

**Decision Maker:** Executive

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent Executive Key

**Title:** WINTER HEALTH PROJECT - Department of Health Funding

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**Chief Officer:** Nada Lemic, Director of Public Health  
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**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

This report provides information on the Winter Health Project (WHP) which seeks to address the Excess Winter Deaths in Bromley in 2012/13. This work is part of the Department of Health's Cold Weather Plan.

In October 2012, The Department of Health invited Local Authorities to submit bids for the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund to identify, assist and support vulnerable groups of people at risk of ill health in the winter months.

This report sets out the activities for which the funding is proposed to be spent and is a request to Executive to draw down the funds for these purposes.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Executive:**

- **Confirm their agreement for the drawing down of funds to allow Public Health to lead on the implementation of the Winter Health Project during December 2012 to March 2013.**
- **Agree the process for managing and reporting on the activities of the project.**

## Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
  2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence.
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## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost Department of Health has allocated London Borough of Bromley £74,817 to deliver a programme of work .
  2. Ongoing costs: Non-recurring cost. This is a one-off grant from DH to implement the project proposal. There are no ongoing costs.
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Doug Patterson, Chief Executives Department
  4. Total current budget for this head: £3,550,510
  5. Source of funding: One-off funding from Department of Health
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## Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1 part-time Project Manager and project support on a consultancy basis
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance. .
  2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Through the various partner agencies involved in the project, it is expected that 5,000 people will be reached and become better informed
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## Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: none

### 3. COMMENTARY

#### Public Health Importance of Excess Winter Deaths

- 3.1 Similar to other European countries, England experiences a higher mortality rate in the winter period; this is referred to as Excess Winter Deaths (EWD). It is the excess winter deaths expressed as a ratio of the expected deaths based on the non-winter deaths i.e. EWD Index (EWDI).
- 3.2 Nationally, 80% of excess winter deaths occur in people over the age of 75 and people at risk are those with underlying long term conditions, e.g. circulatory diseases and respiratory diseases.
- 3.3 The rate of excess winter deaths in Bromley is higher than the national average – 26.0 for Bromley compared to 18.7 for the England average. Latest figures from the Health Profile Bromley (2012) show that this equates to 208 excess winter deaths per year.
- 3.4 Research evidence suggests that a proportion of winter deaths could be avoidable. Excess seasonal mortality has the most impact on those on low incomes, those living alone, older people, disabled people and also on women due to their longer life expectancy.

Evidence also shows that not only cold housing and fuel poverty have an impact on winter deaths, but also that policies aimed at improving thermal efficiency of homes and reducing fuel poverty can reduce avoidable mortality and morbidity.

#### The action plan

The Winter Health Project builds on the same programme of work developed in 2011/12 – The Cold Weather Action Plan. Following the success of its Warm Homes Healthy People Fund last year, the Department of Health is operating the fund again for winter 2012/2013. Funds are to support initiatives that:

- Deliver energy efficiency and heating improvements to the most vulnerable people
- Provide residents with benefits advice
- Ensure better public awareness of the impacts of cold weather

The Winter Health Project is a collaborative project which includes many stakeholders including LBB Home Improvement Team, Age UK, Bromley Healthcare, Primary Care professionals and Community Links Bromley. (See attached Project Proposal)

The project aims to contribute to efforts to:

1. Reduce winter mortality – To avoid winter deaths through *raising public awareness and triggering actions by those in contact with people known to be vulnerable* to cold related illness and death.
2. Reduce winter morbidity – To reduce the preventable exacerbations of existing illness and development of new cold related ill health. This will be done through *engaging health and social services in the action plan and raising awareness of the negative effects* caused by cold weather.
3. Reduce health system pressures – A secondary positive outcome is the potential for reduced pressures on the health and social care system at the busiest months of the year, through *better anticipatory actions with vulnerable people*.

## Funding

- 3.7 The Department of Health has stated that the sum of proposals was significantly higher than £20m available in the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund. As such, all successful bids were reduced by around 19%. The London Borough of Bromley has been offered a grant, therefore, of £74,817 as against the original request of £92, 000.
- 3.8 As a result of the reduced funding, there will be some amendments to the original outline attached. It is envisaged that direct services to the public will remain unchanged, but more reductions will take place in supporting areas e.g. communications and consultancy.

## Governance process

- 3.32 The Staying Healthy Partnership Board will be asked to maintain oversight of the WHP funding and appoint the Assistant Director, Public Health to oversee the process. It is anticipated that partner agencies will be allocated their funds as agreed with the Director of Public Health.
- 3.33 A project management approach will be taken and each agency will be monitored for the delivery of agreed milestones and outcomes within the required timeframe for the Winter Health Project.
- 3.34 An update on project funding and how funds have been spent will be presented to the Staying Healthy Partnership Board mid project in February 2013 and at the end of the project in March/April 2013.

## 4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This work is in relation to the Department of Health's Cold Weather Plan for England 2012.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The one-off grant is for the sum of £74, 817

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 N/A

## 7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This is a short term project (December 2012 to March 2013) and is designed for delivery this winter. A project manager will be recruited to Public Health to ensure delivery of the project plan. Additional specialist input may be required, but this will be arranged on a daily consultancy basis, therefore no personnel implications are anticipated.

7.2

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Cold Weather Plan for England 2012 – Protecting health and reducing harm from severe cold