

Minutes of the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group Meeting

22 November 2007, Defra, Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London

Attendees:

Peter Lehmann	(PL)	Chair
John Chesshire	(JCh)	Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes
Philip Arend	(PA)	Centrica
Graham Kirby	(GK)	PowerGen
Mervyn Kohler	(MK)	Help the Aged
David Mannering	(DM)	NPower
Gill Owen	(GO)	PUAF
Tony Herbert	(TH)	Citizens Advice
Jerry Robson	(JR)	ACE
Jenny Saunders	(JSa)	NEA
Jonathan Stearn	(JSt)	energywatch
Eva Eisenschimmel	(EE)	EDF
David Pickles	(DP)	LGA
Mitesh Dhanak	(MD)	eaga plc

Officials:

Maxine Frerk	(MF)	Ofgem
Angela Bourke	(AB)	Ofgem
Jackie Janes	(JJ)	Defra
Pam Wynne	(PW)	Defra
Sally Harrison	(SH)	Defra
Jack Cunliffe	(JC)	BERR
Yeolanda Lopes	(YL)	BERR
Paro Konar	(PK)	BERR

Apologies:

Sarah Davis, CIH
Dr Noel Olsen, National Heart Forum
George Mayhew, National Grid
Nicola Cumner, BERR

Summary of Minutes

The group agreed the minutes of the last FPAG meeting held pm 11 September 2007.

Local Government Performance Framework

Members discussed and welcomed the connection between central and local government and discussed progress on the local government performance indicator.

Defra officials explained the new PSA framework. For Defra one PSA relates to climate change, with sub set of Departmental Strategic Objectives. Fuel Poverty sits as an indicator within this set. Defra explained that final wording is under discussion, but it is expected that this will remain the same as the current PSA, giving a similar level of recognition. FPAG expressed concern that fuel poverty has been downgraded as an indicator and this should be expressed to Ministers.

Ofgem's role on Social issues

Members discussed a paper on whether Ofgem's had taken sufficient action on tackling price differentials. The following comments were made in discussion:

- The market is not working for vulnerable customers
- Ofgem is working with CAB to address the barriers that prevent vulnerable consumers from switching

Update on Social Programmes and tariff differentials

FPAG discussed Ofgem's report on energy companies' social programmes.

The aim of the report was to present a holistic picture of initiatives including social tariffs and lower prices. FPAG agreed to write to the Minister in favour of reserve powers on Social Initiatives and continue discussion on more specific legislation on differentials.

Role and composition of FPAG

The group discussed the future composition of FPAG. The group agreed that it needed stronger links with poverty groups, such as child poverty and that there may need to be closer links with groups concerned with climate change. It was also pointed out that not all suppliers are represented on the group.

FPAG Secretariat

14 December 2007