



## Hyndburn Borough Council

### Customer First Analysis

#### Energy Efficiency – Energy Switching

#### What is it for?

Our corporate values include putting the customer first, providing opportunities for bright futures and narrowing inequality across the Borough.

From 1 April 2011, a new legal duty applies to all public authorities. It covers these protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- gender;
- sexual orientation; and, for some aspects,
- marriage and civil partnerships.

The duty means that – as previously - we should analyse the effect of existing and new policies and practices on equality. It does not specify how we should do this. However, legal cases on the meaning of the previous general equality duties make it clear that we must carry out the analysis **before making the relevant policy decision**, and include consideration as to whether we can reduce any detrimental impact.

The framework overleaf – our Customer First Analysis - is suggested when making a written record of the analysis. This replaces Equality Impact Assessments.

The Analysis should be **proportionate** to the policy decision being taken. In some cases the written record will be a quick set of bullet points or notes under each heading, to deal with any questions which are relevant (or briefly explain why if they aren't). Others will need to be much more detailed. A meaningful Analysis will help the Council make the best decision or formulate a policy which best meets our customers' needs.

Please return completed Customer First Analyses to Human Resources. I can guide you through the process if this would be helpful.

If you have any suggestions for improving this process, please let me know.

Kirsten Burnett  
Head of HR

## Customer First Analysis

### 1. Purpose

- What are you trying to achieve with the policy / service / function?

*The aim is to help households reduce fuel costs through energy switching which in turn supports the Council's HECA report to reduce fuel poverty.*

- Who defines and manages it?

*Energy switching is a matter of choice for residents. However, by promoting Community Switch Ltd the Council is hoping to help more vulnerable households to switch energy suppliers where appropriate.*

- Who do you intend to benefit from it and how?

*All residential householders in the borough across all tenures (owner occupation, private rented and social rented) have the potential to benefit from energy switching especially those households suffering from fuel poverty.*

- What could prevent people from getting the most out of the policy / service / function?

*Lack of adequate publicity on the opportunity for energy switching.*

- How will you get your customers involved in the analysis and how will you tell people about it?

*Community Switch Ltd with the Council's support will publicise and market their service across the borough with the assistance of our partners. Community Switch will collate feedback from customers and will feed this back to the Borough Council so improvements in delivery can be made.*

### 2. Evidence

- How will you know if the policy delivers its intended outcome / benefits?

*Whilst the Council will not be entering into a formal contract with Community Switch Ltd, the Council will monitor details on the number of households who switch energy suppliers across the Borough.*

- How satisfied are your customers and how do you know?

*Community Switch Ltd will receive feedback from customers about the outcome and will feed this back to the Council so improvements in delivery can be made.*

- What existing data do you have on the people that use the service and the wider population?

*Very limited in terms of switching. We also know that approximately 7,417 households or 21.9% of homes in Hyndburn are in fuel poverty (spending more than 10% of household income on fuel) and 1,785 households have no central heating (2011 Census).*

- What other information would it be useful to have? How could you get this?

*As energy switching opportunities are introduced and rolled out across the Borough monitoring information and data will be collected from Community Switch on the numbers of households accessing help. We will encourage the collection of additional information on the profile of households using the service so we can improve access in the future to all sections of the community.*

- Are you breaking down data by equality groups where relevant (such as by gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity)?

*Data is currently not being collated in this form but see above.*

- Are you using partners, stakeholders, and councillors to get information and feedback?

*Yes we will receive feedback from Community Switch.*

### **3. Impact**

- Are some people benefiting more – or less - than others? If so, why might this be?

*Yes, energy switching is targeted at all households in the borough so that all can benefit from this particularly those who have not yet taken advantage of lower energy bills by switching their supplier.*

### **4. Actions**

- If the evidence suggests that the policy / service / function benefits a particular group – or disadvantages another - is there a justifiable reason for this and if so, what is it?

*As referred to above energy switching will primarily benefit households in fuel poverty particularly those on low incomes or vulnerable in some way (older people, those in poor health and/or with a disability). This is justifiable in that the key objective of this report is to reduce household fuel costs.*

- Is it discriminatory in any way?

*Energy Switching is available to everyone, the purpose of this approach is to sign post and support households who are less likely to be aware of the benefits of switching energy supplier.*

- Is there a possible impact in relationships or perceptions between different parts of the community?

*Measures will be put in place to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to switch energy suppliers including older people and those from the BME community.*

- What measures can you put in place to reduce disadvantages?

*Where possible monitoring and data collection mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that we can identify any barriers to access to particular sections of the population.*

- Do you need to consult further?

*Further and on-going consultation with stakeholders, partners and customers will take place and the outcome and results of this will be monitored and evaluated.*

- Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?

*This is an ongoing process*

- Who should you tell about the outcomes of this analysis?

*The impact will be monitored and reported via the Council's HECA reporting.*

- Have you built the actions into your Business Plan with a clear timescale?

*Energy switching is incorporated into the Council's HECA report.*

- When will this assessment need to be repeated?

*This assessment will be repeated and updated in 1 years' time i.e. 2015.*

**Name: Fiona Goodfellow**

**Signed:**



**Service Area: Regeneration and Housing**

**Dated: 1st March 2013**

**If applicable, please attach copy of – or website link to - the cabinet report for reference.**

**Don't forget to return your written record to HR.**