

**PROCURING A GREEN DEAL PARTNER RELATIONSHIP FOR
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being))**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 12th February 2013, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) considered a report by the Head of Environmental Management seeking authority to establish a Green Deal Partnership for Cambridgeshire. The following paragraphs contain a summary of the Panel's discussions on the report.

2. THE PANEL'S DISCUSSIONS

- 2.1 The Panel has been acquainted with the events that have led to the development of a Cambridgeshire Green Deal brand. To date, three of the participating authorities have endorsed the proposals. A joint procurement exercise will now be required in order to establish a partner relationship with a fully accredited Green Deal Provider. This will be subject to EU procurement rules but Members have indicated that local assessors and installers should be involved in the scheme.
- 2.2 The Panel's attention has been drawn to the Green Deal investment potential in Huntingdonshire together with the likely leads to be generated which is expected to produce an income of around £30,000-£60,000 per annum for the Council. These projections are based on the findings of a report commissioned by the County Council. The costs of any energy improvement works will be levied upon the property and not homeowners. In the case of private rented properties, permission to carry out works will need to be sought from the landlord. Members have stressed the need for safeguards to be put in place to ensure the scheme does not operate in a way that might damage the Council's reputation.
- 2.3 The Panel has discussed the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which focuses on hard to treat properties and vulnerable and fuel poor households. Funding to undertake any works to qualifying properties under the ECO will be obtained via the award of grant from the Government's "Green Deal Pioneer Places" fund, regardless of a household's income. The assessment will be based purely on the property itself.
- 2.4 A robust methodology and associated assessment software will be required to support the accreditation and certification of energy improvement assessors and installers. This will guarantee the standard of works undertaken and the probity of the practices employed to sell them and also protect the Council's reputation. They will need to be aligned to established points of contact within the Council and communities to act as "trusted" informants about the scheme.
- 2.5 The Panel is of the view that the Green Deal offer for Cambridgeshire should commence operation as soon as possible. While there is a need to ensure the partnership arrangements with a Green Deal provider and the offer are sound, Members are aware that other providers have started marketing their products and they do not want to miss this opportunity. Adherence to the

timescales for the launch of the scheme specified in the report should ensure this does not happen.

2.6 Members are further of the view that the level of referral fees should not be part of the criteria employed to select the Provider. The Provider should be selected on the basis of their ability to deliver high quality energy saving measures in a responsible way that meets the needs of customers. Having discussed the role of the Environment Team in generating leads and undertaking marketing activity, the Panel has recommended the Cabinet to:

- approve the establishment of a partnership of the Cambridgeshire Districts to deliver the Green Deal work proposal, subject to detailed approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the local authorities involved at Public Service Board;
- approve a procurement exercise and subsequent award of contract(s) to one or more Green Deal Providers to be let on a Countywide basis and in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Local Authorities, and
- authorise the Head of Paid Service and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding governing joint working and to enter into a contract with a chosen Green Deal Provider, subject to consultation with the Executive Councillor for the Environment.

The Panel has also requested an update on progress of the scheme after 12 months of operation.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The Cabinet is requested to take into consideration the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) as set out above when considering this item.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Reports and Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 12th February 2013.