

## ANGUS COUNCIL

**ITEM No. 7**HOUSING COMMITTEE - 23 MAY 2000  
PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 13 JUNE 2000

## WARM DEAL PROJECT

## JOINT REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

**ABSTRACT**

This report advises members of partnership working between the Housing and Personnel Departments on the Warm Deal Project which will enable Angus householders to benefit from increased energy efficiency, assist local unemployed people into employment through the New Deal Programme and enable the Council to maximise its use of the funding available from the Scottish Executive for these purposes.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to note the Council's participation in the Warm Deal Project as described in this report.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

As part of the Government's long-term objectives of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and alleviating fuel poverty, the Scottish Executive administers a grant scheme known as "The Warm Deal". Part of "The Warm Deal" scheme allows any householder on benefit to access a grant of up to £500 for energy efficiency measures in their home. The other part of the scheme involves the Scottish Executive allocating resources to Scottish authorities for upgrading of energy efficiency measures in local authority housing stock, dependent on strict qualifying criteria.

Payment of these grants is contingent upon the energy efficiency measures being carried out by participants in the New Deal Programme. The grants are paid on the basis of the number of days worked by The New Deal participants. This requirement reflects the dual purpose of the Warm Deal, ie to increase energy efficiency and to promote training and find jobs for unemployed people.

**3. 1999/2000 WARM DEAL**

In 1999/2000 the available grant allocation for Angus Council was £50,000, whereas the actual uptake of funds was £10,769. This low uptake of the allocation was due to a number of reasons:

- The grant money is tied to the number of days worked by New Deal participants, as described above.
- the grant represents only some 30 - 40% of the total cost of any work - the Department must therefore find the rest from the Planned Maintenance Energy Saving Budget - in 1999/2000 this amounted to £50,000 but included projects other than Warm Deal;
- the work is undertaken by local approved installers who are responsible for the actual employment of New Dealers - under-performance by these installers is outwith the Council's control, as is the uptake of New Deal places by unemployed people;

- the Warm Deal Scheme has previously been cumbersome to administer and is not an efficient way of improving the energy rating of Council properties, however it is hoped that the partnership arrangement between Housing and ACTS should improve the effectiveness of the way that the scheme is delivered in Angus.

#### **4. 2000/2001 WARM DEAL**

The allocation of grant funding from the Scottish Executive for the current financial year is again £50,000. £60,000 was requested by the Housing Department and depending on performance the extra £10,000 may be available if funds allow.

The Department intends to maximise the use of the allocated funds in this current year by means of two initiatives.

- An approved installer with a successful track record of delivering energy efficiency measures has been allocated some 2,000 or so addresses in the Forfar area to survey for loft insulation requirements. Once the needs are identified, funds can be allocated from the Planned Maintenance budget to instruct work to the relevant addresses.
- A partnership has been formed between the Housing Department and the Angus Council Training Services (ACTS) section of the Personnel Department, to upgrade loft insulation throughout the Council housing stock in Arbroath. Some 3,000 addresses have been allocated to ACTS for survey, and resultant improvement, where required.

#### **5. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

ACTS will create a team of five unemployed people as part of the New Deal Environment Task Force Option. Each of these positions will attract a wage and will last for six months in accordance with New Deal Regulations. The two Departments will jointly interview applicants to identify those suitable for the project. As each participant's six month ends new appointments will be made.

As an integral part of the project the participants will, in addition to the training required to carry out the work, have their more general work skills developed in order to better equip them to gain permanent employment.

The team will be led by an ACTS supervisor and based at Ladyloan, Arbroath. The teams will purchase and install loft insulation, in any Council house in Arbroath which requires extra insulation in the loft, to bring it up to the recommended depth of 200mm.

Addresses will be surveyed first to identify where the work is required, and the installation will then follow on in the subsequent few weeks.

Arbroath will be split into four areas corresponding to Housing Department Inspector patches. The Warm Deal Team will work through each patch, allowing the Area Housing Manager and local Inspectors to monitor the project. The intention is that work will begin in the Hayshead patch of Arbroath, in June 2000.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Energy Initiatives budget in Planned Maintenance has £70,000 available for 2000/2001, and this will be utilised to fund the project, as well as to fund the parallel work being undertaken by an approved installer in Forfar.

As ACTS will be creating 'waged' positions within the New Deal, ETF option, a proportion of the costs from this, as well as the cost of insulation materials will be borne by the Housing Department – payments will be made on the basis of costs per house, dependant on the

square metres of loft insulation installed. The remaining costs will be met through income generated through the New Deal initiative.

Grant claims are made to the Scottish Executive on a quarterly basis, and monies are made available on the number of New Dealer days worked in that quarter. It is envisaged that the full £50,000 grant allowance for 2000/2001 will be utilised.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

By working in partnership with the Personnel Department, it is hoped that the Housing Department can fully utilise the Warm Deal grant allocation for 2000/2001. With the ACTS Project Team working in Arbroath, and an approved installer working in Forfar, a large proportion of the Council's housing stock will have its loft insulation improved to the recommended standards. Additionally the project increases the opportunities for local unemployed people to gain good quality training and work experience which will increase the skills available to local employers and enhance the individuals' employment prospects.

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**NOTE:-** No background papers, as defined by Section 50d of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied upon to any material extent in preparing this report.

