

Report No.

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** Executive & Resources PDS

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015

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

**Title:** WINTER HEALTH PROJECT - UPDATE

**Contact Officer:** Dr Ade Fowler and Dr Sarah Morgan , Assistant Director and Public Health Registrar, Public Health  
Tel: 020 8313 4938 E-mail: ade.fowler@bromley.gov.uk

**Chief Officer:** Dr Nada Lemic, Director of Public Health  
Tel: 020 8313 4220 E-mail: nada.lemic@bromley.gov.uk

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

The Winter Health Project was developed in December 2012 following a successful bid from the Department of Health to address Excess Winter Deaths in Bromley in 2012/13. The purpose of the fund was to identify, assist and support vulnerable groups of people at risk of ill health in the winter months. This work formed part of the implementation of the Department of Health's Cold Weather Plan.

The Department of Health paid a one off grant to the council from the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund for 2012/13.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Committee:**

- **Notes the progress made following completion of the project in April 2013 and the recommendations for 2015/2016**

### Corporate Policy

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

1. Cost of proposal: No cost
  2. Ongoing costs: Non-recurring cost.
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Public Health Division, Education, Care and Health
  4. Total current budget for this head: £N/A
  5. Source of funding: N/A
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### Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement.
  2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): We estimate that coordinated activities could potentially reach 30% of the older population in Bromley.
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### Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

### 3. COMMENTARY

#### Background

- 3.1 Public Health conducted a Winter Health Project between December 2012 and March 2013, funded by the Department of Health. The project was set up to address Excess Winter Deaths which were higher for Bromley, compared to London and England. In May 2013, a project report was produced for the Executive and Resources PDS and for the Executive Committee.
- 3.2 Excess Winter Deaths continue to be monitored regularly and further work was conducted to investigate in more detail the underlying factors which contribute to Excess Winter Deaths.
- 3.3 Exploratory work is taking place with stakeholders to develop plans to make addressing Excess Winter Deaths part of agencies' core activities. This includes:
- Working with the CCG to commission community-based services to offer further support to vulnerable older people. In order to achieve the desired outcomes clear contract specifications will be developed.
  - Integrating activities with the Proactive Management of Integrated Services for the Elderly (ProMISE) programme to secure further funding from the Better Care Fund. The ProMISE Programme aims to identify vulnerable older people with complex needs and provide integrated services to meet their needs and thereby reduce hospital admissions.
  - The Health Champions Programme in which 40 volunteers were recruited and trained to support identified vulnerable older people in the winter to keep them well at home. In the last year, a further 52 volunteers have been recruited to provide year round care and support and the training and development programme is underway. Ongoing support to health champions is provided by Public Health. The Health Champions Programme is being incorporated into the ProMISE Programme with funding through the Better Care Fund.
- 3.4 **Excess Winter Deaths in Bromley – Summary of the investigation of high levels and underlying reasons**

#### Background

The Excess Winter Deaths Index (EWDI) indicates whether there are higher than expected deaths in the winter compared to the rest of the year. In Bromley we have an all age 3 year EWDI which is significantly worse than London or England meaning we have significantly more unexpected deaths in the winter months. This difference has persisted compared to England between August 2007 and July 2012 and compared to London, between August 2008 and July 2012. Given that Bromley's age distribution is similar to England as a whole, the age of our population is unlikely to be the reason for the higher EWDI. However, as Bromley has the largest elderly population of all London boroughs this may explain why the EWDI is higher than the London average.

#### Key Factors Influencing Excess Winter Deaths Evidence Base

- **Cold**  
In the years without flu epidemics, cold is shown to be the most important factor in excess winter deaths. England compares unfavourably to other colder countries, in Scandinavia and Northern Europe, which suggests that excess winter deaths may be preventable as it is more than just lower temperatures that are responsible for the excess mortality in winter.

- **Housing**

The importance of housing conditions is emphasised by international comparisons that show lower rates of excess winter deaths in countries where homes are more energy-efficient.

- **Fuel Poverty**

Recent UK publications suggest that some 10% of excess winter deaths are directly attributable to fuel poverty and a fifth of excess winter deaths are attributable to the coldest quarter of homes. However, the relation to socio-economic deprivation is somewhat weak.

- **Behaviour**

At national level evidence shows that older people, especially owner occupiers, live in cold homes due to sub optimal behaviours and attitudes to keeping warm, notwithstanding whether they officially fall into fuel poverty.

### **The Situation In Bromley**

- In Bromley the ward level breakdowns do not show a correlation between EWDI and deprivation.
- In Bromley we have a large proportion of older owner occupiers, many living in older less thermally efficient housing stock, and hence at risk of a cold home and EWD.
- Given that EWDs affect the whole elderly population, interventions aimed only at low income and fuel poor households will not address a substantial part of the at risk population in Bromley.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations to address the issue of EWD in Bromley include:

1. Monitoring the EWDI and underlying factors in the JSNA
2. Support for policy approaches which advocate for the provision of specialist housing for older people in appropriate locations.

The full report on Excess Winter Deaths is available on request.

## **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This work is in relation to the Department of Health's Cold Weather Plan for England 2014, the Public health Outcomes Framework Indicators and the draft guidance produced by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence – Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 N/A

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 N/A

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<p><b>Cold Weather Plan for England 2014</b> – Protecting health and reducing harm from severe cold</p> <p><b>National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Public Health Guidance</b> (Draft, 2013) – Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes</p>