

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) Statement of Intent for ECO Flexible Eligibility

Version 1 – 25/07/2017

Withdrawn - 17/09/2017

Overview

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) is a brand established in 2014 to improve the energy efficiency of Lancashire homes, address health inequalities exacerbated by living in cold damp homes, reduce fuel poverty, tackle seasonal excess deaths and reduce carbon emissions from the domestic sector. It is supported by the 12 district and 2 unitary councils in Lancashire and the County Council. The CHiL Steering Group is led by Blackpool Public Health and reports to the three Directors of Public Health in Lancashire and the Public Health Consultant's Collaborative. There is a CHiL Operational Group made up of Energy Officers from the councils that oversee day to day activity and report to the Steering Group quarterly. Central to CHiL's success has been an administration hub that provides a single point of contact for residents providing the reassurance and certainty to apply for measures from a trustworthy source. The Hub processes all applications for CHiL initiatives whether they are via Government ECO (Energy Company Obligation) funding or other sources including coordinating local authority affordable warmth funding contributions to facilitate measures where ECO does not fully cover the entire cost. The Hub also works alongside the Operational Group to access new funding opportunities and negotiate contracts with utilities for Lancashire residents.

This Statement of Intent has been developed with the intention of supporting CHiL to participate in ECO2 transition and specifically flexible eligibility. It responds to the statutory requirements for [ECO Help to Heat](#) as set out in the [ECO2 Amendment Order](#) and the [guidance](#) to local authorities issued by the Department for Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on Flexible Eligibility. It sets out the criteria participating Lancashire authorities will use in making declarations under ECO Flexible Eligibility and the delivery arrangements in place.

Participating Local Authorities

Blackpool Council	Preston City Council
Blackburn with Darwen Council	Ribble Valley Borough Council
Fylde Borough Council	Rosendale Borough Council
Lancashire County Council	West Lancashire Borough Council
Pendle Borough Council	Wyre Council

Date of Publication **25 / 07 / 2017**

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Version Number **CHiL Version 1**

1. Introduction

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) endeavours to deliver all the energy efficiency work by Local Authorities across the County. In 2015 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council on behalf of CHiL secured £50,000 of funding from the DECC Health & Fuel Poverty Booster Fund as well as £2.24m from the DECC Central Heating Fund, both schemes were delivered successfully and in 2016 CHiL won a prestigious National [Ashden Award](#) in the sustainable homes category. From September 2014 to December 2016 CHiL has received 2,584 referrals from which it has installed 2,887 measures (not including advice) representing £5.1 m worth of investment in Lancashire housing stock. There is also a hospital in-reach scheme at Preston and Blackburn Hospitals as well as a 'Take Home and Settle' / in-reach scheme at the Blackpool Victoria Hospital making referrals to the scheme for vulnerable residents.

CHiL has developed a comprehensive website www.chil.uk.com that allows both professionals and residents to refer in for measures as well as a proactive social media campaign that generates referrals and important information.

CHiL maximises the number of energy efficiency measures that Lancashire residents access particularly those that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home and / or are in fuel poverty or on a low income, by utilising local authority intelligence to target initiatives successfully. This includes proactive engagement in the lowest 25% Lower Super Output Areas for deprivation and those areas with high fuel poverty levels, particularly rural areas.

In 2014 (latest figures available) the Lancashire-14 area had 71,075 households in fuel poverty (11.3%). This is above the national average although the gap has narrowed with fuel poverty increasing slightly in England but decreasing slightly in the Lancashire-14 area between 2013 and 2014. In particular, those districts in Lancashire with the worst fuel poverty in 2013 have improved their position in 2014 but still have pockets of fuel poverty above 30% in some areas. An interactive map of fuel poverty in Lancashire is available here: <http://dashboards.instantatlas.com/viewer/report?appid=76dd5dc8c5b041458608752ffd11b67a&authid=EeUdmTVM2tQfwwHh>

The priorities for each council area are identified in their recent Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) reports, all LAs will, however, be working under the CHiL brand to bring measures to residents who qualify under flexible eligibility.

Flexible Eligibility is a means for each local authority to make an application for a range of energy efficiency measures for qualifying residents through a declaration to an energy company on behalf of the resident. Lancashire will be utilising the CHiL brand for the purposes of this scheme. All ECO Flexible Eligibility declarations for participating authorities will be managed through the CHiL admin hub.

Each Local Authority anticipates that Flexible Eligibility will bring energy efficiency measures to residents that have traditionally not qualified for help in the past because they were not on an appropriate benefit. **When the local Authority makes a declaration on behalf of a resident this is not a guarantee that a measure will be installed.** The final decision will rest with the supplier who

will take into account a number of factors including the savings that can be achieved by the resident as well as whether they have already reached their target. The CHiL hub will manage these declarations and approach individual local authorities for support if necessary.

2. How CHiL intends to identify eligible households

A) Criteria for identifying households living in fuel poverty

The [CSE fuel poverty](#) calculator will be used to identify households living with a low income and high fuel costs and, therefore deemed to be fuel poor.

In considering a household's savings the first £6,000 of savings will be disregarded.¹

For people under 60 every £250 of savings over £6,000 will be regarded as £1 per week of income.

For people over 60 every £500 of savings over £10,000 will be regarded as £1 per week of income.

Anyone with savings over £16,000 will **not** qualify for help

B) Criteria for identifying households living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home

Households will be eligible for funding if they meet at least one of the following vulnerabilities and have a *low income.

Vulnerabilities:

- 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)

¹ This approach is consistent with other grant schemes such as Disabled Facilities Grant

- 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.

*Low income

Low income will be determined by completion of the CSE Fuel Poverty calculator. £1,000 will be deducted from annual household income to take account of additional costs experienced by vulnerable households (e.g. medical treatments / equipment, higher energy use, transport to appointments etc.)

C) Criteria for identifying “In-fill” properties for solid wall insulation

The local authority intends to facilitate solid wall insulation schemes including households that are not in fuel poverty or vulnerable (“in-fill”).

Where a household does not meet the criteria for fuel poverty (outlined at A) or living on a low income and vulnerable to the cold (outlined at B), the local authority can declare a household as “in-fill” where they are:

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

In-fill is only allowed where a minimum percentage of households for which the LA is providing declarations are fuel poor (FP) or on a low income and vulnerable to the cold (LIVC), as set out in Table 1.

Table 1 - Summary of the requirements for property types under in-fill

Property Type	LA declaration requirements	In-fill available
Project consisting of a pair of semi-detached houses or bungalows, or a building containing no more than two domestic premises	At least one of the two-properties must be declared by the LA as FP or LIVC (i.e. 50% of the properties are FP or LIVC).	The other property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation.
Project consisting of any premises that are contained in the same building (e.g. flats), immediately adjacent buildings (e.g. neighbouring detached properties) or in the same terrace	At least two in three properties on the list must be declared by the LA as Fuel Poor or LIVC (ie at least 66% of the properties are FP or LIVC)	The other (i.e. up to one third) of properties in the project are eligible for solid wall insulation, provided they are either in the same building, an immediately adjacent building or in the same terrace as the ones identified as FP or LIVC

3. Acting on behalf of another local authority

In most circumstance the designated officer signing the declaration will be from the local authority of the resident applying. However where that officer is unavailable all nominated officers from each of the local authorities that are signatory under this declaration will be granted permission to sign a declaration on behalf of any of the other authorities unless a local authority opts out of this process. If a local authority decides that all declarations from their area must be signed by an officer from that Council then they will nominate at least two.

4. Joint Statement of Intent

The local authorities listed below will be using common criteria and will be signatories to this SOI

