

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer and Advice Services (Introduced by the Executive Member for Customer and Advice Services)	Executive Cabinet	26 March 2015

## HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) REPORT 2015

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To explain the Council's requirements in respect of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA), to advise on HECA-related activity carried out to date, and to set out the proposed HECA-related activity for the future.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Appendix 1 of this report reviews the Council's HECA-related activities over the past two years and its suggested priorities for the next two years. Members are requested to approve the proposals.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The summary of the HECA further report 2015 is attached as Appendix 1, using the reporting template recommended by DECC (Department of Energy and Climate Change).
4. The report provides context about the requirement to provide a HECA update and gives an update on the Council's performance, based on the latest figures available from the Government, in respect of Carbon Dioxide emissions and Fuel Poverty.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

5. By accepting the HECA report the Council has ensured that it is meeting its statutory obligations to publish such a report by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. There were no alternative options to be considered in terms of providing a HECA

report, because the Council has a statutory obligation to publish one.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	X	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

## BACKGROUND

8. Using powers under section 5(1)(b) of the Home Energy Conservation Act, the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change requires all English authorities to publish progress reports electronically on their website and with a link to be forwarded to the Secretary of State at two yearly intervals ie by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and so on, up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.
9. Since the Council published its initial HECA report in March 2013 the Government has changed the definition of Fuel Poverty.
10. The previous definition of Fuel Poverty is *“where a household would need to spend more than 10% of its income on energy to keep warm”*.
11. The new definition of Fuel Poverty in England is measured by the “Low Income High Cost” definition, which considers a household to be in fuel poverty if:
  - they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)
  - were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
12. In July 2014 DECC issued a consultation document *“Cutting the cost of keeping warm – A new Fuel Poverty strategy for England”*.
13. Following the consultation and feedback received, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 DECC announced the publication of the Government’s new Fuel Poverty Strategy entitled *“Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm”*.
14. This strategy sets a 2020 milestone for as many homes whose Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) are rated F and G as reasonably practicable to be brought to Band E by the end of the next Parliament. Longer term, the new fuel poverty legal target for England states that by 2030, as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable must achieve Band C energy efficiency.
15. Rates of carbon emissions and incidence of fuel poverty within the Chorley area are as follows:
  - 5.1% per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions – based on the most recent figures from 2012, which were published in 2014. This is the lowest per capita rate in Lancashire, and shows a reduction of 0.1% since the last HECA report in March

2013. It also compares well with the Lancashire average of 6.1% per capita, the North West average of 6%, and the UK average of 6.2% (source: DECC 2014 '*Emissions within the scope of influence of Local Authorities for 2005-2012*').)

- 8.2% of homes or approximately 3,654 households in the borough of Chorley are experiencing fuel poverty, based on the most recent figures from 2012, which were published in June 2014. This figure ranks Chorley 231<sup>st</sup> out of 326 Local Authorities in England, and the third lowest incidence of Fuel Poverty across Lancashire. The North West regional average for Fuel Poverty is 11.3% and the national average for England is 10.4%. (Source - Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012 sub-regional fuel poverty data, low income high cost measure)
  - The Council has a corporate strategy target for its Fuel Poverty rates to be below the North West average. To date this target has been met.
16. Fuel Poverty is influenced by three main factors: the energy efficiency of dwellings, the cost of energy, and the income levels of occupants.
17. In Chorley we seek to influence all three determinants of Fuel Poverty in various ways:
- The Energy Switching Support Service helps to make customers' energy bills to be more affordable and, by generating cost savings, provides more disposable income for the household.
  - The Affordable Warmth seasonal funding, provided by LCC, which the Council has used in the past two winters to deliver boiler servicing free of charge for eligible households. To date in the winter of 2014/15, 91 households across Chorley have benefited from either a free boiler service or a free Warm Homes check (draught-proofing measures). These activities help to make residents' homes more energy efficient.
  - The collaborative work in which the Council engages with other District Councils in Lancashire, plus LCC, to deliver various schemes designed to offer residents the opportunity to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes. One such scheme which has recently been launched is "Cosy Homes In Lancashire" or CHIL. There are significant benefits of Districts working together on such projects, not least in terms of the more favourable rates of funding available from Energy Companies and installers, which can be passed on to customers, when collaborating as opposed to operating alone. It is the Council's intention to remain alert for similar collaboration opportunities in cases where tangible benefits exist for Chorley residents.
  - The work undertaken by the Employability Officer, whose role helps unemployed residents back into paid employment and thus be more able to afford to heat their home.
  - The work of the Council's Economic Development Unit seeks to promote commercial activity and business start-ups in Chorley, which in turn leads to greater job opportunities for local residents.

- The partnership working undertaken by Strategic Housing and Planning services, to facilitate the provision of new, energy efficient affordable housing across the borough.
- **Table 1** below gives details of the numbers of new build affordable homes built in Chorley between 2006 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014:

**Table 1**

Ward	Delivered
Chorley South West	79
Adlington & Anderton	74
Astley & Buckshaw	64
Chorley South East	60
Clayton-le-Woods & Whittle-le-Woods	51
Eccleston & Mawdesley	46
Clayton-le-Woods West & Cuerden	45
Chorley North East	39
Lostock	33
Chorley East	30
Coppull	21
Clayton-le-Woods North	19
Chisnall	15
Euxton North	8
Pennine	8
Wheelton and Withnell	4
Heath Charnock and Rivington	4
Chorley North West	0
Euxton South	0
Brindle & Hoghton	0

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

18. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	X	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

## COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

19. There are no financial implications associated with the report.

## COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

20. Any legal obligations on the Council are properly set out in the report.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON  
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND ADVICE SERVICES

<b>Background Papers</b>			
<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>File</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>
1. Guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities issued pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995	March 2013		<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180786/Updated_version_of_HECA_guidance_-_March_2013.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180786/Updated_version_of_HECA_guidance_-_March_2013.pdf</a>
2. "Cutting the cost of keeping warm: a new fuel poverty strategy for England" (consultation document)	June 2014		<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335099/fuel_poverty_consultation.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335099/fuel_poverty_consultation.pdf</a>
3. DECC fuel poverty statistics 2012	June 2014		<a href="http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?siteid=6121&amp;pageid=35490&amp;e=e">http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?siteid=6121&amp;pageid=35490&amp;e=e</a>
4. Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm – A Fuel Poverty Strategy for England	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2015		<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cutting-the-cost-of-keeping-warm">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cutting-the-cost-of-keeping-warm</a>

<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Ext</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Doc ID</b>
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