

CABINET MEMBERS DELEGATED DECISION

Open		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards	Mandatory/	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES/NO
	Discretionary /	Need to be recommendations to Council		YES/NO
	Operational	Is it a Key Decision		YES/NO
Lead Member: Cllr Adrian Lawrence E-mail:		Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
		Other Members consulted:		
Lead Officer: Ray Harding E-mail: Direct Dial:		Other Officers consulted: Duncan Hall, Gordon Jackson-Hopps		
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)				
Date meeting advertised: 7 th August 2018			Date of meeting decision to be taken: 14 th August 2018	
Deadline for Call-In: 21 st August 2018				

FLEXIBLE ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT OF INTENT (ECO FLEX)

Recommendation	<p>To adopt a Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent so as to permit the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to make declarations determining that certain households meet the eligibility criteria for energy efficiency measures under the Affordable Warmth element of Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.</p>
Reason for Decision	<p>The adoption of a Statement of Intent will allow the Borough Council to support and assist fuel poor and vulnerable households.</p>

Background

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an obligation placed upon larger energy companies by the Government to help households reduce their energy bills and associated carbon emissions.

Changes to ECO have enabled obligated energy companies to achieve up to 10% of their Affordable Warmth targets in conjunction with local authorities via a mechanism called ECO Flexible Eligibility.

ECO Flexible Eligibility (ECO Flex) allows local authorities to work with energy companies to identify eligible households for the installation of energy efficiency measures.

There are two main categories of household that government intends ECO Flex will benefit;

1. Fuel poor households, especially those that are not in receipt of ECO eligible benefits, and the estimated 20% of fuel poor households that are not in receipt of any benefits.
2. Low income households that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

A prerequisite of the ECO Flex mechanism is that local authorities produce and publish a Statement of Intent. The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (the Council) intends to take part in ECO Flexible Eligibility and the Statement of Intent (SOI) in Appendix A details how the Council will identify households as eligible, and the criteria which will be adopted.

In addition to publishing a SOI, a declaration is required from participating local authorities for each household they assess as being eligible. The production of declarations will ensure that the Council has been consulted on the proposed installation of measures in eligible homes. The inclusion of a household in a declaration will not guarantee that a household receives any measures. A final decision will depend upon; i) a survey carried out by the energy suppliers agents or contractors and installation costs calculated, ii) energy savings that can be achieved and iii) whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

The final decision on whether a household is successful in receiving an ECO measure(s) is made by the energy company, their agents and or contractors. The Council is not responsible for making any final decisions on which households receive measures.

Also, the Borough Council was a partner to a funding bid lead by Broadland District Council, who successfully bid for £3.1m in funding from the Warm Homes Fund. This funding will be used over the next two years to help fuel-poor households across Norfolk. Norfolk's Warm Homes Fund Partnership will help residents who are in poor health, at risk of ill health, have underlying health issues, or are caring for a vulnerable person or worried about their home being cold or damp.

The funding will provide first-time central heating systems to increase comfort in fuel-poor households that do not have any central heating. This project aims to help more than 1,000 people – including homeowners, landlords, private tenants and social housing tenants – with energy advice and support, and first time central heating, such as renewable heating, mains gas, oil, or LPG.

By adopting a Flex Statement with criteria similar to the Broadland District Council and South Norfolk District Council joint Statement of Intent this will allow the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk to also refer fuel poor or vulnerable households to this scheme seamlessly.

Policy Implications

The potential opportunities arising from ECO Flex complements the work currently taking place within the Borough to address the issues surrounding fuel poverty and excess winter deaths.

The Council's Home Energy Conservation Act report (HECA report) makes reference to the Council's priority areas, in terms of reducing fuel poverty levels and excess winter deaths.

Financial Implications

It is not anticipated that there will be any financial implications.

Personnel Implications

Existing Housing Standards officers and Care & Repair staff will make assessments where appropriate and they will prepare declarations for sign off by nominated senior officers. It is proposed that the Housing Standards Manager and the Home Improvement Agency Manager will authorise relevant declarations with Service Managers deputising in their absence.

Statutory Considerations

The adoption of a SOI is complementary to those objectives identified in the Council's Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report published in accordance with the Energy Conservation Act 1995 and the adoption and governance will be in accordance with government guidance published to support the ECO Flex scheme.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

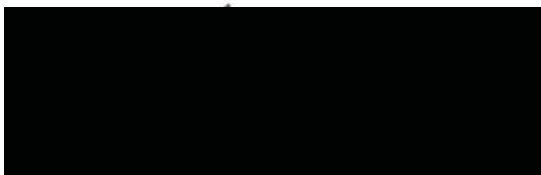
Pre-screening complete and attached.

Risk Management Implications

None identified.

Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None



Signed
(Cabinet Member)

6/8/18
Date



Appendix A

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

1) Introduction

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (the Council) will use the flexible eligibility part of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) to assist residents in fuel poverty. This will contribute to a number of the Council's key ambitions and will increase levels of health and wellbeing for residents.

Once a declaration has been authorised, the case will be passed onto an ECO provider and will then fall under standard ECO regulation. Meeting the flexible eligibility criteria does not guarantee the installation of measures, this rests with the obligated energy suppliers or their contractors. The final decision depends on i) the survey carried out by supplier's agents/contractors and installation costs calculated; ii) the energy savings that can be achieved for a property; iii) whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

2) Identifying Eligible Households

The Council will use the following eligibility criteria to identify households that may benefit from the installation of measures under ECO Flexible Eligibility. This scheme is only available for those who live in private housing (owner occupiers or renting from a private landlord).