Blackpool Council

Preston City Council

Blackburn with Darwen Council

Ribble Valley Borough Council

Fylde Borough Council

Rosendale Borough Council

Lancashire County Council

West Lancashire Borough Council

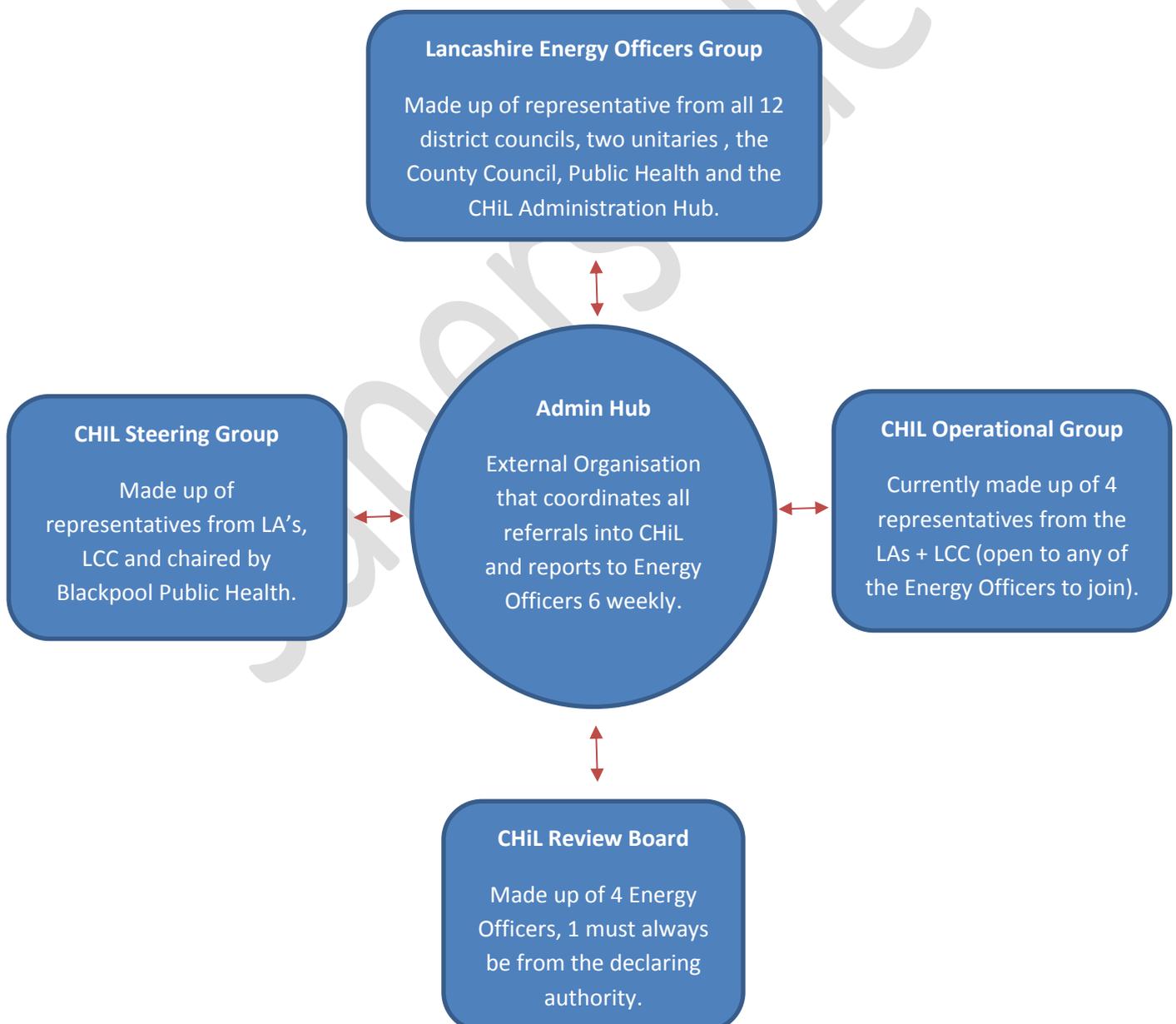
Pendle Borough Council

Wyre Council

5. Governance

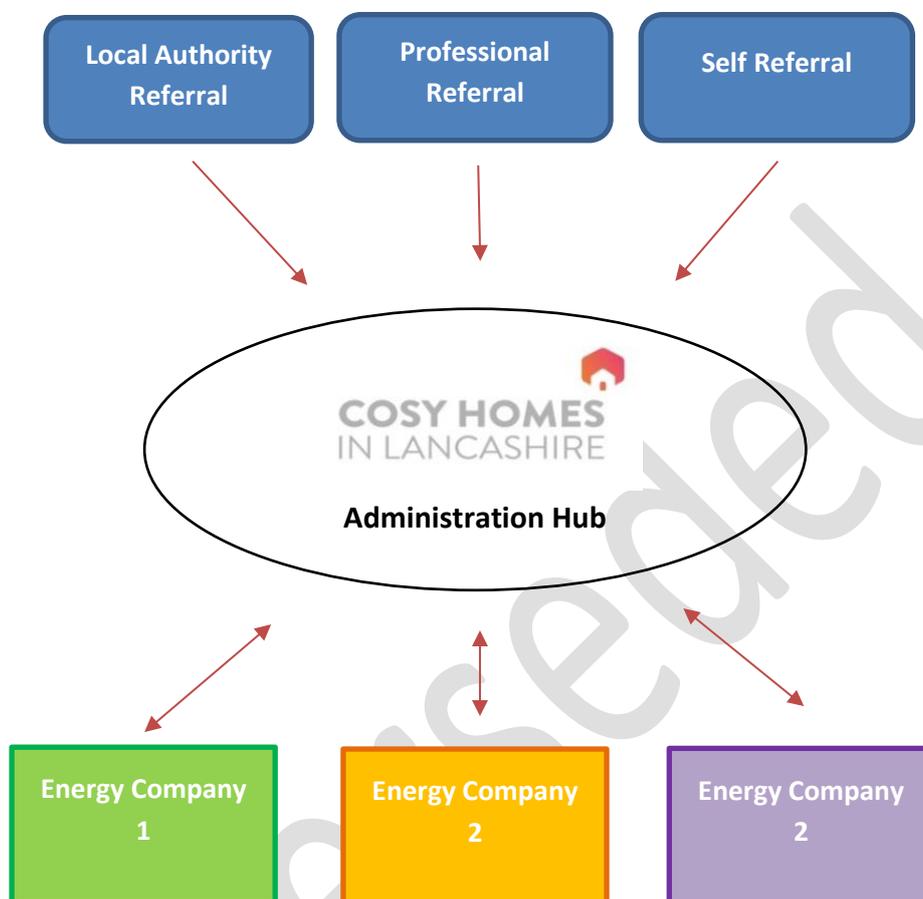
The Energy Officer from each participating local authority will be responsible for signing declarations on behalf of their authority or will delegate to another participating authority. In the event that the nominated officer is unavailable then any one of the other energy officers can sign the declaration on their behalf providing that local authority has agreed to that process, if not then the local authority will identify at least two officer posts within the local authority that can sign the declaration. Where an individual local authority does not want to endorse a certain measure in their area it will be their responsibility to inform the CHiL Steering Group and Administration Hub so that no declaration is signed for that measure.

In addition to the above a review board will be established that can be made up of any 4 members of the Lancashire Energy Officers Group. Their role will be to assess individual cases where the applicant either falls just outside the qualifying criteria but there is still a clear need or where the applicant disputes the decision of the local authority in respect of them not qualifying under Flexible Eligibility. This board's decision will be final.



6. Referrals

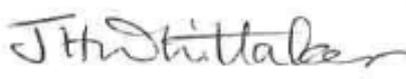
All referrals will be coordinated through the CHiL Administration Hub. A local authority can take referral directly, however they will then pass them to the Hub.



7. Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting

