

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	HOUSING AND HEALTH – FUEL POVERTY PLAN		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	MARCH 2015		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH		
<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
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<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>			
None.			

### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

The quality of a home has a substantial impact on health. A warm, dry and secure home is associated with better health. In addition to basic housing requirements, other factors that improve wellbeing include location/neighbourhood, adaptations for disabilities, proximity to primary health services as well as security of tenure in rented homes. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) has calculated that poor housing costs the NHS at least £600 million each year.

This briefing highlights the impact of fuel poverty in Southampton. It sets out local issues, partnership work and an action plan to tackle fuel poverty in our City. In addition, this briefing provides the scope for a paper to be presented to the Board in June 2015 looking at Housing and Health in a broader context and the opportunities arising from the National Fuel Strategy.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) That the Board considers the potential impact and ambition of the Fuel Poverty Plan (Appendix 1) and identifies methods in which additional support could be mobilised.
- (ii) That the Board agrees the scope for the paper on housing and health as described in this briefing, to be presented to the Board in July 2015.

### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To endorse the Fuel Poverty Plan and seek direction on requirements for the proposed report on housing and health.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

2. None.

## **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

3. Fuel poverty is a distinct and serious problem in Southampton, An estimated 9.7% households in the City meet the definition; they have below average income and above average expenditure on fuel to keep warm. In 2012 there were 124 excess winter deaths in Southampton.
4. The Southampton Warmth for All Partnership (SWAP) is a multi-agency response to the issue of fuel poverty, led by Public Health. This key partnership includes statutory services and third sector organisations and aims to raise awareness of fuel poverty and coordinate action to alleviate it. The partnership has been operating for almost 15 years and more recently has a core membership from Public Health (SCC), Environmental Health (SCC), Housing Services (SCC), the Environment Centre and Age UK Southampton. The group have found it a challenge to sustain engagement with colleagues in health and social care services.
5. SWAP have had many successes:
  - (i) Raising awareness with services and partners who visit people in their home (community, voluntary and statutory services); each year a fuel poverty checklist is updated and distributed as a prompt.
  - (ii) Providing advice services to help residents to better understand their energy costs and manage these.
  - (iii) Delivering physical improvements to homes through initiatives such as Warm Front, Cocoon, Heat Seekers etc.
  - (iv) Bidding for resources to deliver services and provide support, for example successful bids were made to the Department of Health as part of their 'Warm Home Health People Fund' and two successive bids to provide practical support for residents.
6. The Fuel Poverty Plan builds on the successes of the previous strategy approved in 2004 and aims to 'reduce health inequalities associated with fuel poverty, to reduce the number of deaths caused by cold homes and improve the quality of life of people living in fuel poverty'. The plan has been developed by SWAP and has been presented and approved by Southampton City Council's Sustainability Board in 2014. The plan can be found in Appendix one.
7. The Plan sets out the complexity of issues in Southampton and compares this with the national picture, the focus is on delivering a range of practical actions with demonstrable improvements. Included within is a three year action plan where each partner organisation has committed to contribute and these actions will be monitored and reported. The action plan has key themes:
  - Redefining the challenge (researching the impact of the new definition).
  - Improving energy efficiency (supporting improvement across all tenures).
  - Maximising income.

- Ensuring cheaper energy (best deal on energy bills).
  - Changing behaviours (fuel poor households have access to and act on best advice).
8. The targets are challenging and depend on the effective partnerships already in place to be achieved. The funding for energy efficiency improvements has become complex and challenging. This together with maintaining the ability to bid for funding streams to complete work identified in the action plan requires sufficient resources and priority in terms of officer time.
9. In March 2015, the Government published 'Cutting the cost of keeping warm: a fuel poverty strategy for England'. This sets out the Governments priorities for tackling fuel poverty whilst recognising that there are many factors affecting a household's ability to keep warm in their home. The key outcomes are:
- Progress against milestones (to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable) achieve an energy rating of band C or above).
  - Increased comfort.
  - Improved health and wellbeing.
  - Improved partnership.
  - Improved evidence base and understanding.
  - Improved targeting.
  - Lower carbon emissions.
10. The full impact of the national strategy needs to be assessed locally. There will be opportunities to bid for additional funding to support delivery of innovative and creative schemes including boilers on prescriptions.
11. The design, quality and standard of homes have a measurable impact on physical and mental health. As such housing was identified as an important social determinant of health in the Marmot Strategic Review of Health Inequalities and a number of housing related factors are included within the Public Health Outcomes Framework for England.
12. The proposed paper that will be presented to the Board in June 2015 will cover:

#### **Overview of housing in the City**

- Put into context the housing stock in the City including tenure, age, type, location.
- Residential homes, housing with care.

#### **Housing quality**

- What the condition is of homes in both the public and private sector.
- Making homes accessible for people with disabilities, now and in the future.
- Assessment of the impact on the health and wellbeing of residents.

### **Strategic overview**

- National strategic approach.
- Overview of related local strategies, plans and services  
This will include: Housing strategy, empty properties, regulation in the private rented sector, planning, performance and City Plan and Better Care Fund.

### **Housing availability**

- Homelessness (including outcome of recent member led enquiry into single homeless people)
- Allocation of social housing
- Overcrowding

### **Housing needs**

- Needs of residents now and in the medium term.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

13. None.

### **Property/Other**

14. None.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

15. Health and Social Care Act 2012.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

16. None.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

17. None.

**KEY DECISION?** No

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	All
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## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices**

1.	Southampton Warmth for All Partnership. Fuel Poverty Plan 2014-2017 'Warm homes for health' June 2014.
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### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None.
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	No
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**Other Background Documents****Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None.	
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