



<b>Subject:</b>	Update - Action on Avoidable Winter Deaths
<b>Date:</b>	9 <sup>nd</sup> June 2020
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ryan Black, Director Neighbourhood Services, CNS
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	At the meeting of the People and Communities Committee on 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2019, Members noted progress being made in developing a targeted project to address avoidable winter deaths in the city and agreed to support the communication of winter messages and services.
1.2	This report provides Members with an insight in to action taken in delivering this project, in advance of the full evaluation, which is currently being finalised. The evaluation will form the basis for winter planning in 2020/21 and include a series of recommendations for statutory, community, voluntary and private sector organisations to adopt, in supporting a collaborative approach to mitigating the impacts of cold weather on those who are most vulnerable.

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the content of this report by way of update.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b><u>Background</u></b>
3.1	<p>Within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) area, the recorded number of excess winter deaths increased by 220% between 2015/16 and 2017/18. The figure of 320 excess winter deaths in 2017/18 was the second highest recorded figure since the major flu epidemic of 1989.</p>
3.2	<p>The National Institute of Clinical Health Excellence (NICE) set out guidance under NG6 (Excess winter deaths and illnesses associated with cold homes) for preventing avoidable excess winter deaths. Central to this approach is a requirement to work collaborative across sectors and geography's to identify those most vulnerable to cold weather, due to living in cold homes. For these reasons the establishment of a cross-sectoral project to address avoidable winter deaths was agreed within the Living Here Board.</p>
3.3	<p>The working title of 'Belfast Warm and Well' was assigned to the project and work areas were developed in line with the recommendations identified in NG6 and grouped under four headings: intelligence; coordination; service delivery and communication. This report provides a summary of action taken to date under each heading and the next steps in the expanding the implementation of this work.</p>
	<b><u>Progress to date</u></b>
3.4	<p><b>Intelligence</b> – identifying people who are vulnerable to the risk factors associated with avoidable winter deaths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data associated with the risk factors for avoidable winter deaths were mapped to identify areas of focus, allowing for a citywide project and a targeted focus. The areas of focus identified were Shankill and Andersonstown;</li> <li>Community assets from across statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors, were identified from within the areas of focus and contacted with information on the project and requested to support raising awareness within their community;</li> </ul>

- Outcome domains linked to the evaluation process for the project were created in keeping with the outcome based accountability approach supported within the Belfast Agenda; and
- An evaluation framework and data gathering template was created and completed to capture information on people referred to the project.

3.5

**Coordination** – developing a referral pathway for people who are vulnerable, by agreeing to a Single Point of Contact (SPoC):

- A referral and assessment process was delivered and implemented, in line with the guidance of NG6;
- Key stakeholders and services were identified and a series of engagement activities undertaken to inform the process, including the hosting of information sessions within each of the areas of focus and with existing partnerships such as the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership.
- A cross sectoral project team was established with representation from statutory, community and voluntary sectors, including community representation from the areas of focus;
- A critical friend (East Ayrshire) was identified as an example of best practice and provided advice throughout the development of the referral pathway.

3.6

**Service Delivery** – ensuring people who are vulnerable receive the services and support they need.

- A specification for the single point of contact was developed following engagement with key stakeholders, including the hosting of a process mapping workshop to consider alignment with related work currently being taken forward by partners;
- A process map was created to manage the flow and timescales for referrals, assessments and subsequent service delivery;
- With support from the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and Public Health Agency (PHA), National Energy Action were appointed in the role of the single point of contact.
- A service delivery plan was developed and implemented between the period of 1<sup>st</sup> December to 11th March, at which time the service delivery was reduced due to Covid-19. During this time a total of 91 households were referred to the project, with 54% of referrals coming from the 20% most deprived areas of the city. 11% of referrals come from the 20% least deprived areas, supporting local and nationally guidance that this issue is more complex than a straight correlation to poverty. 66%

of referrals were from north and west Belfast, with 15% specifically from the Shankill and Andersonstown areas. 66% of the people referred were recorded as having at least one of the main health conditions identified as high risk for avoidable winter deaths by NICE.

3.7

**Communications** – raising awareness of risk factors associated with avoidable winter deaths through a multi-agency winter communications plan.

- A communication plan was developed and implemented with support from a range of partners including the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Health and Social Care Board. A series of messages were identified highlighting the risk factors of winter deaths and shared across stakeholders utilising a range communication channels.
- A leaflet for the Belfast Warm and Well project was designed and circulated across key stakeholders and within the areas of focus. The leaflet provided details of how to make a referral, either for yourself or on behalf of someone else. 33% of referrals received were self-referrals, with a further 32% being referred by health partners and 26% by community and voluntary partners.
- A directory of services related to winter was developed with support from the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership and circulated to key stakeholders.

**Next steps**

3.8

The full evaluation of the Belfast Warm and Well project is currently being undertaken, using a series of qualitative and quantitative methods and once complete will be shared with key stakeholders including the Living Here Board and Members, over the summer.

Included within this will be a series of recommendations based on learning from the project and action required to fully implement the guidance set out by NICE in NG6, such as the recommendation to development of a strategy and year round action plan to address avoidable winter deaths, with work already underway in planning for next winter / cold weather period.

Given the complex nature of factors which impact on avoidable winter deaths, there is a need to consider the areas health, housing and energy, alongside social and economic factors such as job training, employment and income. Engagement with the relevant Departments responsible for these areas will be critical in supporting the full

	<p>implementation of the recommendations set out by NICE and the reduction in vulnerability to risk of avoidable winter deaths. As will taking learning from how city partners have collectively responded to the Covid-19 outbreak and building on the structures which have emerged and relationships which have been created and/or strengthened.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are 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>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None