

**REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE 16 APRIL 2001**  
**REPORT ON: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CENTRAL HEATING INITIATIVE**  
**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**  
**REPORT NO: 208-2001**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The Scottish Executive has committed £350 million over the next five years to provide a central heating package, which includes heating, insulation, advice and other benefits to an estimated 140,000 households across Scotland. Further information on the exact extent to which Dundee City Council housing tenants will benefit from the scheme are still to come forward but this report outlines for Members how the initiative will be implemented and the rules for eligibility. The scheme comes into operation in April 2001 and is planned to end in March 2006.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Housing Committee is asked to:-

- 2.1. Note the detail of the Scottish Executive Central Heating Initiative.
- 2.2. Remit the Director of Housing to report back on the success of Dundee City Council's bid to the Scottish Executive, under this scheme, to provide 2,668 council tenants with central heating at a grant level of £2,500 per house giving a total bid of £6.67 million over a maximum of 5 years, which will supplement current capital allocations. This will be reported as part of the revised capital estimates, planned to report to June Policy and Resources Committee.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The financial implications will depend on the success of Dundee City Council's bid of £6.67 million to the Scottish Executive.

**4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

The integrated package of measures on offer from the Scottish Executive will increase the energy efficiency of our housing stock thus reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere. In achieving this objective, we will also be addressing the issue of fuel poverty currently suffered by significant numbers of our tenants.

**5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None

## 6. BACKGROUND

6.1. The scheme will apply to 140,000 homes that currently lack central heating and are comprised of:

85,000	Local Authority tenants,
16,000	housing association tenants and
40,000	owner-occupiers and private rented sector tenants aged over 60 years.

6.2. Local Authorities and housing association tenants will deliver the scheme to their own tenants and the Scottish Executive will appoint a managing agent to administer the scheme for the private sector.

6.3. In the Local Authority scheme the amount of the cash grant is £2,500 per house, which is to provide each council house that does not have **any** form of central heating with:-

- An approved central heating system.
- Home insulation and energy efficiency measures such as loft insulation, tank jackets, draughtproofing, and energy efficiency light bulbs.
- Advice on how to use the heating system and advice on energy and budgeting.
- A cold alarm, a carbon monoxide alarm, a mains linked smoke detector.
- A benefits check.

The age of the tenant is not taken into account for local authority or housing association tenants to benefit from the scheme.

## 7. PRIVATE SECTOR

7.1. In the private sector the package will be available to householders where one is aged 60 or over. It will be delivered under a grant scheme. The main rules are that the house should lack a central heating system, but if there is an existing system it must be completely broken and beyond repair. (This is different to the scheme for Housing Associations and Local Authorities). Further details are still awaited and a managing agent is still to be appointed. However Members may wish to note that a leaflet will shortly be available at local information points such as local libraries to allow householders to register an interest in the scheme. A copy of the leaflet has already been sent to each Elected Member for information.

## 8. LOCAL CONTEXT

### 8.1. Heating for all programme

Members will be aware that over the last 5 years the Council has committed significant resources to both installing central heating where none exists and upgrading old and obsolete heating systems with the aim of providing heating for all in a ten year programme. Significant progress has been made in this with 5,643 tenants already benefiting, and the aim of 1,050 tenants benefiting each year. Clearly the additional resources in the form of a grant from the Scottish Executive will escalate the programme, but the exact speed at which the programme will be complete will depend on the grant made available, future capital allocations and tender prices.

## 8.2. Resources

Dundee City Council has made a bid to the Scottish Executive for a grant to provide central heating under the scheme to 2,668 tenants, which is the total number of Council tenants in Dundee without any form of central heating, and therefore the maximum number of houses for which grant can be claimed under the scheme. As the grant has to cover other work such as insulation and advice, it is estimated that around £2,000 will be available to spend on the heating system. At current tender rates this will not be enough to actually cover the full cost and will therefore need supplemented from capital allocations. In addition to this a number of properties will also need rewired. It is current policy to upgrade wiring at the same time as heating installation or renewal, if this is required, to minimise future disruption to tenants. This cost will also be met from current budgets.

## 8.3. Timetable for Completing the Programme

If the Council receives the maximum grant that has been claimed, this will leave 3,540 tenants who require old or obsolete heating to be replaced under the heating renewal scheme, the cost to be met from normal capital allocations. The Director of Housing is currently examining the cost implications of providing the additional measures such as, carbon monoxide alarms, cold alarms and advice and benefits checks to tenants within the renewal programme. However until we receive notification from the Executive on the exact grant available it is difficult to predict the date for completing the programme. This information is expected in April 2001. However the programme will be complete in 5 years and hopefully, it will be sooner. It is expected that the Director of Housing will be able to update Members at the Policy and Resources Committee in June when the Revised Capital Estimates are reported for consideration.

## 8.4. Availability of Contractors

One final factor, which may affect the speed at which the programme can be delivered, is the availability of electrical and gas contractors to carry out the work to the standard required. The City Architectural Services Officer along with the Director of Housing are examining this and will again report back on progress at the Revision of the Capital Estimates in June 2001.

## 9. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive and all Chief Officers have been consulted on the content of this report.

**ELAINE ZWIRLEIN**  
**DIRECTOR OF HOUSING**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_