

**Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat  
Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent  
Chelmsford City Council**

**Local Authority Name:** Chelmsford City Council

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## Permanent

### 1. Introduction

Fuel poverty is driven primarily by three factors: income, the current cost of energy and the energy efficiency of the home. Fuel poverty can lead to a lower temperature in a property than might be healthy. Chelmsford City Council welcomes the introduction of Flexible Eligibility in the Help to Heat obligation to provide access to grant funding for households in Fuel Poverty or are considered low income and vulnerable to effects of living in a cold home.

Addressing the issues of fuel poverty is an essential priority for Chelmsford City Council, there are a number of areas within the district that experience fuel poverty and income deprivation. According to Public Health England, 6.2% of households in Chelmsford experience fuel poverty compared to the national average of 11%. Fuel poverty is closely linked to excess winter deaths and Chelmsford's excess winter deaths is not significantly better than national average (*Chelmsford Health Profile 2017*). Most excess winter deaths are due to circulatory and respiratory diseases, and the majority occur amongst the elderly population.

Although overall the prevalence of fuel poverty is a little lower than the national average, there are areas within the district that suffer amongst the highest levels of fuel poverty and deprivation in the country. At the last census (2011), 2.2% of households in Chelmsford did not have central heating, with the highest proportion of these households in Springfield North Ward (4.3%). This compares to 2.7% in England overall. Open data communities 2015 showed that 1 Lower Super Outcome Area (LSOA) out of 107 in Chelmsford was ranked within the bottom decile of 10% most deprived areas in England and 2 LSOAs in the 20% most deprived for "Index of Multiple Deprivation".

In addition, Chelmsford faces an ageing population with 18.9% of the population aged 65 and over compared to the England average of 17.9%. An ageing population exacerbates health issues as they are more at risk of falls and are more susceptible to cold or damp health related problems.

This Statement of Intent states the criteria the Council intends to use to identify households for Flexible Eligibility. The ECO scheme is due to run until 30 September 2018. Under this scheme, energy suppliers will be able to achieve up to 10% of their Affordable Warmth obligation by installing energy saving measures in households declared eligible by Local Authorities to support their commitment to tackle fuel poverty. This new mechanism allows Local Authorities to make declarations determining that certain households meet the eligibility criteria for a measure under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO. This Statement of Intent sets out how households in the district of Chelmsford will be declared eligible for ECO.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The decision on whether a household receives ECO measures is made by the obligated energy suppliers. Inclusion in a Declaration of Eligibility issued by the Council to a supplier will not guarantee installation of any works that may help reduce fuel poverty as the final decision will depend on:

- Identification of measures eligible under the Help to Heat
- The supplier's assessment of the cost effectiveness of installing measures in relation to achieving its obligation
- Whether the supplier has achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

### **Chelmsford City Council**

This scheme will contribute to the Chelmsford City Council's Corporate Plan priorities:

- To facilitate suitable housing for local needs

It will contribute to the Chelmsford City Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan to fulfil the following aim:

- To tackle poor housing including fuel poverty and thermal comfort.
- Support communities to Staywell and Agewell.

### **2. Identification of Eligible Households**

This section sets out how Chelmsford City Council will identify and target eligible households that may benefit from the installation of measures under flexibility eligibility.

Private tenure households must fit one or more of the following in order to be eligible;

- Living in fuel poverty: not in receipt of passporting benefits or other income-related support /Households with low income and high heating costs. (*Passported benefits include Income support, Jobseekers allowance (Income based), Employment and Support allowance (Income based) and Pension Credit (Guaranteed Pension Credit).*)
- Households with low income who, because of health, disability, age, or other reason, are vulnerable to the impact of living in a cold home.
- Low income, high heating cost and vulnerability to cold

These qualifying values will be kept under review, in relation to levels of referrals made, delivery of installed measures and the practices of other authorities. Set out below are the criteria for living in fuel poverty but not in receipts of passporting benefits, low income and vulnerability to cold and low income, high heating cost and vulnerability to cold.

The Council notes that, under the ECO legislation Flexibility Eligibility is only open to those living in owner-occupied or private rented sector housing (collectively "private housing") and is not open to those in social housing. Declarations will not be made in relation to social housing.

#### **a) Criteria for identifying 'households in fuel poverty, and not in receipt of any passporting benefits'**

The Council aims to use:

- 1) Household gross (total) income levels as self-certified by householder or estimated by a frontline Council worker being below threshold; or
- 2) A member of the household receiving certain qualifying benefits; or

3) Significant and persistent debt problems including energy debts;

as indicators of low income. For private rented sector properties, the income of the resident (tenant) household is considered rather than that of the landlord.

