

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	3 rd December 2024
Report Title	Scheme to Provide Thermal Imaging Cameras in Swindon
Agenda Reference	12
Author	Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO

Officer's Recommendations:

To recommend to Full Council and agree in principle to join the parish-wide scheme and allocate £1,000 of Community Development – Community Choices to fund to the project (4629 / 402), in the absence of SBC funding becoming available. To note there will be an impact on the Office's resources to administer and promote the scheme.

Background

All of the Swindon Parishes are being approached by South Swindon Parish Council to find out if they would be willing to join a parish-wide scheme to provide Thermal Imaging Cameras in Swindon.

The scheme is designed to help residents identify energy efficiency improvements that can be made to their homes. It has been recognised that due to Swindon Borough Council (SBC) staff and costs constraints there have been delays to the Build a Greener Swindon agenda already. As such, parishes are being approached to opt in to and deliver the scheme directly from either their libraries, Community Centres or Parish Council offices.

Each Parish or Town Council will operate the scheme independently, but it would be good that no area of Swindon be left out. The more councils that are involved the better the potential discount on the hardware that needs to be purchased.

There may be funding from Swindon Borough Council (SBC) for the cameras but in the absence of any funding it is being recommended to allocate a maximum of £1,000.00 from the current financial year's Community Choices.

FROM COUNCILLOR NEIL HOPKINS, SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Scheme to Provide Thermal Imaging Cameras in Swindon

Members of the Build a Greener Swindon Committee have noted that Wiltshire County Council and North Somerset Council have introduced schemes that provide for the loan of thermal imaging cameras through their library services to residents.

The use of these cameras will help householders to identify where heat loss is occurring in their homes so that they can take steps to reduce heat loss and therefore, their heating costs.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, the Chair of Build a Greener Swindon (BGS), has approached Wiltshire County Council who have indicated that they are happy to provide information on their scheme to enable an early implementation in Swindon. This is particularly important because winter is already upon us so any delay reduces the benefit that can be derived by householders. The implementation of this scheme may be done through Swindon Borough Council and/or Parish Councils depending on resources available and timing.

The Wiltshire Scheme:

Details of the Wiltshire Scheme are provided in this link:

[Thermal imaging cameras available to borrow from libraries to check for house heat loss - Wiltshire Council](#)

The advantages of adopting the Wiltshire Scheme include:

- 1. Wiltshire (and North Somerset) have already conducted a review of available equipment and now have experience in their operation*
- 2. Speed of setting up the scheme with documentation and videos already available*
- 3. Availability of videos and instructions on using the cameras*

[Thermal cameras instruction video](#) (North Somerset Council)

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14129/Thermal-imaging-camera-user-guide/default/Thermal imaging camera user guide20241001.odt?m=1727951303293](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14129/Thermal-imaging-camera-user-guide/default/Thermal%20imaging%20camera%20user%20guide20241001.odt?m=1727951303293)

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14130/Thermal-imaging-camera-top-tips/default/Thermal imaging camera tips20241001.odt?m=1727951408573](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14130/Thermal-imaging-camera-top-tips/default/Thermal%20imaging%20camera%20tips20241001.odt?m=1727951408573)

- 4. Wiltshire have also drafted guidance on how to access advice on improving insulation with links to the Warm and Safe Wiltshire - Centre for Sustainable Energy and the Energy Saving Trust in this document:*

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14132/Thermal-imaging-camera-What-s-next-guide/default/Thermal imaging camera what next20241001.odt?m=1727951622317](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/14132/Thermal-imaging-camera-What-s-next-guide/default/Thermal%20imaging%20camera%20what%20next20241001.odt?m=1727951622317)

Next Steps

A Teams meeting is being organised with Wiltshire Council to learn more about the operation. Following this, some proposals will be drafted for consideration by interested parties – principally SBC and Parishes.

Feedback from the live Wiltshire Scheme

Trowbridge Library advised that library card holders could borrow the cameras for up to 7 days but generally returned them earlier and they had a waiting list of over 100 applications.

Wiltshire have a dozen cameras available through their libraries (of two types) and the service is provided free, but a loan agreement needs to be signed by the borrower.

The costs of the cameras are around £250 for one that links to a smartphone and around £450 for one that is a stand-alone unit, so costs of participating for parishes (and/or SBC) are relatively low.