

CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 30 January 2024

Title: Thermal Imaging Camera

Contact Officer: Operations Manager

Background

At the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting on the 15th of December 2020, it was agreed to purchase a thermal imaging camera. The thermal imaging camera would then be made available to residents to hire.

At a following Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting on the 10th of August 2021, it was decided by the council that the thermal imaging camera should be offered to a local community group to facilitate its use. However, no community group could be found.

Due to the unsuccessful uptake of the thermal imaging camera by community groups the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer submitted another report to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee on the 12th of July 2022. This report again raised the question of a hire scheme managed by the admin office. Councillors had concerns with the hire scheme so recommended there was a community group that may be interested.

The camera was issued to the community group however it received little usage and wasn't promoted to residents, so was returned to the council. This report is asking the council to consider returning to the original proposal to maximise the camera usage.

Current Situation

Council Manged Hire Scheme

A completely free scheme would probably see the biggest uptake however the camera may need replacing, repairing, or re-calibrating and if the funds are not available it would end the scheme. A small charge would accumulate quickly over the course of a year but this could be off-putting to residents.

The thermal imaging cameras can be supplied with a simple set-up guide. A questionnaire could then be completed after the camera is returned to assess if the thermal imaging camera rental scheme is making a difference.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

This is a community scheme that will hopefully see residents make improvements to their home insulation. If the scheme proves popular then the accumulated results and remedial work could make a large difference to the carbon emissions of Witney.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

For the scheme to be successful it's crucial the equipment is readily available and in working order. The scheme should only be offered during the colder months when heat loss can be better identified through the use of thermal imaging cameras.

Financial implications

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- The resource cost of administering the scheme.
- If the camera was damaged or lost the cost to replace the camera would be around £1,400.00 excl VAT. This would unlikely to be covered by insurance if being used by a third party at the time of breaking.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. A free or charged scheme for the use of the thermal imaging camera.
2. Delegated to officers to design, promote and run a hire scheme for the camera.