

Committee: COMMUNITY

Agenda Item

Date: 9th November 2006

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Title: CHANGES TO THE CRITERIA FOR HOME
RENEWAL ASSISTANCE

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Item for decision

Summary

1. This report draws Members attention to the poor thermal insulation standards in mobile homes, advises that this type of accommodation does not qualify for Warm Front financial assistance and recommends that the criteria for Homes Renewal Assistance be expanded to include thermal insulation and energy efficiency measures in mobile homes which are occupied as permanent residential dwellings.

Recommendations

2. That the criteria for Homes Renewal Assistance be expanded to include thermal insulation and energy efficiency measures in mobile homes, and that the maximum grant in circumstances where repair works are also undertaken be raised from £3000 to £5000.

Background Papers

3. None

Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	Owners of Mobile Homes on Low Income
Community Safety	It will help reduce fuel poverty
Equalities	Mobile Home owners are unable to access the sources of funding which are available to other home owners
Finance	With existing budget
Human Rights	
Legal implications	

Ward-specific impacts	Takeley has a large number of mobile homes
Workforce/Workplace	

Situation

5. The current criteria for Uttlesford District Council's Home Renewal Assistance allows for works to improve or repair the homes of owners who are on low income (in receipt of a means tested benefits such as Council Tax benefit) but does not include energy efficiency measures such as insulation.
6. The Government's Warm Front scheme which is administered by the Energy Savings Trust specifically excludes mobile homes for the grant schemes which are designed to reduce fuel poverty and increase energy efficiency.
7. Mobile homes have very poor insulation qualities and are subsequently expensive to heat and often only have access to the most expensive forms of fuel such as electricity or LPG. They are often occupied by the elderly and young families who are unable to afford to live in more traditional types of dwellings.
8. The legislative framework for making financial assistance to home owners gives local authorities a wide range of powers which can be exercised to suit local circumstances including the present proposal.
9. Materials which could be used to improve the thermal efficiency of mobile homes have recently become available and are particularly appropriate in circumstances when roofs or other structural parts of the home are being repaired or renewed, although the current maximum grant of £3000 may be insufficient to cover the costs and £5000 would be a more appropriate figure.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That thermal efficiency levels in mobile homes will not be improved	High	High but limited scope in	None