

## Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

### City of York Council

Date of publication 17/05/2019

Publication on website: [www.york.gov.uk/flexibleECO](http://www.york.gov.uk/flexibleECO)

Version: 002

#### 1) Introduction

Under the Energy Company Obligation Regulations 2018–2022 (ECO3) local authorities can set their own criteria for eligibility for funding for domestic energy efficiency measures. This funding is aimed at those within a local authority most likely to be in fuel poverty. Energy companies can spend up to a maximum of 25% of their full obligation within these criteria.

The Leeds City Region intends to adopt a city region wide approach to implementing the forthcoming Flexible Eligibility policy initiative within the current Energy Company Obligation regulations, through the Better Homes Yorkshire programme, the City of York Council Statement of Intent fits within this framework.

The focus of funding on those most vulnerable and use of funding to increase the uptake of energy efficiency improvements supports the following Council Plans and Strategies:

#### **City of York Council Private Sector Housing Strategy 2016-2021<sup>1</sup>:**

- Encourage and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from category 1 hazards
- To enable people whose independence may be at risk safely remain in or return to their home
- Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty

#### **One Planet York<sup>2</sup>**

- Principle 1 – Health and Happiness – All residents enjoying long, healthy, independent and safe lives.
- Principle 2 – Equity and Local Economy - A high skilled, low poverty, low carbon, circular economy aided by a high concentration of businesses.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3162/consultation\\_private\\_sector\\_housing\\_strategy](https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3162/consultation_private_sector_housing_strategy)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20252/one\\_planet\\_york/1846/one\\_planet\\_york](https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20252/one_planet_york/1846/one_planet_york)

- Principle 9 – Zero Carbon - Creating energy efficient buildings, getting most of our energy from renewable sources and ensuring York is climate ready.

### City of York Council Plan 2015-2019<sup>3</sup>

- Prosperous city for all - where local businesses can thrive and residents have good quality jobs, housing and opportunities;
- A focus on frontline services - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities;
- A council that listens to residents - to ensure it delivers the services they want and works in partnership with local communities.

In addition Priority 3 of the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (Clean Energy and Environmental Resilience) 2016-2036<sup>4</sup> sets out a long term ambition to become a resilient zero carbon energy economy underpinned by high quality infrastructure. Priority 3 particularly emphasises the ambition to:

- Deliver improvements that make homes across the Leeds City Region warmer and reduce fuel poverty;
- Develop partnership and funding models with the health sector to deliver collaborative interventions that reduce extreme cold and damp and improve health.

The policy approach is based on the following principles:

- Eligibility criteria are to be as streamlined, and simple, as possible
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- Early engagement with energy suppliers
- Early engagement with local Members and partners
- Eligibility via 2 routes:
  - Geographical areas based on priority communities; and
  - Eligibility for funding due to individual circumstances (based on criteria developed and refined already for the Central Heating Fund programme).

This approach has been taken to maximise the potential for funding however fitting the criteria within the statement of intent does not guarantee that any individual household will benefit from energy saving improvements as the final decision on funding rests with energy suppliers and will depend on:

- a. The survey carried out and installation costs calculated;
- b. The energy savings that can be achieved for a property, and
- c. Whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/7880/council\\_plan\\_2015-2019](https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/7880/council_plan_2015-2019)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.investleedscityregion.com/system/files/uploaded\\_files/SEP-2016-FINAL.pdf](http://www.investleedscityregion.com/system/files/uploaded_files/SEP-2016-FINAL.pdf)

## 2) How the City of York Council intends to identify eligible households

### Fuel Poverty

Households will be considered as living in fuel poverty or at risk of fuel poverty if they are determined to be a low income household, living in a high cost home in relation to energy use.

Households need to meet Stage 1 (Low Income) criteria and one of the Stage 2 (High Cost) criteria, based on March 2015 Government Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Stage	Criteria	Definition
Stage 1	Low Income	Gross household income of <£21,000
Stage 2	a) High Cost	Property EPC rating of E, F or G
	b) High Cost	Property EPC rating of D; and Living in a hard to treat home Property is primarily constructed with: Solid walls; Non standard cavity walls; System built walls; No connection to mains gas; No loft.

**Households with Low Incomes within the following areas are also identified as households in fuel poverty.**

Households located within the following Wards defined by the Local Authority as priority areas for action:

- Micklegate
- Guildhall
- Fishergate
- Holgate
- Clifton
- Hull Road
- Heworth
- Westfield

These areas have been identified in the Council's Private Sector Housing Stock Modelling report produced by the Building Research Establishment in December 2015 and are the most fuel poor Wards within the City<sup>5</sup>.

### 2b) Low Income and Vulnerability to Cold

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics#2016-statistics>

Households will be considered a low Income household, and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, if they meet Stage 1 (Low Income) criteria and someone in the household meets one of the Stage 2 (High Cost) criteria. These are based on NICE guideline NG6 on “Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes”.

Stage	Criteria	Definition
Stage 1	Low Income	Gross household income of <£21,000
Stage 2	a) High Cost and vulnerable to cold	Property EPC rating of D; and Has a health condition made worse by cold, for example: Chronic respiratory, cardio vascular, or musculoskeletal illness, mental health condition, disability made worse by cold living conditions, terminal illness, or suppressed immune system.
	b) High Cost and vulnerable to cold	Property EPC rating of D; and Has a vulnerable resident: Over 70 years of age Child under 16 resident in the household

All Flexible Eligibility ECO will be delivered by Better Homes Yorkshire. The Better Homes Yorkshire programme was procured at the end of December 2014, and was launched in March 2015, to respond to the challenge of cold homes and fuel poverty. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and all 10 Leeds City Region Local Authorities contracted with Keepmoat and Fortem to deliver domestic energy efficiency measures, secure ECO and Green Deal funding (and their successors), up to 2022.

### 3) Governance

Local Authority Declarations will be valid when signed by the Housing Standards and Adaptations Manager, Assistant Director of Housing and Community Safety, or a City of York Council service Director.

Approaches by suppliers (or organisations with ECO funding available) for Local Authority Declarations will be screened initially by the Council’s Home Energy Project Manager before being considered for approval by the Housing Standards and Adaptations Manager

### 4) Referrals

Referrals may be received from front line staff within the Council; health and social care sectors; and trusted partner agencies including AgeUK and Citizens' Advice York. Referrals will also be accepted from Better Homes Yorkshire.

## **5) Evidence, monitoring and reporting**

Declarations issued pursuant to this Statement of Intent will be monitored and reported on a scheme by scheme basis as required by the Council.

### **Schemes with Local Authority Declarations Proposed by Outside Organisations**

Where a scheme has been proposed by an organisation outside of the Better Homes Yorkshire partnership and agreed with Better Homes Yorkshire, progress will be monitored through the Better Homes Officers Group with reporting to the Better Homes Yorkshire Programme Board. Qualification evidence for such Declared schemes will be required by the Council for audit and anti-fraud purposes.

## **6) Signature**

**Tom Brittain**  
**Assistant Director for Housing & Community Safety**