The total income thresholds that aim to use in the assessment of a low-income households are displayed in the table below. The thresholds levels used were taken from the ECO Affordable Warmth Scheme qualification criteria, increased by 10% to account for the higher cost of housing and cost of living in the East of England.

Household	Number of children or young person under 18 or 19 (in Full Time Education) in the household.				
	0	1	2	3	4 or more
One adult	£14,250	£19,140	£23,760	£28,380	£33,000
Two adults	£21,780	£26,400	£31,020	£35,640	£40,260

**b) Criteria for identifying low income and vulnerability to cold**

The Council will target households containing people with the following characteristics, which reflect the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2015 guidance on preventing excess winter deaths and illnesses associated with fuel poverty. In particular, those with one or more members who are;

**Table 2: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance for preventing excess winter death and illness associated with cold homes.**

a) Health conditions made worse by the cold	b) Vulnerable to the cold
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with cardiovascular conditions</li> <li>• People with respiratory conditions</li> <li>• People with mental health conditions</li> <li>• People with disabilities</li> <li>• People with long term illness</li> <li>• People who are terminally ill</li> <li>• People with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)</li> <li>• Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)</li> <li>• Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aged over 65, particularly those over 75</li> <li>• Children under 5 and pregnant women</li> <li>• People who attended hospital due to a fall in the last year</li> <li>• People diagnosed with dementia</li> <li>• Dependent children of 18 years or younger</li> </ul>

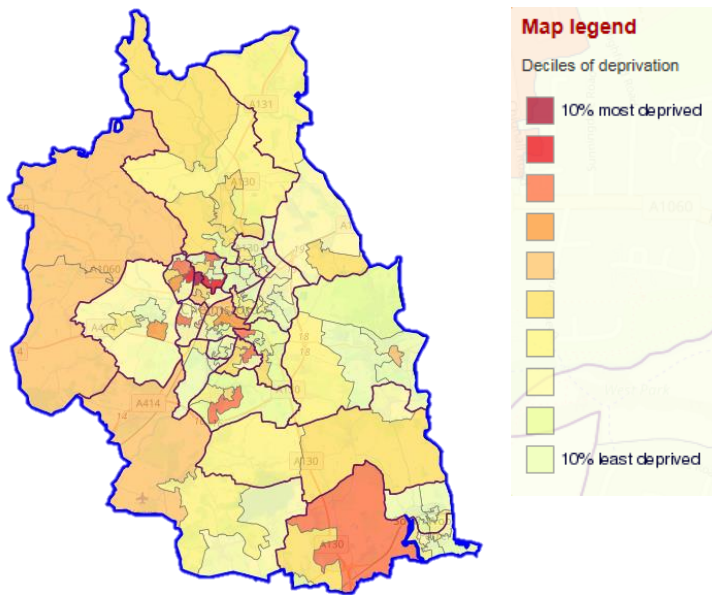
**c) High costs and vulnerable to cold (size and type of property, type of heating and means of payment.**

- F or G on EPC (if available)
- Or a score of 80 or above on the chart below

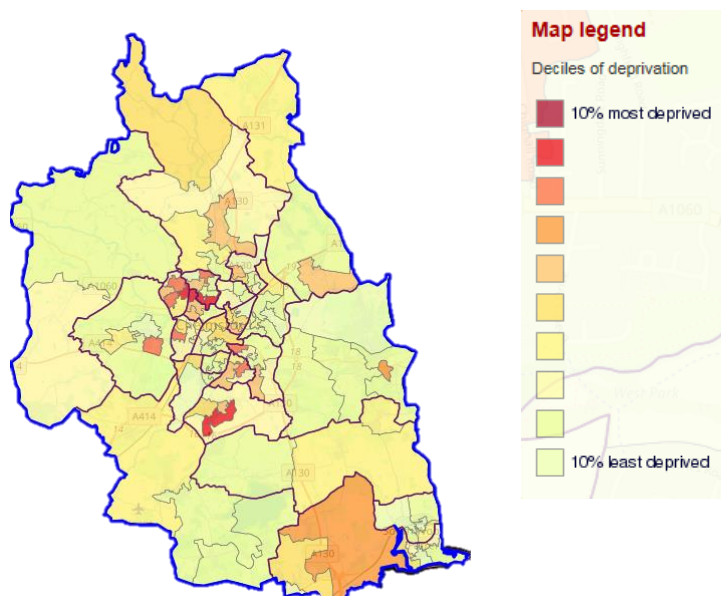
Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms	1	5
	2	10
	3	35
	4	55
	5	70
	6+	80
Are energy payments made by direct debit?	Yes	0
	No	15
Do you use a prepayment energy meter?	Yes	25
	No	0
What type of house is it?	Semi detached	30
	Terrace	20
	Flat	15
	Detached	30
What is the tenure	Private rented	15
	Owner occupied	0
Does the home use a boiler	Yes	0
	No	15
Was the home built before 1964	Yes	25
	No	0
What is the main fuel type	Gas	0
	Electricity	30
	Other	15
	Broken heating	15

