

Report of	Meeting	Date
Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Early Intervention (Introduced by the Executive Member for Early Intervention)	Executive Cabinet	16 March 2017

HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) REPORT 2017

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 2017 is attached as Appendix 1, using the reporting template recommended by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
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 Fuel Poverty and Carbon dioxide emissions.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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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 31st March 2017.

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 Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 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 heca-reports@beis.gov.uk at two yearly intervals ie by 31st March 2017, 31st March 2019 and so on, up to and including 31st March 2027.
9. One of the key aspects of a Council's HECA report is the work being undertaken to address Fuel Poverty.
10. Fuel Poverty rates for Chorley, based on the most recent figures from 2014 (which were published in 2016) indicate that 8.7% of homes or approximately 3,968 households in the borough of Chorley are experiencing fuel poverty.
11. This figure places Chorley 229th out of 326 Local Authorities in England.
12. This is the second lowest incidence of Fuel Poverty in Lancashire and the third lowest in the North West.
13. The North West regional average for Fuel Poverty is 11.2% and the national average for England is 10.6%. (*Source – BEIS*).
14. The Council's corporate strategy target is for Chorley's Fuel Poverty rates to be below the North West average. To date this target has been attained.
15. Fuel Poverty is influenced by three main factors: the energy efficiency of dwellings, the cost of energy, and the income levels of occupants.
16. In Chorley we seek to influence all three determinants of Fuel Poverty in various ways.
17. The **Energy Switching Support Service**, which the Council introduced in 2014, helps to make customers' energy bills more affordable and, by generating cost savings, provides more disposable income for the household.
18. Since the service launched in June 2014, up to 31st January 2017, the Council has assisted 495 customers to switch tariffs.
19. Customers have collectively saved a total of £133,225 by switching, which equates to average annual savings of £269.10 achieved by each customer who has switched.

20. In October 2016 the Council successfully bid to LCC for **Affordable Warmth Grant**, to deliver various Affordable Warmth interventions such as providing boiler servicing free of charge for eligible households.
21. The approved funding of £35,936 for the winter of 2016/17 is sub-divided as follows:
 - £13,500 on heating system maintenance incorporating boiler services and gas fire servicing
 - £4,000 on draught proofing
 - £12,500 to assist customers with Energy Company Obligation ('ECO') funding shortfalls to obtain new boilers
 - £3,000 on cavity wall insulation
 - £2,936 on loft insulation
22. As at 1st February 2017, 42 households have benefited from one or more interventions funded by the Affordable Warmth Fund. The scheme will run until the end of April 2017, and it is anticipated that the Council will receive a similar amount of funding for the winter of 2017/18.
23. The Council engages with other District Councils in Lancashire, plus LCC, on a number of collaborations to deliver various schemes designed to offer residents the opportunity to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes.
24. Since the last HECA report in 2015 the Council's ongoing Energy Efficiency collaboration with other District and Unitary Councils in Lancashire and the County Council has operated under the banner of **'Cosy Homes in Lancashire' (CHiL)**.
25. The intention of CHiL, which was supported by the Directors of Public Health in Lancashire, was that it would act as a county-wide mechanism to attract ECO and other funding. <http://www.chil.uk.com/about-chil>
26. The scheme operated as a one year pilot project during 2016, with day to day project management undertaken by a Project Manager hosted by Blackpool Council. The scheme yielded modest results as far as Chorley was concerned. 6 households qualified for free boiler installations.
27. During 2016, again operating under the 'CHiL' banner, a successful bid on behalf of Lancashire was submitted to the Government which resulted in funding being awarded via the DECC 'Central Heating Fund'. Only 20 bids were successful nationally.
28. The aim of the Central Heating Fund was to offer 'first time' central heating to eligible residents whose homes had never previously had it. Therefore a simple boiler replacement was not an eligible item, but a full installation of central heating - including radiators – where none had previously existed, was eligible.
29. By the time that the scheme closed in early February 2017, 16 households across Chorley had received full central heating systems. In 7 of the 14 Lancashire Districts (including Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool) between 15 and 30 households had received full central heating systems under this programme.

30. Other areas of the Council's work also contribute to the overall objective of addressing Fuel Poverty:
31. The Council's Employment, Skills and Business Support team seek to promote commercial activity and business start-ups in Chorley, which in turn leads to greater job opportunities for local residents. This includes the specific role of the Employability Officer, whose work helps unemployed residents back into paid employment and thus be more able to afford to heat their home.
32. The Business Development and Growth Directorate facilitate the provision of new, energy efficient affordable housing across the borough.
33. Between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2016 a total of 795 new build affordable homes have been built in Chorley.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

34. 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

35. All expenditure is met from external funding. Funding of £21,561 has already been received with the remaining £14,375 to be received before the end of the financial year.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

36. No comment

JAMIE CARSON
 DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/
 DIRECTOR OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
1. Guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities issued pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995	January 2017		https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581598/HECA_Guidance_2017.pdf
2. DECC fuel poverty statistics 2014	June 2016		http://dashboards.instantatlas.com/viewer/report?appid=76dd5dc8c5b041458608752ffd11b67a&authid=EeUdmTVM2tQfwwHh
3. UK Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emission national statistics 2005-2014	June 2016		https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2014
4. Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat (Government response to the consultation)	January 2017		https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/energy-company-obligation-eco-help-to-heat
5. Chorley Council draft Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy	January 2017 (consultation draft)		https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s71205/Report.pdf https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s71206/Private%20Sector%20Housing%20Assistance%20Draft%20Policy%20for%20Consultation.pdf

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