

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Climate Change Steering Group

**Date:** 26 October 2023

**Title:** Home Upgrade Grant 2 – October 2023 Update

**Report of:** Lucie Bolton, Environment Strategy Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of Report:** To provide details for Members on the Home Upgrade Grant 2 rollout.

### Officer

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) progress of the Home Upgrade Grant 2 and the report be noted; and
- 2) a progress report be presented to the Climate Change Steering Group in April 2024.

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### Introduction

1. The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) provides energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating via local authority funding.
2. Rother District Council (RDC) was part of a consortium bid, led by Lewes District Council (LDC), and was awarded £6,230,700 to be spent in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
3. LDC is administering the scheme with support from officers in each authority.

### Details of the proposal

4. HUG2 is now live.
5. HUG2 offers 100% energy efficiency grants to people living in private homes.
6. The grant is just over £6m and has to deliver 300 energy efficiency upgrades to homes in Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother, and Hastings; LDC is administering the scheme, and the main contractor is Retrofit Works.
7. We are aiming to upgrade 40 homes this financial year (up to 31 March 2024) and 260 homes next financial year – spread across all four local authorities.
8. The criteria for these grants is:
  - a) Household income less than £31k or in IMD bands 1-3.
  - b) Property is EPC D or worse.
  - c) Does not have a gas boiler.

9. Flats get the least money (£8k), semi-detached, detached, and end terraces get the most (up to £38k). Park homes are capped at £15k per property and collectively cannot be more than 10% of total homes upgraded. Rented accommodation can also benefit but landlords need to contribute 33% of the costs and they must have four or fewer properties in their portfolio.
10. The Government's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) has provided a list of properties that are pre-approved as they have access to both building and IMD data. We are using this list to target homes.
11. For areas that are dominated by gas, HUG2 will have little overall impact to the overall area but from the data we have there are still properties we can help.
12. The first wave of targeting will be homes that have an EPC rating of F & G and are either semi-detached, end of terrace, or detached as these homes will have the highest energy bills. We can widen this scope if take-up is slow. Year two will approach all eligible properties.
13. All properties will receive a letter, and any interested residents will need to call the Warm Homes Check service.
14. For this year, we are targeting homes first with a letter drop and then if needs be we will use our social media and PR channels if take-up is slow, or homes are unsuitable. This will be reviewed weekly.
15. Overall, we will be ensuring that we reach as many people as possible that are eligible and will be working up a programme for next year to target the private rented sector.

## **Conclusion**

16. The HUG2 scheme will provide energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heating to eligible properties across Rother.
17. The Environment Strategy Officer is the named RDC officer for HUG2 and will be supported by the named Environmental Health officer, where necessary.

## **Legal Implications**

18. A partnership agreement between the four local authorities may be required by DESNEZ. LDC, as administrator for the scheme, is seeking clarification from DESNEZ on this matter.

## **Environmental**

19. The HUG2 scheme provides energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating to households in England that meet the requirements. The scheme will reduce district-wide emissions from the domestic sector and help the Council meet its climate ambitions.

## **Equalities and Diversity**

20. To be eligible for HUG2, households must have an income of less than £31k or in IMD bands 1-3. This scheme supports the Council's Anti-poverty Strategy.

| <b>Other Implications</b> | <b>Applies?</b> | <b>Other Implications</b> | <b>Applies?</b> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Human Rights              | No              | Equalities and Diversity  | Yes             |
| Crime and Disorder        | No              | Consultation              | No              |
| Environmental             | Yes             | Access to Information     | No              |
| Sustainability            | No              | Exempt from publication   | No              |
| Risk Management           | No              |                           |                 |

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| Appendices:                | n/a  |
| Relevant previous Minutes: | n/a  |
| Background Papers:         | n/a  |
| Reference Documents:       | n/a  |