**Area based (assisted targeting of funding where there are areas of low-income households.**

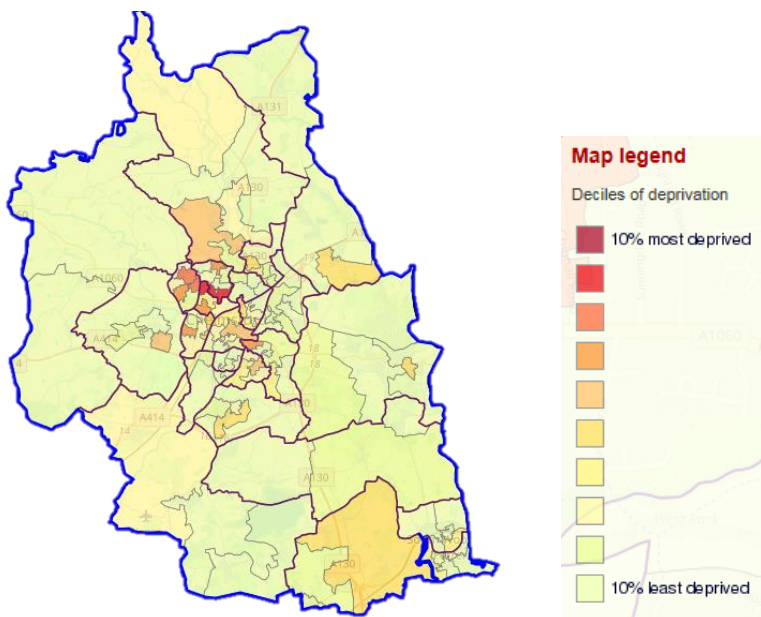
To increase the impact of the Flexibility Eligibility scheme, data from Open Data Communities was used to analyse areas with high levels of deprivation. The maps below show the 107 LSOAs in Chelmsford displaying the ranking across 3 indices, Index of Multiple Deprivation, Index of Employment Deprivation and Index of Health Deprivation and Disability. St Andrews, Patching Hall, Marconi and Galleywood wards have LSOAs in the bottom decile ranking across these indices indicating that households within these areas have a high propensity to be both low income and vulnerable to cold homes.



Map showing the 107 LSOAs in Chelmsford displaying the Index of Multiple Deprivation. 1 LSOA within the Marconi Ward is in the 10% most deprived and 2 within the Patching Hall and St Andrews Ward are in the 20% most deprived areas.



Map showing the 107 LSOAs in Chelmsford displaying the Index of Employment Deprivation. 4 LSOAs are in the 20% most deprived areas. (St Andrews, Marconi, Patching Hall and Galleywood)



Map showing the 107 LSOAs in Chelmsford displaying the Index of Health Deprivation and Disability. 2 LSOAs are in the 20% most deprived areas within the Patching Hall and St Andrews Ward.

**Any referral or enquiry received will be considered on a case by case basis**

**3. Acting on behalf of another local authority**

Not Applicable

**4. Joint Statement of Intent**

Not Applicable

**5. Referrals**

Chelmsford City Council will ensure appropriate referral processes are in place while maintaining the protection of personal data. Chelmsford City Council will work with partner agencies to determine those that may be vulnerable due to living in a cold home, suffering from a qualifying medical condition.

**6. Evidence, monitoring and reporting**

Chelmsford City Council will record key information including the number of referrals made and the number of funded installations delivered for reporting both to BEIS and future Home Energy Conservation Reports.

**7. Governance**

**(Person responsible for signing local authority declarations, include role and address)**

This Statement of Intent (SOI) is signed on behalf of Chelmsford City Council by:

**Paul Brookes**

Public Health and Protection Services Manager

Telephone: 01245606436

Email: [Paul.brookes@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.brookes@chelmsford.gov.uk)

Signature:



Declarations will be signed on behalf of Chelmsford City Council by:

**Paul Brookes**

Public Health and Protection Services Manager

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Signature:

