

REPORT TO: Health and Wellbeing Board

DATE: 18th September 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health

PORTFOLIO: Health and Adults

SUBJECT: National Energy Action (NEA) Public Health Work Programme

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek approval in principle of an application for free assistance from National Energy Action (NEA) to support the achievement of fuel poverty public health outcomes.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board provide support in principle for the application for free NEA support that will be circulated at the meeting.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 National Energy Action (NEA) is the national charity which aims to eradicate fuel poverty and campaigns for greater investment in energy efficiency for vulnerable people.

3.2 The organisation is seeking expressions of interest from Health and Wellbeing Boards (or member agencies) for assistance to:

- Support the development and/or implementation of action plans or other activities which will help achieve local public health outcomes on fuel poverty (and by association excess winter deaths where applicable) in support of Health and Wellbeing Strategy and other aligned policy commitments; or
- To assist Health and Wellbeing Board member agencies (particularly local public health teams) to develop wider sectoral or community engagement on the issue of fuel poverty to inform future refreshes of the JSNA.

3.3 The support offered takes the form of up to 12 days of officer time for development activities in 8 localities across England, which must be utilised by 14th March 2014.

3.4 Examples of potential activities that an NEA officer could support include:

- **Practical assistance to contribute to the development of a local action plan** which provides a planned approach to the achievement of public health outcomes on fuel poverty and excess winter deaths
- **Sectoral partnership development/ engagement activity** to bring health, social care, energy, housing and other agencies together with a view to collaborative action
- **Community development/ engagement activity** including activities that raise awareness of the impact of fuel poverty on communities and help them to participate in priority setting and decision making e.g. focus groups, consultation activity etc
- **Project development support** including advice and guidance on practical project design and delivery which helps households to achieve warmer, healthier homes they can manage to afford to heat
- **Awareness raising activities with the public** including energy advice/ fuel debt surgeries, energy awareness events etc
- **Developing local referral practice or provision** to ensure communities have access to local or nationally available energy efficiency, advice or other services including Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation, Warm Homes Discount and services for vulnerable households etc
- **Awareness raising and/or training for frontline practitioners** to improve professional practice including better targeting, assessment and referral of individuals into services - including awareness of the health/mental health impacts of fuel poverty etc
- **Information support** – including content for briefings, local promotional or other resources for policy makers, practitioners and/or the public
- **Technical advice** – for home improvement projects with a healthy housing dimension

3.5 It is important to note that NEA officers are not health/public health professionals but have an awareness of the health impacts of cold homes associated with fuel poverty and can offer a wealth of experience in the areas of domestic energy efficiency, fuel poverty, income maximisation, energy advice and fuel debt. If the application is successful NEA staff will require the support of an appointed local contact(s) with high level support to lead any agreed local activity, facilitate local introductions and assist with the development and delivery of agreed actions.

3.6 Applications for assistance must be submitted by Friday 20th September 2013 by either a Director of Public Health or the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board (or an appointed representative). NEA expects that all applications must

be supported in principal by individual Health and Wellbeing Boards.

- 3.7 Unfortunately due to the tight timescale it is not possible to undertake a full consultation on potential projects with all member agencies. However, officers from a range of disciplines are working together to develop an application which supports the aims of Halton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Affordable Warmth Strategy and Home Energy Conservation report.
- 3.8 The completed draft of the application will be circulated for comment and endorsement in principle at the September meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Should the application be successful there will be an opportunity for Board members and partner organisations to influence the delivery of the project as appropriate.
- 3.9 Should the application be successful an NEA officer will attend an initial meeting with a representative of the Health and Wellbeing Board to discuss local priorities, determine support activities and agree an outline work plan and delivery timescale. Time associated with this initial meeting is additional to the development support time available from NEA.

8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

If successful the application for NEA Officer support will support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plans and the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Strategy and Home Energy Conservation report.

Fuel Poverty is also an indicator in the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

9.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The application relates to up to 12 free days of NEA officer time. This includes desk preparation work and delivery activity within the locality as well as travel time. NEA will cover all NEA staff costs, travel, accommodation and subsistence costs associated with delivery activity.

All other costs associated with agreed delivery activities must be covered by the local partner(s) e.g. meeting, event, resource, printing or other activity costs.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Research shows that living in a cold home can have an adverse impact on child development in terms of their health and emotional wellbeing and educational attainment.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None directly

7.3 A Healthy Halton

Research shows that fuel poverty contributes to excess winter deaths, cardio

vascular disease, respiratory disorders, mental health issues and reduced resistance to cold and flu.

7.4 A Safer Halton

None directly

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Action to improve the energy efficiency of housing can help to reduce carbon emissions and have a positive impact on climate change.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None identified at this stage. However, should the outline application be successful a full risk assessment will be undertaken prior to the commencement of the project and mitigating factors identified and actioned.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Should the application be successful an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken with regard to the detailed delivery plan.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None