

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

CABINET

15TH SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER(S) – HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

HEATSEEKERS PROJECT

KEY DECISION – YES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform members about the Energy Saving Partnership Limited and seek support for a programme using the Heatseekers thermal imaging project.

2. Recommendation(s)

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| <p>2.1 That members support the Energy Saving Partnership Limited with support for the Heatseekers imaging project across the District as it develops, through granting permission to use the Council logo and local support as necessary to assist in its promotion.</p> |
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3. Summary (inc. brief overview of relevant background history)

- 3.1 The Council have recently been approached by this Company to undertake the Heatseekers project within the District. Approximately 60 other Local Authorities across the country have been using the scheme, which informs local residents about the amount of heat loss from their property.
- 3.2 The scheme works by carrying out a thermal image survey of properties, using an imaging camera mounted on a vehicle, which is driven around the residential streets carrying out the survey. The images are recorded and a picture of the thermal efficiency of the properties is prepared by the Company.
- 3.3 Where the image shows noticeable heat loss, then the Company will contact the owner and help them obtain insulation products for the property to improve its thermal footprint. Properties which are not well insulated show as red on the image, those showing green are already insulated.
- 3.4 It is anticipated that a saving of more than £100 per year on heating costs can be made by owners, once their property is adequately insulated. The work will also assist in improving the Standard Assessment Performance (SAP) rating of the property and thus improve the thermal comfort of the property and ultimately its saleability. The likely cost to the owner for an average

sized property is about £150 for loft or cavity wall insulation. People receiving appropriate benefits can have the work undertaken without payment.

- 3.5 There is no direct cost to this Council, the Company are requesting support through use of the Council logo on the letters sent to owners and local press and Council coverage of the scheme.
- 3.6 The project will provide information about all types of property construction, but only those with cavity walls will fully benefit from the project. Those properties which do not have cavity walls, for example properties built prior to about 1935 and concrete properties will only benefit from loft insulation as there is no cost effective method of improving the thermal loss rating from solid wall construction at present; the company are happy to undertake work to try to develop a system which is cost effective for such property.
- 3.7 The image of the property indicates the thermal performance of the property, it is not a photograph of the property and no detail of the property, car registration numbers or images of people or objects are captured other than as a thermal image; there are therefore no privacy issues to be considered.
- 3.8 The Councils housing stock has already had loft insulation bought up to the relevant requirements whilst cavity wall insulation has been installed to all suitable properties.

4. Key issues and Implications

- 4.1 The council through the Private Sector Housing section of the Environmental Health service have been approached by the Energy Savings Partnership for limited support to a project to assist local residents in improving the thermal comfort of their homes.
- 4.2 The scheme, run by this company would be supported by information from this Council to identify those areas most likely to have houses with poor thermal insulation.
- 4.3 There is no direct cost to the Council for supporting this scheme, all costs being borne by the Company providing the service to local residents.
- 4.4 The Council will be supporting a private company providing services to the local community, by way of the Heatseekers thermal imaging project. The company will seek to recover its costs from undertaking insulation work at properties identified via their survey.
- 4.5 Should members agree to support the Energy Saving Partnership Limited in delivering the Heatseekers project appropriate safeguards will be put in place by officers to protect the public and prevent any harm to the Councils reputation. These will include ensuring that householders receive a written letter from the company with a written quote rather than being contacted by telephone or doorstep calling. This correspondence will include a disclaimer stating that the Council supports this initiative to improve home insulation but is in no way responsible for the quality of work undertaken or commissioned by the Energy Saving Partnership Limited.

5. Conclusions and Reason(s) for the Recommendation(s)

- 5.1 The Council has an opportunity to support a scheme which clearly identifies properties in the District which are not sufficiently insulated and enable those owners to access loft and/or cavity wall insulation to improve the Standard Assessment Performance (SAP) rating of their property and save on the cost of heating.

6. Other Options Considered

- 6.1 Not to support the scheme and rely on local residents contacting contractors to undertake the necessary thermal comfort work.
- 6.2 Rely on the passive approach adopted in the past where the owner or occupier of the property has to make contact through a phone line to obtain advice and assistance on affordable warmth measures for their home.

7. Report Author Details

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SCHEDULE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Section 1

Contribution to Council Priorities

This initiative has benefits for both an improved living environment and active and healthier lifestyles. Improvements in thermal performance arising from work undertaken as a result of this project will deliver considerable benefits. Occupiers will enjoy improved thermal comfort and reduced heating bills. The reduction in energy consumption will generate less carbon dioxide, thereby benefitting the environment. The improvements achieved in the Standard Assessment Performance (SAP) rating of individual properties will contribute to an overall average improvement for the District as a whole.

Section 2

Contribution to Promoting Community Engagement

No direct contribution.

Section 3

Financial Implications

As stated in paragraphs 3.5 and 4.3 above there are no financial implications arising from this report that will affect this Council. Officer time spent on supplying the Energy Company with the relevant housing demographic will be contained within existing budgets.

Section 4

Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising in this report that need to be considered.

Section 5

Human Resource Implications

None.

Section 6

Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

If approval is given, steps will be taken to ensure that the contractor's staff carry appropriate identification and properly identify themselves to residents that they call upon.

Section 7

Human Rights Act Implications

The image of the property indicates the thermal performance of the property, it is not a photograph of the property and no detail of the property, car registration numbers or images of people or objects are captured other than as a thermal image; there are therefore no privacy issues to be considered.

Section 8

Data Protection Act Implications

No identified implications.

Section 9

Risk Management Implications

Heatseekers is an established initiative operated with the endorsement of a number of local authorities. Provided that the company's staff carry proper identification and conduct themselves appropriately there should not be any significant risks presented by being associated with this company.

Section 10

Equality and Diversity Implications

The provision of this scheme is available to all residents of property in the survey area and will benefit all owners of property which does not have adequate insulation.

Section 11

List of Background Papers

None.

Section 12

Report History

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	15 th September 2011