

**REPORT FOR: HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

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**Date of Meeting:** 2 July 2015

**Subject:** **INFORMATION REPORT – Warm Homes Healthy People Update**

**Responsible Officer:** Dr Andrew Howe, Director of Public Health

**Exempt:** No

**Wards affected:** ALL

**Enclosures:** Warm Homes, Healthy People project evaluation report

## **Section 1 – Summary**

This report is an evaluation of the Warm Homes Healthy People project. Over 300 vulnerable older people received this intervention. The benefits to local residents exceeds the cost of the project.

**FOR INFORMATION**

## Section 2 – Report

The Warm Homes, Healthy People project is Harrow's winter wellness initiative. Each winter, there is an increase in deaths and admissions to hospital and much of this is due to the cold. The health problems associated with cold homes are experienced during 'normal' winter temperatures (when outdoor temperatures drop below 6°C), not just during extreme cold weather. Improving the temperature in homes, by improving energy efficiency, may also help reduce unnecessary fuel consumption (addressing cold homes is likely to involve an increase in fuel use by people living in fuel poverty). In addition, it may reduce absences from work and school resulting from illnesses caused by living in a cold home.

The aim of this project was to contribute to

- Reducing preventable, excess winter death rates.
- Improving health and wellbeing among vulnerable groups.
- Reducing pressure on health and social care services.
- Reducing 'fuel poverty' and the risk of fuel debt or being disconnected from gas and electricity supplies (including self-disconnection).

The project was designed as an holistic assistance programme that targeted hard-to-reach, vulnerable groups with structured, impartial assistance delivered in homes to improve individuals' comfort, quality of life and overall health. The interventions complied with NICE guidance which was published during the life of the project.

The project funding of £50,000 came from the public health allocation for measures to improve health during the winter. A tender exercise was undertaken and a £45,000 contract awarded to Thinking Works, an incorporated not-for-profit company. A further £5,000 was awarded to Citizen's Advice Bureau to provide fuel debt advice that had been successful in previous years. Due to tendering process, the project was unable to start until later in the year than expected (November rather than September).

An underspend of £20,000 from a previous grant from the Department of Health was used to provide matched funding for a grant from the Foundations Independent Living Trust (FILT) to enable more people to benefit from the programme. This funding was mainly used to replace boilers.

The programme has helped to enhance economic self-sufficiency, social well-being and reduce carbon emissions by tackling key factors contributing to fuel poverty and via energy efficiency measures and education.

The outcomes of the project are:

- 300 visits commissioned, 328 visits completed on time and within budget
- Confirmed savings on average to Harrow residents of £7 for every pound spent on the project. As many of the changes have a longer term impact there is a potential lifetime savings of £25 for every pound spent.
- £66,300 worth of grant measures applied for (e.g. repair or replacement of boilers, roof or wall insulation)

- Citizens Advice Bureau confirm that the £5k that we gave them in funding generated £45,159.20 of annual savings/income to Harrow residents from grants for financial support on fuel debt, benefits checks and advice
- 23% of households request smoke alarms from the Fire Service
- 49 applications to the Handy Person service with 33 complete
- Potential lifetime carbon savings of 3784 tonnes from grant work and small measures
- 12% of households signposted to the Falls Service
- 24% of households request information on Walk Your Way to Health in Harrow

It is planned to continue the programme in 2015-6, starting earlier so that the benefits of the programme are in place before the coldest part of the winter.

### **Section 3 – Further Information**

None

### **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

Funding for the project of £50k per annum was included within the approved commissioning intentions for both 2014-15 and 2015-16, and that future amounts will depend on the grant allocation and annual budget setting process.

### **Section 5 - Equalities implications**

An EQIA was not carried out as part of this project. The project targeted older and vulnerable people who were likely to be affected by cold temperatures and live in cold homes. The targeting was achieved through getting referrals from teams working with vulnerable people and through selecting the areas most likely to have older people and cold homes based on Mosaic profiling.

### **Section 6 – Council Priorities**

The Council's vision:

#### **Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow**

This report has an impact on the council's priorities as follows:

- Making a difference for the vulnerable – vulnerable people received the services
- Making a difference for communities – the project raised awareness of the need for warmer homes for vulnerable people and trained the local Health Champions to raise awareness in their communities
- Making a difference for local businesses - contracts used local businesses where possible
- Making a difference for families – by reducing the risk of illness during the winter, the project reduces the burden on families and carers

## **STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE (Council and Joint Reports)**

Name: Donna Edwards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 .		
Name: Caroline Eccles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2015		

<b>Ward Councillors notified:</b>	<b>NO</b>
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### **Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Carole Furlong, Consultant in Public Health, ext 5508

**Background Papers:** None