

## **COUNCIL – 8 NOVEMBER 2016**

### **ITEM 6 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR T EYNON TO COUNCILLOR A V SMITH**

The 2016 Annual Report of Leicestershire's Director of Public Health states that in 2014 North West Leicestershire was 6th worst in the country for excess winter deaths.

How did this Council rank in 2015 and 2016? What action was taken to improve performance and what more needs to be done?

#### **RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR A V SMITH**

The District Council has contacted the County Council's Public Health team and the excess winter deaths ranking data for 2015 and 2016 will be provided to us within the next few weeks, this information will be relayed to Cllr Eynon on receipt. However, Public health have confirmed we are no longer in the bottom ten nationally.

In terms of action to continually improve performance North West Leicestershire District Council administers and supports a multi-agency Staying Healthy Partnership with representatives from Public Health, County Council, Health providers, voluntary agencies and related service providers.

The partnership considers a wide range of issues from smoking cessation, obesity, physical activity, drug and alcohol use and home safety. Priorities are set based upon intelligence from annual Strategic Needs Assessments and Public Health Data.

Winter deaths is a multi agency issue and one that the partnership supports through awareness campaigns and promoting advice and guidance. This is the NHS Choices 'stay well this winter' guidance - <https://www.nhs.uk/staywell#SYoH51OFLouW0DIQ.97> which all partners are encouraged to share and promote.

Winter deaths concerning older people are usually as a result of complications in other long term illnesses brought about by low temperatures. Poor housing conditions are a significant factor in this brought about by being unable to heat the home due to cost or some other reason.

Apart from promoting NHS guidance the District Council is supporting the following;

- A collective Switching scheme ([www.nwleics.gov.uk/switch](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/switch)) which makes it easy for people to switch energy supplier in order to access competitive tariffs for their gas and electricity. The scheme is specifically designed to support those who would not ordinarily compare the market. The scheme was launched in October 2015 and has seen average annual savings of £329 for those who have taken part.
- Promotion of First Contact Plus which is a single point of contact for anyone seeking information for themselves or on behalf of someone else. Information on a range of health and social care issues are accessed via the website or by telephoning 0116 305 4286 and speaking to one of the advisors or via the following link below <http://www.firstcontactplus.org.uk/home/>
- The Leicestershire Warm Homes Healthy Homes scheme which provides personalised advice and support for those struggling to afford to heat their home. The

scheme includes an advice line (0300 333 6544), home visits and grant funding for energy efficiency improvements for those on a low income. We continue to promote to scheme through information sessions to community groups and organisations, parish councils and front line staff.

- Opportunities for the delivery of ECO funded programmes in the District. This funding is delivered via the larger energy companies and provides funding towards energy efficiency home improvements such as loft and cavity wall insulation. A new ECO funding regime will be launched in April 2017 and we are looking at how we access this in order to benefit both council owned and private properties in the District.
- In 2017 the Council will revise its Affordable Warmth Strategy in order to further develop actions to address fuel poverty in NWLDC.

The District Council is also supporting (in principle) the developing Lightbulb programme which is a partnership transformation Programme supported by the seven District Councils in Leicestershire and Leicestershire County Council. It aims to bring together a range of practical housing support into a single point of access or referral. A holistic housing needs assessment (the Housing MOT) will ensure that housing support needs are proactively identified and that the right solution is found. The overall ambition is to maximise the contribution that housing support can play in keeping vulnerable people independent in their homes; helping to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions or GP visits and facilitating timely hospital discharge. A report will be presented to Cabinet to outline how the District Council can support this programme further during Quarter 4.