



Hyndburn Borough Council

Customer First Analysis

Housing Renewal Policy (Cabinet Report 17 July 2019)

1. Purpose

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

The overall aim of this Policy is to encourage home owners and landlords to invest in their own property and to target available funds towards the most vulnerable households living in the worst housing conditions and within areas of market weakness. In particular, public funds will be utilised to meet the Council's objectives to support independent living, increasing levels of fitness and decency, targeting empty homes and alleviating fuel poverty and excess cold.

The aims of the policy are to:-

- *Improve housing conditions across the borough*
- *Reduce the number of vulnerable households living in sub-decent housing*
- *Reduce the number of vacant homes*
- *Adapt homes for people with disabilities*
- *Tackle fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency*
- *Achieve improvements in condition and management in the private rented sector*

And subsequently reduce health inequalities that are a consequence of poor housing conditions.

- Who defines and manages it?

The Regulatory Reform (England and Wales) (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 (the RRO) grants a general power on local authorities to provide "assistance" "in any form" "to any person", to improve, repair, adapt or rebuild residential premises.

The RRO reflects the view that it is primarily the responsibility of private sector owners to maintain their own property but it recognises that some owners, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, do not have the necessary resources to repair or improve their homes. Local authorities therefore, subject to resources, have an important role to play in providing assistance in these cases.

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

The aim will be to provide assistance to vulnerable households including the elderly and disabled and those with limited resources.

Disabled Facility Grants will benefit households that contain a disabled member where adaptations have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist as being necessary to meet their need and to help support the household to continue to live independently.

Additional assistance / interventions will be available to households who meet the following vulnerability criteria:-

- *people with a diagnosed cardiovascular conditions*
- *people with a diagnosed respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)*
- *people with diagnosed mental health conditions*
- *people with diagnosed disabilities*
- *older people (65 and older)*
- *households with young children (up to the age of 5)*
- *pregnant women*
- *people who are terminally ill*
- *people with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)*
- *people who have mobility issues and have attended hospital due to a fall*

The following vulnerable groups will be considered on referral from a professional organisation

- *people who move in and out of homelessness*
- *people with addictions*
- *Recent immigrants and refugees.*

Subject to funding support may also be available to assist in the relocation of households as a result of the Council's regeneration and growth plans and to private owners to bring empty homes back onto use. This assistance will be subject to eligibility criteria.

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

Lack of awareness of the types of assistance available and the availability of funding.

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

Working with partners we aim to provide information and advice to assist any person to improve, repair, adapt or rebuild residential premises. In doing so, we may enter into partnership arrangements with Registered Providers, the private sector, the voluntary sector, home improvement agencies, health, other local authorities and fuel poverty and energy efficiency partnerships and collaborations.

Details of assistance will be available on the Council website. A full copy of the policy will be available to the public free at the council offices and a summary document available on request.

2. Evidence

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

Assistance will be targeted and provided to the most vulnerable households as per the aims of the policy and detailed above. For example households in receipt of affordable warmth grants that will improve the energy efficiency and thermal comfort of their homes - this will also improve their health.

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

Households will be required to sign a certificate to say they are satisfied with the work and standard of works completed. Customer survey / satisfaction surveys may also be completed.

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

It is well evidenced that poorly maintained homes negatively impact on physical and mental health. Effective interventions can:

- *help prevent people being admitted to hospital*
- *help people to be discharged from hospital*
- *support people to remain independent in the community*

Hyndburn has not undertaken a recent House Condition Survey. However pages on the Lancashire CC Insight website <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/> contain a wealth of data on area profiles, health and social care, deprivation, wellbeing etc that gives information at a district and ward level.

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

There is a wealth of information relating to poor house conditions and its impact particularly on health and well-being. This is freely available online and through nationally published reports.

Gathering of information on the groups of vulnerable households assisted will help in targeting assistance and interventions.

- 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)?

This information is collected on the application form and recorded on a data monitoring form.

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

The Council and partners that we work with to deliver the assistance will gather this information. Feedback and case studies will detail the benefits of the interventions.

3. Impact

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

The types of assistance have eligibility criteria that are targeted at the most vulnerable households and those with limited resources. These households are most disadvantaged in terms of their health and housing conditions so the interventions will have a greater impact.

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?

The types of assistance are targeted at the most vulnerable groups i.e. people with physical or mental health conditions, older people, or families with young children, These households are likely to be spending more time at home therefore spending more of their disposable income

on heating and maintaining their homes. They may have to limit the time they have the heating on in order to be able to afford it. By making their homes more energy efficient the households should have more disposable income to spend on keeping themselves warmth and safe in their own homes.

- Is it discriminatory in any way?

No this is to benefit the most vulnerable people in the Borough so that the number living in sub-decent housing is reduced, the fuel poverty inequality gap is reduced and housing conditions across the borough are improved.

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

None envisaged.

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

Ensure the availability of assistance is well publicised to vulnerable households.

Recording and analysis of service users accessing support by vulnerability group so we can identify where targeted promotion maybe needed for those not taking up assistance.

- Do you need to consult further?

No

- Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?

Not at present. As the types of assistance are introduced improvements in customer service will be integral to their delivery

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

Hyndburn BC via monitoring undertaken.

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

Not applicable

- When will this assessment need to be repeated?

When and if the nature of the policy and interventions change significantly.

Name: FIONA GOODFELLOW

Signed:



Service Area: REGENERATION & HOUSING

Dated :

28th June 2019

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.