



**EQUALITY ANALYSIS**  
**Fuel Poverty Strategy 2012**



## LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING EQUALITY ANALYSIS

### HAVERING COUNCIL FUEL POVERTY STRATEGY 2012

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#### SCOPE OF PROPOSAL

- 1. What is the scope and intended outcomes of the activity being assessed; in terms of both the Council's organisation and staffing, and services to the community?**

- 1 (a) Organisation and Staffing**

As 70% of Havering Council staff live in the borough, measures to reduce fuel poverty in Havering will impact some Council staff and their families who may be facing fuel poverty themselves. See 1(b) below for intended outcomes.

- 1 (b) Services to the Community**

The Fuel Poverty Strategy 2011 builds on the work undertaken since the previous Strategy from 2004. Havering Council will aim to:

- Stabilise and reduce the numbers of people vulnerable to fuel poverty within Havering

This will be achieved through initiatives to:

- Improve the energy efficiency of housing in Havering
- Increase awareness among residents on how they can reduce their energy costs and cope with cold weather
- Maintain data on housing within the borough and access funding and finance to deliver fuel poverty measures for residents

#### PEOPLE AFFECTED

- 2. Which individuals and groups are likely to be affected by the activity?**

- 2 (a) Staff Individuals and Groups**

As 70% of Havering Council staff members live in the borough, some may be affected by the Fuel Poverty Strategy. This would particularly be the case for staff members who live in properties which are very energy inefficient or have poor

heating systems and are part-time staff or on low incomes, staff with disabilities, or staff who may be struggling with financial difficulties.

## **2 (b) Community Individuals and Groups** (*including voluntary organisations*)

Individuals and groups targeted by the Fuel Poverty Strategy are those who are facing fuel poverty. People who can be more at risk of fuel poverty are those with disabilities, older residents, and households on low incomes or receiving means-tested benefits.

## **DATA AND INFORMATION**

### **3. What data/information do you have about the people with ‘protected characteristics’** (*age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation*) **or other socio-economic disadvantage** (*e.g. disabled and part-time workers, low income and/or lone parents (mothers and fathers), looked-after children, other vulnerable children, families and adults*) **among these individuals and groups? What information do you have about how they will be affected by the activity? Will you be seeking further information in order to assess the equalities impact of the activity? How is this information being used to influence decisions on the activity?**

#### **3 (a) Staff**

See 3(b) below – applicable for staff living in Havering who fall into the affected categories mentioned above.

#### **3 (b) Community**

Within Havering, in 2009 an estimated 15.2 percent of the population were facing fuel poverty.

In Havering, 13 percent of the population are receiving work-related benefits and 4 percent of Havering residents are receiving income support. Nineteen percent of Havering households are living in poverty. Seventeen percent of working age people reported having a disability, with four percent of the population in Havering receiving disability allowance.

Eighteen percent of the population are over the age of 65 years. Thirty percent of pensionable age residents are receiving pension credit.

Generally, areas with high levels of social housing are also the areas with the highest numbers of residents facing fuel poverty. The three wards with the highest levels of fuel poverty are Romford Town, Gooshays and South Hornchurch. These areas also have more households facing unemployment, on low incomes and receiving benefits.

As the Fuel Poverty Strategy aims to assist these groups, we are using this information to target programmes to those most vulnerable.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **4. If no data and information is available about the groups likely to be affected by the activity, how would you inform your EA? Will you be considering carrying out some consultation to inform your EA?**

#### **4 (a) Staff**

Meetings have been held with relevant Council services to discuss the Fuel Poverty Strategy, including Social Services (presentation to the Adults Transformation Board, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012), Housing, Customer Services and the Climate Change Strategic Working Group. Feedback from these discussions has been incorporated into the strategy, in terms of setting actions, identifying and verifying data on target groups, and making links with other strategies.

#### **4 (b) Community**

Consultation has been held with Homes in Havering, NHS Havering and Havering Citizens Advice Bureau. The Financial Inclusion Project Board, which comprises members from various community groups, has had a presentation and discussion on the Fuel Poverty Strategy (6<sup>th</sup> February 2012). Comments on identifying target areas, working with key partners and related strategies being developed have been incorporated.

The strategy will be sent to stakeholder groups for a six week consultation period, and the strategy will be revised where appropriate to take into consideration stakeholder comments.

## **LIKELY IMPACT**

### **5. Based on the collected data and information, what will be the likely impact of the activity on individuals and groups with protected characteristics or other socio-economic disadvantage?**

#### **5 (a) Staff**

As mentioned in the previous sections, the likely impact on staff will be the same as the community, for those that fall into the groups most likely to be affected by fuel poverty (see 5(b) below for further detail).

#### **5 (b) Community**

The likely impact of the strategy on individuals or groups identified previously will be an improvement in their ability to heat their homes to an adequate level. People within these groups will be assisted in finding opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and will be provided with advice and assistance in reducing

their energy bills and dealing with cold weather. This will lead to reduced winter illness and improved living conditions for people with protected characteristics or facing socio-economic disadvantage that are facing fuel poverty.

**6. What is the likely impact on arrangements for safeguarding children and/or safeguarding vulnerable adults?**

**6 (a) Vulnerable children**

Vulnerable children who are already receiving support through children's services may also be at risk of fuel poverty, which can have a detrimental effect on their health, education (e.g. difficulty in concentrating, home environment not conducive to doing homework) and quality of life. Through the measures proposed in the Fuel Poverty Strategy, social care services within Havering will be made aware of the risks of fuel poverty, how to identify families facing fuel poverty and what services and assistance can help these families.

**6 (b) Vulnerable adults**

Vulnerable adults may also be facing fuel poverty, particularly those on low incomes or with disabilities. Fuel poverty can lead to social exclusion, poor quality of life and increased vulnerability to winter and respiratory illness. The Fuel Poverty Strategy outlines actions for voluntary groups and social services that work with vulnerable adults to be aware of the risks of fuel poverty, how to identify households facing fuel poverty and what services and assistance can help these individuals.

**PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION**

**7. If any negative impact is identified, is there a way of eliminating or minimising it to reasonable level? If not, how can the negative impact be justified?**

**7 (a) Staff**

See 7(b) below.

**7 (b) Community**

No negative impact identified, as the Fuel Poverty Strategy will help fuel poor households facing socio-economic disadvantage and fuel poor individuals with protected characteristics of age and disability.

**PROMOTING EQUALITY**

**8. How will the activity help the Council fulfil its legal duty to advance equality of opportunity in the way services are provided?**

## **8 (a) Staff**

Staff living in Havering facing fuel poverty will be able to access the same programmes and schemes that are available for the community.

## **8 (b) Community**

Because households with socio-economic disadvantage, older residents and residents with disabilities are most at risk of fuel poverty, helping residents facing fuel poverty will inevitably address inequality in the ability of these households to heat their homes adequately.

## **SPECIFIC NEEDS**

### **9. What actions will you be taking in order to maximise positive impact and minimise negative impact from the activity?**

#### **9 (a) Staff**

Havering Council staff will be able to access schemes and programmes that are available to all residents of Havering who are facing fuel poverty.

#### **9 (b) Community**

Actions to maximise positive impact will include:

*1. Collaborating with agencies and Council Services who work with residents at risk of fuel poverty to raise awareness of:*

- *available grants and income maximisation*
- *ways to get the best energy price*
- *ways to improve resilience to severe cold and available assistance*
- *ways to reduce energy consumption*
- *works that can improve energy efficiency in homes*

*Specifically through:*

- *Training frontline staff and volunteer agencies*
- *Delivering awareness events and presentations to groups*
- *Providing communications on fuel poverty, cold weather and energy efficiency (information materials, publicity campaigns, etc.)*
- *Accessing funding to promote, support and deliver cold weather services and schemes for vulnerable residents*

Communications will be delivered with the Corporate Communications team to ensure it is accessible for different groups. Various communication channels and methods will be used to reach as many people as possible. Existing networks within faith and racial/ethnic groups will be used to promote the information to other protected characteristic groups beyond age, disability and socio-economic disadvantage.

2. *Consolidate databases on housing stock and socio-economic indicators in Havering to identify vulnerable households.*

Data from social services, customer services, housing, Homes in Havering and customer insight data will be used to identify houses at risk of fuel poverty and particularly targeting the most vulnerable in protected groups.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

**10. Once implemented, how often do you intend to monitor the actual impact of the activity?**

**10 (a) Staff**

See 10(b) below.

**10 (b) Community**

The impact will be reported to the Adults Transformation Board and the Housing Strategy Board on a 6-monthly basis.

## **SIGN OFF AND PUBLICATION**

**11. When completed, the Equality Analysis needs to be signed off by the Head of Service. Once signed off, it should be forwarded to the Directorate Equality Analysis Web administrator to publish it on the council's website.**

**HEAD OF SERVICE**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Signature:**