

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 8 FEBRUARY 2010

REPORT ON: ENERGY EFFICIENCY DISCOUNT SCHEME - COUNCIL TAX

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

REPORT NO: 80-2010

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform the Elected Members on the Energy Efficiency Discount scheme being introduced under the terms of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Under this scheme an eligible Council Tax payer will receive a one-off discount on their Council Tax where energy efficiency improvements are made to the dwelling by the Council's chosen provider.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The discounts awarded will be funded in full by the Scottish Government. Any costs associated with the administration of this scheme will be minimal and will be met from existing departmental budgets.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 there is a duty on local authorities to establish energy efficiency discount schemes.

The above Act amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and inserts the provision for local authorities to establish a scheme for reducing the amounts which persons are liable to pay in respect of Council Tax where improvements are made to the energy efficiency of chargeable dwellings.

- The discount scheme will come into effect on 1 April 2010.
- The Council will advertise the scheme in the additional information leaflet which is included with the annual Council Tax bills. (See Appendix)
- The Council will have a relationship with a single energy supplier. (British Gas)
- The scheme will focus on cavity wall insulation and loft insulation.
- The advert will advise the Council Tax payer to contact the energy supplier direct for details of the scheme.
- Certain groups will not qualify for this particular scheme. Those in receipt of certain qualifying benefits are able to have this work undertaken for free and would therefore not qualify for the discount. Council tenants and Housing Association tenants will be advised to contact the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project for information on other grants/schemes which may be available to them.
- To qualify for the discount, the work must be undertaken by the energy supplier.
- The discount is a one-off and will be awarded in the year in which the work is completed and the appropriate certificate received by the Council from the energy supplier.
- The Housing Department will co-ordinate the scheme for the Council.
- The minimum amount for the discount is £50. The maximum amount is £75. Council's have the option to set the level between these two figures. Officers consider a discount award of £75 to be appropriate.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management and no issues have been identified.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive and Director of Housing have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

M Stewart
Director of Finance

Date: 8 February 2010

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APPENDIX

Would you like to reduce your Council Tax Bill this year?

Dundee City Council is committed to improving the energy-efficiency of all homes in Dundee and has teamed up with a utility partner to help homes become more energy-efficient.

Insulate your home with cavity wall and/or loft insulation and you could receive a one off £75 Council Tax discount.

Want to find out more? Simply call the number below to arrange for a FREE no-obligation home energy survey.

0845 605 2535 Quoting Reference: DUN

Lines Open 8am - 8pm, Mon to Fri and 8am - 1pm Sat
Calls may be monitored and/or recorded for quality assurance

Householders in receipt of certain qualifying benefits get FREE insulation but will NOT qualify for the Council Tax discount. If in doubt whether you qualify, ask for further details when calling the above number.

Council and Housing Association tenants are not eligible for this scheme but can contact Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project on (01382) 434840 for other grants/schemes which may be available to them.