

Report to

Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board

Date: 1 December 2010

Title of report –PRGS Funding bid – Wiltshire is Saving Energy (WiSE) - update

Purpose of the Report:

To request that the Area Board consider the following information and decide if the Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board would want take up the offer of the £3,000 that has been agreed from the PRGS panel to fund the WiSE Project.

Impact of the decision

Should the decision of the Area Board be not to participate, the funding agreed for Wootton Bassett and Cricklade community Area will be withheld and the Community Area will not be able to participate in this initiative.

Background:

Working with the Energy Saving Trust and sponsored by the Wiltshire Environmental Alliance this initiative aims to make available to all Wiltshire householders the equipment and advice to save energy in their home.

By making an energy monitor and support pack available to hire free of charge from all libraries across Wiltshire, the project are providing the tools that will allow householders not only to save money but also reduce their carbon footprint.

At the Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board meeting on 6th October, some concern was raised regarding the cost of this project and it was suggested that such energy monitors could be obtained from many of the major energy suppliers.

The Decision of the Area board was to recommend that the pilot phase of the Wiltshire is Saving energy project be extended and that efforts should be made to source the energy monitors free of charge before committing the funds to this project.

Further information was sought from the Community Climate Change Officer and she reports that:

1. The energy companies are reluctant to provide 100+ monitors without any benefit to that company.

2. As a local authority, clarity would be required to ensure users understand that the Local Authority is not promoting or endorsing any one energy company.
3. Southern Electric provided 30+ monitors free of charge for the pilot and are not able to provide any more without a charge.
4. Energy Efficiency colleagues in Private Sector Housing explored the possibility of getting the monitors from energy companies without success
5. Only some companies are offering them and we have a deregulated market, with not all Wiltshire residents using the same supplier
6. When companies offer the monitors they are only on certain tariffs and this tariff may not necessarily be the best for the customer
7. The WiSE Project has the benefit that it is free to all regardless of which energy supplier they utilise.
8. The WiSE Project will also be able to provide a guarantee on all the monitors and a dedicated customer service helpline to ensure they can continue to issue effective equipment through the Libraries

£3,000 per Area Board was requested from the Performance Reward Grant Scheme and the Panel approved the bid on 2nd November 2010.

However, It was noted that Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board was not supportive of the bid and would rather the scheme was piloted first

The panel agreed that this project could have a high potential impact for the County.

The Panel noted that the Environment Alliance are very supportive of this and it has been supported by all Area Boards apart from Wootton Bassett and Cricklade.

The Panel fully supported this project but felt that it should be on the condition that Housing Associations, Age Concern and CABs should be involved, to make sure that they were reaching the appropriate people, i.e. Council tenants, homes with children on school meals, hard to reach groups, etc.

They need to make sure that they are hitting those people who would benefit most. In effect, they shouldn't be distributed by libraries alone. These conditions will be written in as a condition of the grant.

The panel have given the authority to the Performance Manager to withhold this portion of funding if Wootton Bassett and Cricklade does not wish to participate and await a decision from this Area Board.

Alison Sullivan, Community Area Manager

The full application can be viewed at: www.tinyurl.com/38zs2sf