

Cookstown

DISTRICT COUNCIL

44.01.09
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Clerk/Chief Executive
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COMHAIRLE CHEANTAR NA COIRRE CRÍOCHAÍ
DISTRICK COONCIL O COOKESTOUN

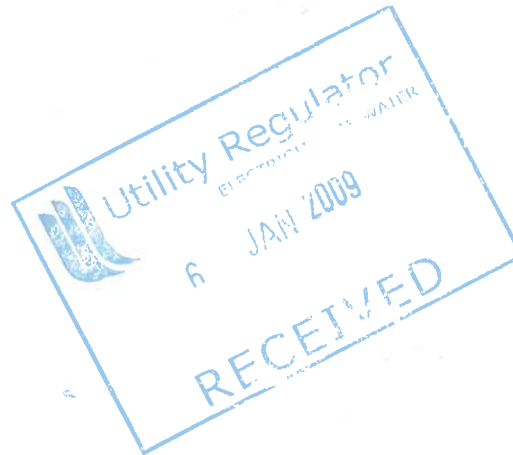
Seach

M G Kelso

GEH/gj

5 January 2009

The Utility Regulator
Queens House
BELFAST
BT1 6ER



Dear Sir/Madam

RE: NI ENERGY EFFICIENCY LEVY STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL REVIEW 2008

The above review was considered by Council at their Statutory Meeting held on 9th December 2008.

In consideration of the proposals, Council wished to record the following comments.

- The Schemes provided through the NI Energy Efficiency Levy, has had a significant impact to date on delivering fuel efficiency measures into 'fuel poor' and vulnerable households across Northern Ireland and it is hoped that the primary focus of the Scheme will continue to deliver on this programme of work.
- The infrastructure arrangements contained within the programme, should provide sufficient flexibility for partnership driven initiatives, along the lines of the Northern Investing for Health Partnership Programme 'Warmer Ways to Better Health' Scheme, which allowed schemes of this nature to deliver increased benefit awareness, as well as delivering full insulation and heating improvements within 'fuel poor' homes.
- The proposal to open Levy Funding to organisations other than licensed electricity suppliers should be welcomed, as this may enable Social Partners and suitably structured Community Based Infrastructural Programmes to apply.
- The current focus of 80 : 20 prioritisation on measures to address Fuel Poverty should be retained as the statistical basis would suggest increasing levels of Fuel Poverty across wider sections of the Community, given ongoing elevated energy costs and increasing financial hardship.
- Whilst the emphasis on Whole House Solutions could be reviewed, it would be important to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained between insulation and heating schemes, as a large number of solid wall dwellings with inadequate heating systems, still predominate the rural housing mix.
- The issue of assisting with heating oil purchase for needy and vulnerable households, should be given careful consideration. While certain households would undoubtedly benefit from such an approach, such a scheme would require careful management and integration with other Insulation and Heating assisted schemes to deliver added value benefits.

I trust you find these comments useful.

Perhaps you could advise what will be incorporated within the new levy programme in due course to address the issues outlined.

Yours faithfully



M G KELSO
Director of Environmental Health