

## Older People Task and Finish Group

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>29 October 2020</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	<b>Information paper – update on Older Peoples Project</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Sarah Jewell, C&amp;E Services Support Officer</b>

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- 1. Information paper setting out the next steps for progressing this project.**
- 2. Next steps identified at last meeting (15 October 2020)**
  - a) Research telephone befriending services
  - b) Distribution of an updated 'Yellow Book for Older People' and research costs around an online directory of 'services/activities'
  - c) Support the set up of a website for Leighton Linslade Helping Hands
  - d) Digital inclusion – in the medium to longer term, set up of a technology helpline, training and a possible tablet loan scheme.
- 3. Update on identified next steps**
  - a) Befriending services**

Officer created a table (appendix 1) to show what organisations currently operate either a befriending service or who currently offer 'welfare checks' via the phone. Capacity exists for new clients.
  - b) Older people booklet**

The last 'Information for Older People' booklet was published in 2018. Officer not managed to speak to anyone about a new version. Hard to tell how much is out of date. Pages 17-23 covering 'Things to do, try and join' and 'Places to go' are not going to be useful due to the suspension of many groups since Covid-19. Not useful to circulate in it's current format.
  - c) Leighton Linslade Helping Hands webpage**

Leighton Linslade Helping Hands (Good Neighbours Scheme) are keen for our help to set up a simple website. Discussions with BRCC took place. Nothing exists (from BRCC) that can be used, so LLTC will pursue this to support their obtaining a simple website pending C&E Committee endorsement.
  - d) Digital inclusion**

**Directory**  
Discussions have taken place about a temporary webpage on LLTCs website listing activities/services. This could be a stop-gap directory

while we investigate an online interactive directory of services.

### **Technology helpline**

Discussions held with Community Action Bedfordshire and BRCC about whether they would be able to coordinate a helpline. They do not currently have the capacity, so are discussing the cost implications for a p/t coordinator and what would be involved in running a helpline.

Community Action Bedfordshire will be presenting a proposal for running the helpline and cost required to the officer ready for the officer to present at this T&F Meeting.

### **Technology workshops**

This would be in the longer term when technology support can be offered to those housebound, plus possible workshops linked to the library and community centre/activity groups.

### **Tablet Lone scheme**

This would be a longer term/future project which the officer can continue pursuing with the groups and Committee's blessing.

#### **e) Online Music initiative \*update**

At the end of the last T&F meeting, Cllr Freeman raised that Inspiring Music were looking into a project to address loneliness through music. The officer contacted Inspiring Music and another organisation - Music 24 (who currently run online music services including the Leighton Buzzard Neurotones).

This is an area of interest with regards to both 'activities for older people' but also in terms of digital and 'Covid-19' inclusion as it would be something that could be run while other groups are still suspended.

It does not however currently fit with our immediate, short term identified priorities. As a consequence it is recommended that it either be passed back to the 'general grant scheme' with the request for the approved funds to be reallocated to fund the alternative project, or this project could be put on hold until T&F group propose a future Older Peoples grant scheme.

#### **5. Areas of immediate focus and the draft Committee Report**

A draft report has been created to take to C&E Committee on 7 December. The recommendations include project activities that need funding and can be activated in the short term. It is however important to note that other medium to longer term activities for older people can be pursued for approval at the Cultural & Economic Committee in early 2021.

#### **6. Activities to keep on the agenda for future consideration**

6.1 Relevant groups for **older men** - There is still a needs gap for groups tailored specifically to older men to help reduce loneliness.

6.2 **Befriending Services** - there is current capacity, but if we successfully promote this service, organisations may start to struggle and need support with elements such as volunteer recruitment.

6.3 **Increase in activities/clubs** – all organisations spoken to by the officer said that while they do not have the capacity to run more clubs themselves, there is great need for more clubs/activities for their beneficiaries to be referred to/to attend.

6.4 **Grant funding** - This is still an option. For example, to support online (or offline) music groups.

**7. Next steps**

7.1 Amend and agree the report to be taken to C&E Committee.

7.2 Agree in what 'form' we would like to suggest to C&E Committee the medium/long term work be carried on – should T&F Group be continued (monthly) or would C&E wish progress to reported directly?

<b>Project Activation (time frame)</b>			
<b>Area of focus</b>	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Medium term</b>	<b>Long term</b>
<b>Digital Inclusion</b>	Technology helpline	Technology workshops face to face – in community centres/libraries and via befriending services	
	Leighton Linlade Helping Hands website	Tablet loan scheme through the library	
<b>Directory/ Information hub of activities &amp; services</b>	Town Council webpage listing known activities & services	An interactive 'searchable' online directory that organisations and individuals can have password access to for updating their activities/services directly.	

**END.**