

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF OLDER PERSONS TASK & FINISH GROUP

THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM

Present: Councillors D Bowater
 M Freeman (Vice-Chair)
 R Goodchild
 T Morris
 S Owen (Chair)
 G Perham (joined meeting at 10.30 am)

Also in attendance: V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services
 M Jahn, Committee Officer
 S Jewell, Administrative Co-Ordinator

1/OP APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor S Owen be appointed Chair of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group. One further nomination was received for Councillor T Morris but Councillor Morris declined. On being put to the vote, Councillor Owen was appointed.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor S Owen Chair of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Owen took the Chair.

2/OP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor K Cursons substituted by Councillor G Perham.

3/OP OLDER PEOPLE

The Task and Finish Group received and considered an update report on scoping activity including time scales and next steps. After distributing hard copies of the survey via various community groups supporting the elderly, online, by telephone and discussions with Central Bedfordshire Council the main points highlighted were –

- (a) The lack of digital inclusion for older people
- (b) A gap in groups being accessed by men
- (c) The need of a 'central hub' be it a physical location older people can go to and/or a online location that lists all

- activities/groups/services available to older people.
- (d) The influence of COVID-19 on what we plan to do – the current Covid-19 landscape for older people looking quite different from what it will look like/what activities can be done post-Covid 19. what organisations are currently able to do and what timescales how resources could be used.
 - (e) All with an underlying theme of ‘Connectivity’ – the importance of connections in reducing loneliness, but that a wider variety of options need to be available in the community to meet different needs.

The members agreed there was a lack of a central hub/information point for people to research what groups were available and how to access them. It was suggested that the Town Council could help co-ordinate this by adding a page to their present website giving this information and links. This option would have to be researched in terms of capacity within the town council and how it would operate. Also noted was the inclusion of the Town Council as a trusted organisation would give older people confidence in whatever scheme was introduced.

After discussion it was agreed that the greatest need should not be decided by age group (i.e. 55+/60+/80+) but by what ‘circumstances’ that older person has, this could be their mobility, their specific ‘illness’ or the mental health needs they have. Alongside this is the older persons need for multi-generational contact. The members agreed to invite other organisations to the next Task and Finish Group meeting and provide them with a list of questions to discuss at that meeting. It was also supported that the Parishes outside Leighton Buzzard could be included in this scheme when finalised and the same opportunities could be offered to the older people within the outlying Parishes, especially those featured in the Central Bedfordshire Public Realm proposal.

Next Steps

At the next meeting on 15th October 2020, it was agreed to include the following

- (a) Helping organisations connect.
- (b) Digital inclusion and how equipment would be funded or provided for beneficiaries.
- (c) To invite other organisations to the next meeting
- (d) Questions to be agreed and provided for these organisations prior to the meeting based on the themes of digital inclusion and connecting.
- (e) Possible provision of webpage on the Town Council Website and how this would be funded and maintained.

4/OP APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor M Freeman be appointed Vice Chair of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group. There were no further nominations. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor M Freeman Vice Chair of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group.

The meeting closed at 11.31 am.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2020.

Chair

15 OCTOBER 2020