



Subject:	Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths
Date:	3 rd December 2019
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	At the meeting of the People and Communities Committee on 5 th November 2019, a Motion regarding Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths was passed. The Motion called on Council 'to 'convene and facilitate a meeting of Belfast's community, voluntary and social enterprise agencies who focus on protecting and supporting older vulnerable people to identify, develop and support innovative programmes that can be deployed and co-ordinated to prevent avoidable deaths in our city over the upcoming winter'.
1.2	This report outlines action being taken by Council and its partners to identify and support older people who may be vulnerable during the upcoming winter period and provides a list of available services for Members information (Appendix 1).

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of this report; and • Agree to support the communication of winter messages and services.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	<p>The Belfast Agenda sets out the ambition to reduce the gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods of the city by 33% and gives a commitment to ensure the needs of older people are met through the Age-friendly Belfast approach and that health inequalities are addressed by the design and delivery of integrated multi-agency city programmes.</p>
3.2	<p>The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) co-ordinates the interagency Age-friendly Belfast Plan and as part of its work convenes a Winter Planning Group who lead on communications regarding winter planning with older people each year in Belfast. Two city wide meetings take place in August and November each year involving a wide range of organisations from the community, voluntary and statutory services in Belfast (including Belfast City Council emergency planning and affordable warmth leads). The purpose of these meetings and ongoing communications is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a list of ‘services to support people in the winter’(see appendix) • Update a comprehensive list of contacts for circulation of information in extreme weather-this is tested in November by Elma Greer and used to inform contacts of extreme weather warnings and additional initiatives or contact centres that are enacted • Update each other on specific plans that each organisations has for the winter period. • Circulate an up-to date list of organisations that distribute winter warmth packs to older people, families, and vulnerable groups of people at risk of fuel poverty and with specific conditions
3.3	<p>As part of the work to reduce avoidable winter deaths, the winter planning group and other local contacts have been involved in the Living Here Board workshop on Avoidable Winter</p>

	<p>Deaths in October. Additional communications are also being provided on general messages for people to keep warm in the winter.</p>
3.4	<p>Working with our Community Planning partners through the Living Here Board, the issue of avoidable winter deaths was identified as a priority requiring a multi-agency approach. This was supported by the publication of Excess Winter Death (2017-18) statistics by NISRA which showed an increase of 220% in deaths since 2015-16 for the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area. The highest recorded figures since the major flu epidemic in 1989.</p>
3.5	<p>There is a substantial body of evidence linking cold temperatures with ill health and higher mortality and morbidity rates in winter, and the World Health Organisation estimates that 30% of winter deaths are caused by cold housing. The focus therefore for Council and its Community Planning partners has been on the mobilisation of statutory, community and voluntary agencies to identify and support people who are living in cold homes, including older people. For Council, this approach has clear links with our Affordable Warmth Scheme and officers have been in discussion to consider opportunities for collective gains across both.</p>
3.6	<p>Action to date taken by Council and its partners include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citywide data analysis of risk factors associated with winter deaths including housing quality, income, prevalence of a chronic condition (heart disease, COPD, etc.) and age; • The identification of areas with multiple risks for the purpose of staging a targeted prototype intervention, which will identify and support vulnerable people with action across a range of areas including home energy efficiency, finances, health and social connections. The super output areas identified through data analysis are Shankill 1, Crumlin 2, Falls Park 2 and Andersonstown 1; • The hosting of a Process Mapping workshop to allow statutory, community and voluntary partners with the opportunity to shape the prototype intervention process and to establish links with community based support services; and • The appointment of National Energy Action (NEA) to operate as a single point of contact for referrals of vulnerable people from statutory, community and voluntary partners working within the prototype intervention areas.
3.7	<p>Further engagement with agencies serving the prototype intervention areas will continue in shaping aspects of local delivery including identification of vulnerable people and support</p>

3.8	<p>networks available, and also in defining the evaluation measures and shared learning which will guide future roll out of the intervention across the city.</p> <p>In addition to the prototype intervention, Council and its partners have been working to develop a series of shared city messages for winter, which all partners will be asked to communicate. Included within the messages will be signposting to services and general information on how to stay well this winter. Central to both the prototype intervention and wider city messages is a call to action for all statutory, community and voluntary partners to help support our citizens to be good neighbourhoods this winter and help us look out for people who may be vulnerable.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial or resource implications contained within this report.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained within this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Services to support people in the winter