Criteria for Identifying Fuel Poverty

In order to be eligible the resident must meet one of the low income criteria (A) AND either one from high costs (B) OR one from vulnerable to cold (C).

Note: The assessment of a household's income will consider all household incomes excluding those of non-dependents.

(A) Low Income

In receipt of any income related benefit:

- Housing benefit
- Council tax reduction/support (not single occupancy)
- Child tax credit - no income cap
- Working tax credit – no income cap
- Universal credit – no income cap
- Pension savings credit

Or

Households not in receipt of an income related benefit will be assessed using the income thresholds shown in Table 1. Table 1 refers to a household's disposable income after they have paid a mortgage or rent.

Table 1. Low income thresholds the Council will use to identify households eligible for ECO support.

Household composition	Annual household income	Monthly household income equivalent
1 adult (18yrs & over)	£8,900	£740
and 1 child	£11,700	£980
and 2 children	£14,400	£1,200
and 3 children	£17,300	£1,440
and 4+ children	£20,100	£1,680
2 adults (18yrs & over)	£14,600	£1,220
and 1 child	£17,400	£1,450
and 2 children	£20,200	£1,680
and 3 children	£23,100	£1,930
and 4+ children	£25,700	£2,140

Or

If a resident is in receipt of State Pension, a household will be assessed using the following income criteria:

- Where the household income consists of only one resident's income where more than 50% is from state pension and the resident has less than £10,000 in savings and investments.
- Where the household income consists of a resident and their partner's income where more than 75% of their income is made up from state pension and the residents combined have no more than £20,000 in savings and investments.

(B) High Costs

The resident is either:

- Living in a property with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of F or G.
- If an EPC is not available, a score of over **80** on the questionnaire below is required:

Questionnaire

Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	5
	2	10
	3	35
	4	55
	5	70
	6 +	80
Are energy payments made by direct debit?	Yes	0
	No	15
What type of house is it?	Semi detached	30
	Terrace	20
	Flat	15
	Detached	30
What is the tenure?	Private rented	15
	Owner occupier	0
Does the home use a boiler?	Yes	0
	No	15
Was the home built before 1964?	Yes	25
	No	0
What is the main fuel type?	Gas	0
	Electricity	30
	Other	15
	Broken heating	15

(C) Vulnerability to Cold

The resident:

- is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Incapacity Benefit or Attendance Allowance

Or

- is aged 65 and over, or has a child under 5 or is pregnant

Or

- is on the Energy Companies' Priority Service register

Or

- has a health or vulnerability condition that can be exacerbated by living in a cold home, with confirmation from one of the following:
 - letter from GP or hospital
 - other medical professional
 - invitation for free flu jab for health reasons

Any details of scheme requirements for SWI “in-fill” projects

At this stage the Council will not be actively searching for in-fill properties but will declare eligible properties if approached by a resident or ECO provider. This is due to an expectation that the grants provided through ECO will be insufficient to enable a fuel poor household to afford solid wall insulation. Where a property doesn't meet the fuel poverty criteria they can be declared “in-fill” if they are:

- in the same terrace as; or
- in an immediately adjacent building to; or
- are in the same building as a household that does meet those criteria.

There are also minimum percentages of households that must apply:

Property Type	Declaration Requirements
Semi-detached or a building containing no more than two domestic properties	At least 1 of the 2 (50%) properties must have been declared as fuel poor and therefore be eligible for ECO
Any premises that are contained in the same building (e.g. flats), immediately adjacent buildings (e.g. neighbouring properties) or in the same terrace	At least 2 of the 3 (66%) properties must have been declared as fuel poor and therefore be eligible for ECO

3) Acting on Behalf of another Local Authority

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk will not be acting on behalf of any other authority.

4) Joint Statement of Intent

This is not applicable.

5) Governance

The Housing Standards Manager and the Home Improvement Agency Manager will be principally responsible for authorising declarations. In their absence it will be signed by relevant Service Managers.

6) Referrals

The council expects referrals for flexible eligibility to come in three ways:

- Self-referrals from residents;
- Referrals from other council teams or partner organisations;
- Referrals from ECO providers or installers.

Declarations will be passed to contractors through secure data transfer and only where authorised by the applying household.

7) Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting

Officers will verify that a resident meets the eligibility criteria before processing a declaration.

To evidence eligibility, the following information will be documented:

- Name, address and telephone number
- Property, heating type and measure required
- Official documents to support sections A, B or C criteria.

To prevent fraud, this information will be collected in the application form which residents will sign to declare the information is correct. Official benefit letters will be checked and if necessary will be verified internally with the benefits team. External sources may also be sought such as EPC data, gas grid maps and google street view to verify answers.

Application forms and supporting documentation will be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policies.

8) Signature

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area. A dotted line extends from the bottom left corner of the box to the right.

Ray Harding
Chief Executive, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Flexible Eligibility - Statement of Intent				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	To adopt a Statement of Intent so as to permit the Council to declare fuel poor and vulnerable households eligible for ECO funding.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			X	
	Disability			X	
	Gender			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
Other (eg low income)	X				
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes / No	Not likely.			
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes / No	The adoption of a Statement of Intent will be in line with government guidance and will reflect the aims of government policy.			
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes / No	The policy will widen the scope of available energy efficiency measures funding for low income, fuel poor and vulnerable households.			
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes / No	Actions: No actions proposed.			
		<p>Actions agreed by EWG member:</p> <p>.....</p>			
Assessment completed by: Name	Gordon Jackson-Hopps				
Job title Senior Housing Standards Officer	Date July 2018				