

28 January 2013

Dear Councillor

Local authority action on fuel poverty

I am writing to draw your attention to a set of initiatives the End Fuel Poverty Coalition, Consumer Focus and local authority partners are taking to encourage council action on fuel poverty. They include:

- Commissioning of the report *Going local* – this details a survey of council activity and makes recommendations for improvements. In particular, it calls for the introduction of a new local authority fuel poverty duty, following an assessment of burdens and resources required. See: <http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk/publications/going-local-a-report-for-consumer-focus-on-local-authorities-work-to-tackle-fuel-poverty>
- Development of the local authority fuel poverty commitment (attached) which we would like your council to sign up to.
- Organisation of a major conference on fuel poverty – *Local action for warm homes* – at Islington Council on 31 October which highlighted good practice. The conference was addressed by the Energy Minister, LGA and leading local authorities (conference presentations available on request).
- Sponsorship of NEA regional fuel poverty forums – these provide an opportunity for councils, NGOs and others to share information and develop good practice.
- Commissioning of research, with NEA and DECC, on the health and social care costs of cold homes as part of an initiative to encourage action by Health and Well-being boards on the new fuel poverty public health outcome (publication due March 2013).

We think there are important new opportunities for increased council action on fuel poverty, including new sources of funding. They include under-spent fuel company funds, the new Energy Company Obligation, new DECC and DoH funds for local action on fuel poverty, the revised HECA guidance and the transfer of public health to local government.

However, despite new funds coming on stream we recognise that local authorities have borne the brunt of public expenditure cutbacks. We are calling, alongside our partners in the Energy Bill Revolution (EBR) coalition, for the Government to use its carbon tax proceeds to invest in an energy efficiency programme focussed on the fuel poor (see www.energybillrevolution.org). We think councils could play an important role in implementing the proposed programme and would urge your council to support the EBR campaign.

We hope you find the report of interest. Please sign the 'fuel poverty commitment' and support the EBR campaign. We have drafted a model resolution in support of this which you may find of use – see overleaf. You can find more information about the End Fuel Poverty Coalition at our website: www.endfuelpoverty.org.uk. You can also get advice on local initiatives to tackle fuel poverty from NEA (www.nea.org.uk) and the Carbon Action Network (www.can.uk.net).

Yours sincerely



William Baker
On behalf of the End Fuel Poverty Coalition