- The information to be collected can be seen on the application form (Annex 1).
- All applications will be recorded on a secure CRM system by the Administration hub.
- All LAs will have access to the data relating to their area.
- The CHiL Operational Group will review 10% of applications for accuracy and compliance with the qualifying criteria.
- CHiL will have a Service Level Agreement in place with each energy supplier it enters into an arrangement with that will detail acceptable time scales and processes
- The Admin Hub will hold paper and electronic copies of all documents relating to each application including any evidence supplied by the applicant.
- Every applicant will be required to sign a declaration stating that the information they have supplied is truthful and accurate.

8. Signatures

Local Authority	Signed by	Date
Blackpool Council	Dr Arif Rajpura Director of Public Health	 29 th June 2017
Blackburn with Darwen Council	Sayyed Osman Director of Localities and Prevention	 22 nd June 2017
Fylde Borough Council	Paul Walker Director of Development Services	 14 th June 2017
Lancashire County Council	Dr Sakthi Karunanithi Director of Public Health and Wellbeing	 22 nd June 2017
Pendle Borough Council	Julie Whittaker Housing, Health and Economic Development Manager	 17 th July 2017
Preston City Council	Adrian Phillips Director of Environment	 30 th June 2017
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Colin Hirst Head of Regeneration and Housing	 30 th June 2017
Rossendale Borough Council	Sam Plum Director of Communities	 15 th June 2017
West Lancashire Borough Council	David Tilleray Director of Leisure & Wellbeing	 15 th June 2017
Wyre Council	Mark Broadhurst Service Director Health and Wellbeing	 23 rd June 2017

Document Control

Version	Revision date	Summary of changes
CHiL / V1 / 25.07.2017		

Superseded