

Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment – Start Up

1.	Title of Proposal:	Scottish Borders Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth Strategy (HEEAWs)
2.	Service Area: Department:	Strategic Housing, Policy & Development The responsibility of developing the Strategy lies with SBC, but its implementation is dependent on a wider partnership working with a range of stakeholders across the energy efficiency and fuel poverty supply chain. In particular the implementation will work with the Borders Home Energy Forum; key partners for delivery of the Strategy include housing associations (RSLs), housing developers, installers, educators and various departments within SBC.
3.	Description:	<p>The HEAWs forms part of the SBC Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The LHS sets the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand in the Scottish Borders and informs future investment in housing and related services across the Scottish Borders. Delivery of the HEAWs will contribute towards the Borders LHS’s vision that ‘Every person in the Scottish Borders lives in a home that meets their needs’. The main priority related to the HEAWs is Priority 2: ‘More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes’.</p> <p>In terms of improving housing quality and energy efficiency, the LHS is required to address the following policy issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National fuel poverty target (2016) and links to energy • Housing’s contribution to climate change • Maintaining the Scottish Housing Quality Standard • Delivering ESSH (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) <p>The HEAWs provides a focus for cross-sector, multi-agency strategic planning, improvement and delivery. It will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders, as outlined in Section 2. It demonstrates clearly how its objectives integrate with the local authority’s strategic plans across the range of its functions and responsibilities. The strategy supports the council’s priorities where fuel poverty impacts on their success, particularly for example in reducing inequalities, helping to alleviate the pressure on health and social care services arising</p>

	<p>from an expanding older population, achieving a low carbon economy and addressing the challenges associated with Welfare Reform.</p> <p>The successful delivery of the HEEAWs will improve the energy efficiency of homes, in turn raising the living standard of all households, in particular those in fuel poverty. It should, as a baseline, support the understanding of housings contribution to climate change, as well as support the delivery of schemes such as Energy Efficient Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) and Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map to raise households out of poverty.</p> <p>The Strategy is in its infancy and so further aim and objectives are not provided at this stage. It should be read in conjunction with the LHS.</p>
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4.	Relevance to the Equality Duty.		
	Do you believe your proposal has any relevance to the following duties of the Council under the Equality Act 2010?		
		Duty	Yes/No
		Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment.	Yes. The implementation of the HEEAWs will have an impact on the whole population of the Scottish Borders as everyone has a right to live in an energy efficient home that meets their needs.
		Promotion of equality of opportunity?	Yes. The development and implementation of the HEEAWs and the action plan will identify and promote equality of opportunity.
	Foster good relations?	Yes. The implementation of the HEEAWs is dependent on partnership working and requires engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Through implementation there is also the potential to engage further and to build new relationships	

5.	Which groups of people may be impacted (both positively and negatively) if the proposal is advanced?				
	Equality Characteristic	Impact			Description
		No Impact	Possible Positive Impact	Possible Negative Impact	
	Gender, Race		X		The delivery of the HEEAWs will improve the access to a more energy efficient home for all. There is likely to be a

	Groups, People with Religious or other Beliefs, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sexual orientation, Carers, Employees				positive impact on these groups, and the outcomes will be monitored through the life span of the Strategy and the LHS.
	Age		X	X	<p>The HEEAWs and the LHS is inclusive to all individuals regardless of age. Providing opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of homes and in turn helping to alleviate fuel poverty should benefit the health and well-being of children, young people and older people.</p> <p>In terms of possible negative impacts, there is a risk that elderly home occupiers may be impacted from disruption associated with the installation of energy efficient measures. However, this would be a short term impact and where possible, any disruption would be minimised through working closely with contractors.</p>
	Disability		X	X	<p>The HEEAWs and the LHS is inclusive to all individuals regardless of disability. There are numerous plans linked to the LHS that focus on disability and these should be referred to separately.</p> <p>In terms of possible negative impacts, there is a risk that households with disabled occupants may be impacted from disruption associated with the installation of energy efficient measures. However, this would be a short term impact and where possible, any disruption would be minimised through working closely with contractors.</p>
	Poverty		X		<p>The HEEAWs and the LHS sets out priority areas and actions for investment in energy efficient measures, including in rural areas and for those in fuel poverty. Both strategies recognise the needs of those on low incomes, identifying the number of households (under different tenure types) eligible for energy efficiency upgrades through a variety of Scottish Government and wider funded initiatives. The strategy considers the needs of those in fuel poverty and sets out the services and actions required to tackle fuel poverty. This includes information and advice on income maximisation, behaviour in the home (relating to energy use) and energy efficiency.</p>
	General – digital exclusion			X	<p><i>This theme has been added as an additional factor to consider. Digital exclusion in this case homeowners may experience exclusion or literacy and numerical issues could be disadvantaged in what is a very complicated energy market. This may leave them in a position where they may not be able to access the most appropriate or ‘best’ options available to them in terms of energy provider etc.</i></p>
6.	Mitigation				

	Characteristic	Mitigation
	Age and disability	Impact – temporary disruption and distress during installation of energy efficiency measures. Mitigation – liaising with contractors with directly, through RSLs or delivery agents to ensure minimised.
	General – digital exclusion	<i>The HEEAWs will look to present opportunities for individuals and homeowners to access services such as Home Energy Scotland and continued services such as community hubs (Change works in Peebles).</i>
	All	The implementation of the HEEAWs and the LHS will bring many positive outcomes for all communities in the Scottish Borders. The LHS is a high level strategic document, therefore, there are specific strategies including the HEEAWs that feed into the LHS that cover the four priorities. Throughout the development of the HEEAWs any gaps in evidence/ data will be identified and steps will be put in place to ensure these are monitored within the strategy.

7.	How certain are you of the answers you have given?	
	Answer	Tick One
	Certain - I have populated the evidence base to support my answers.	
	Fairly Certain – but don't have concrete evidence to support my answers so would recommend further assessment is conducted if the proposal is progressed.	✓
	Not Certain – further assessment is recommended if proposal is progressed.	

Completed By			
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