

Review of the health impacts of damp housing conditions

September 2015

1.0 Purpose of the report

The aim of this report is to provide an overview to the Islington health scrutiny committee on the impact of damp housing. It provides a summary of the best available evidence relating to the impact on health of damp housing; what is known about the extent of damp housing in Islington; and what measures are being taken by Islington Council and its partners to tackle damp housing and the attendant health related impacts.

2.0 Recommendations to the scrutiny committee

The committee are asked to note the contents of the report

3.0 Intended impact of the report

The report is intended to provide an impartial summary of the evidence base about the impact of damp housing on health for the committee's review.

4.0 Contribution by community partners to the report

This health evidence section of this report was compiled as a desk-based exercise and involved an extensive literature review of studies relating to health, wellbeing and housing and national and international guidance concerning damp.

5.0 Contribution by professional partners to the report

The report was completed by Camden and Islington's Public Health team with input from partners across the council.

6.0 Key issues, challenges and risks and their management - focusing on prevention, partnership working and reducing inequalities

None identified.

7.0 Intended impact on reducing inequalities and improving health, wellbeing and value for money

Tackling cold and damp housing is important because of its association with a range of health conditions, from common colds and asthma through to respiratory and heart conditions that can lead to early death. Cold and

damp homes are also associated with poor mental health and poor social and economic outcomes as well as fuel poverty.

8.0 Comments of the Borough Solicitor

“The Health and Social Care Act 2012 (“the 2012 Act”) provides the legal framework for the councils duties in respect of public health functions.

Section 12 of the 2012 Act inserted a new section 2B into the National Health Services Act 2006 , which imposes a duty on each local authority to take such steps as it considers to improve the health of people in its area. In addition the 20 12 Act places a duty on local authorities to reduce health inequalities in its area”

9.0 Comments of the Director of Finance

Islington Council receives a ring-fenced Public Health grant from the Department of Health to fund the cost of its Public Health service. The total funding for 2015/16 is £25.4m however an in-year cut is expected circa £1.7m, with a future reduction in grant also expected.

There are no direct financial implications from this report. The cost of the review will be met from existing Council resources however any findings or recommendations from the report will need to be considered at a later date, and financial implications may result from implementation of the findings.

10.0 What success looks like, measuring success and targets

N/A

11.0 Next steps, next month, six months and a year

Next steps will be dependent on the report and recommendations of the scrutiny review panel.

REPORT ENDS