - Repair and install double glazed windows, heat can be lost through single glazed windows and cracks and drafts. Unless the building is very new, heat will be lost through draughts around doors and windows, gaps around the floor.
 - Installing a new boiler and or introducing an improve temperature sensor. Modern boilers are more efficient for several reasons, but their main advantage is that they are all condensing boilers. All well-maintained boilers burn their fuel very efficiently, but they inevitably lose some heat in the hot gases that escape up the flue. A condensing boiler has a larger heat exchanger, so it recovers more heat, sends cooler gases up the flue and is more efficient. The right heating controls will let you keep the community building at a comfortable temperature without wasting fuel or heat.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The Place and People board are asked to consider supporting this priority with SIB funding.
- 4.2 Consider approving a total of £100,000 SIB funding, the budget breakdown would be £10,000 towards energy audits and the remaining £90,000 to be split equally across the 6 wards. A call for projects would be developed to invite West Area VCS community facilities to apply for an energy audit to be carried out, with the findings being presented to a future Place board for consideration and a decision. The Place board would consider the findings of the energy audit including information on the size and usage of the community facilities and make a decision on how much of the ward based funding is approved.