



Hyndburn Borough Council

Customer First Analysis

Home Energy Conservation Act Report

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 HECA report sets out the energy conservation measures and activity that the Council considers practicable, cost effective and likely to result in significant improvements in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation across all sectors – owner occupation, private rented and social housing. Targets to reduce the number of households in fuel poverty and to reduce carbon emissions in the housing sector are included within the report.

- Who defines and manages it?

The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 places a requirement on local authorities to issue progress reports to national government on the status of their plans to implement energy efficiency measures in the residential housing sector.

- 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 the energy efficiency measures that the Council and its partners will promote particularly households living in energy inefficient homes and those suffering from fuel poverty.

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

Lack of adequate publicity to all the 'protected characteristic' groups of the energy efficiency measures available. In some cases households may not qualify for the measures available due to the eligibility criteria applied particularly in the case of income levels.

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

Energy efficiency measures and activity will be publicised and marketed across the borough with the assistance of our partners including Hyndburn Homewise our home improvement agency. Homewise will also receive feedback from customers about the accessibility and benefits of the measures available 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?

The energy efficiency actions and activity in the HECA Report will be regularly monitored for efficiency in delivery and to ensure that they are being targeted at all households who are likely to benefit from the measures. There is also a statutory requirement to produce an update of the report every 2 years.

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

Our delivery partners will receive feedback from customers about the accessibility and benefits of the measures available and will feed this back to the Borough 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?

Hyndburn Homewise has data and information on households who have accessed energy efficiency measures and this will continue to be collated. 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 new energy efficiency measures are introduced and rolled out in the Borough monitoring information and data will be collected from the energy provider / facilitator / supplier 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 section 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 are using our key partners to provide and supplement information that is held by the Council particularly Hyndburn Homewise and our partner Registered Providers.

3. Impact

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

Households in poor energy efficient homes and those in fuel poverty are likely to benefit more from the energy efficiency measures being promoted than those who have a highly energy efficient home or have sufficient income to meet their fuel costs.

In respect of Collective Energy Switching this is targeted at all households in the borough and 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 the energy measures in this report will primarily benefit households living in energy inefficient / hard to heat homes and those 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 targets in this report and those of central government are to reduce carbon emissions and to reduce the number of households in fuel poverty.

- Is it discriminatory in any way?

No this is not. Measures and activity will be undertaken to ensure that available energy measures are targeted at those households most in need. For example in respect of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) this will be targeted at the areas of low income in Hyndburn identified using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

- 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 access energy saving measures 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 over the lifetime of this report (2 years) and the outcome and results of this will feed into the further report that will be produced in 2 years' time (2015).

- Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?

This is an ongoing process

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

Further HECA Reports will be presented to Cabinet when produced.

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

These are incorporated into the HECA report that is the subject of this Customer First Analysis.

- When will this assessment need to be repeated?

This assessment will be repeated and updated in 2 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.