



WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of external funding received from Public Health to address the issue of excess winter deaths from cold through a county wide project and to seek approval for the appointment of 3 Warm Homes Officers plus additional part time bank staff to carryout temperature and humidity audits across the County.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 2.1 Approve the project to deliver strategically targeted advice and practical support to residents within the County, in order to reduce the number of excess winter deaths.
- 2.2 Agree to the receipt of public health funding to support the project and act as the lead authority on behalf of the other Leicestershire authorities and County Council for the recruitment of the three Warm Homes Officers, as detailed in 5.1
- 2.2 To approve the creation of income and expenditure budgets totalling £59,033 as detailed in section 4.1

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 Up until May 2014, Warm Homes Officers were employed across the county to provide advice and assistance in relation to fuel poverty. This service was funded for a temporary period through the Department of Health's Winter Pressures funding and DECC's Big Energy Saving Network. This project was successful in reaching a large number of people vulnerable to fuel poverty and contributed to work around excess winter deaths caused by the cold and inadequately heated homes. Public Health have identified additional funding to provide a further time limited fuel poverty advice service. The Warm Home Officers to be recruited as part of the project will take referrals from GPs, Supporting Leicestershire Families, front line officers and First Contact maintaining the existing service referral routes that have taken a long time to establish. The Warm Homes Officers aim to tackle fuel poverty at a local level, providing a measurable impact on the households visited by reducing household energy bills.
- 3.2 Between December 2012 and February 2014 the following was carried out by 7 Warm Home Officers and it is anticipated that this work will continue, albeit at a reduced level due, to the reduce resource:-

46558 Households reached by Warm Home Officers

253 events have been hosted or attended by a Warm Home Officer.

1353 frontline staff have had contact with a Warm Home Officer, this including GPs, Parish Councillors, District Nurses, Councillors, Social Workers, Community group leaders etc.

1167 referrals to help vulnerable residents have come from frontline staff.

1961 audits (home visits) have been completed.

- 3.3 These contacts resulted in the referral of households within Leicestershire being able to apply through various funding streams shown below, for measures to help reduce their fuel bills:-

858 ECO referrals have taken place (for cavity wall, solid wall or loft insulation and replacement boilers)

1333 Green Deal referrals (for cavity wall, solid wall or loft insulation and replacement boilers)

1698 measures funded by DECC, DoH, Public Health or other localised funds. This includes insulation upgrades through to complete new heating systems.

- 3.4 This project will deliver timely practical advice and solutions to help reduce the number of excess winter deaths this winter, working with partners to access the capital funding made available by Public Health, ECO, Green Deal and Charitable organisations.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [SJE]

- 4.1 The total amount of external funding expected to be received for 2014/15 is £59,033. This will be spent as highlighted in the following table, and therefore revenue expenditure budgets will need to be created to allow such spending.

Expenditure	Budget Required (£)
Agency Payments	46,077
Travel	3,000
Equipment Purchases	6,456
Bank staff	3,500
Total	59,033

- 4.2 In accordance with financial procedure rules, budget variations over £50,000 require Council approval.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (SJB)

- 5.1 The three WHO's are being sourced via an external agency Change Agents UK Limited ("**Change Agents**"), with whom the Council will enter into a contract: the draft contract with Change Agents has been reviewed and amended, and a response to the draft amendments is currently awaited. The Council is entering into the contract with Change Agents as Lead Member of a partnership with LCC, Blaby, Charnwood, Harborough, Melton, Oadby & Wigston, and North West Leicestershire, across whose boroughs the partnership will operate. LCC has agreed to accept ultimate liability for the cost of the partnership, and in particular any liabilities that may fall to the Council arising from the contract. A draft partnership agreement affirming these commitments has been drafted by the Council and is currently with the other participating authorities for review.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Supporting Individuals, specifically supporting the most vulnerable people and reducing the impact of poverty and improving health and wellbeing by offering practical advice in relation to fuel poverty.
Providing value for money and pro active services by delivering an early intervention service and preventing poor health due to fuel poverty.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 Leistershire County Council, The District Councils within Leistershire, The Papworth Trust.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
The possibility of breakdown with the partnership.	A partnership agreement	RL
Liability of the partnership	The agreement with Change Agents to reflect that LCC are responsible for the Warm Homes Officers on a day to day basis	RL

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The service will be offered across the project area using referrals from G.P practices and other front line service providers via first contact.

- Data for targeting will be from varied sources including hi4em, ONS, Census local intelligence and referrals from front line staff.
- Vulnerable groups will be specifically targeted to help reduce winter deaths. This will reduce in fewer excess winter deaths by helping reduce fuel costs this winter.
- The service will be available across the entire district.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers:

Contact Officer: Rosemary Leach
Executive Member: Councillor Michael Mullaney, Executive Member for Housing
Councillor David Gould, Executive Member for Environment, Health & Climate Change