

OLDER PEOPLE

1. Background

Over the past months, attention has been drawn to the contrast in active support by the Town Council between younger people and older people in the town. For example, the successful Town Council annual grants scheme aimed at organisations to do with young people.

This paper supports the continuation of the Council's commitment to younger people whilst advocating an initiative towards greater support of organisations dealing with older people. Doing so now will enable an appropriate sum for this purpose to be included in the Council's 2020/2021 Budget.

2. Objective

To help reduce loneliness among older people and to support third-party initiatives that increase the health and well-being of older people in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade.

3. Who/what should we support?

There is a temptation to identify some "golden scheme" that is not being done at the moment that would, by itself, take a major stride towards improving the happiness of older people.

We know that we cannot influence (or afford) basic State provision on things such as Pensions, Disability benefits, Housing support, NHS medical care, etc. And the Council has not been lobbied to improve particular provision for older people in the town.

So a sensible starting point might be to identify and contact the organisations currently working with older people in the town to discover a) whether Town Council funding would enable them to reach further or deeper with their current activities, and b) whether there are any needs not currently being met at all that Town Council support might help to initiate. An initial list of such organisations is found at the end of this paper. It will need correction and addition; LLTC officers can help here.

4. Current available guidance on loneliness

The recently-issued LGA/NALC publication "Reaching Out" is about Loneliness. Its quite a dense formulaic read, and takes the approach of Principal Councils linking with Local Councils to deliver joint programmes to antidote loneliness. It may well be that CBC's Health & Wellbeing Board will decide to mount an initiative based on this paper. There may be other good current advice around for Local Councils on working in community with older people that LLTC officers could bring forward.

5. Next Step – Budget 2020/2021

The Town Council could make a start by offering a bid-based approach to organisations active with older people to match that being done with young people. Such a scheme, whilst providing an immediate benefit for our older people, would enable us to learn how to make most effective use of our resources for older people – not least by scrutinising the reasons given by bidding organisations. We suggest provision of £150k in the 2020/2021 budget for this purpose.

To move this suggestion forward, officers are asked to refine and improve the list that follows as a starting point for the grant-aid scheme. They are also asked to liaise with CBC counterparts to establish whether a CBC initiative based on "Reaching Out" is being planned, and to bring forward any good current third-party guidance.

6. Organisations currently working with older people in Leighton-Linslade. The only certainty is that the list will contain errors and will need work to correct and add to it. Some may need to be removed if they are not "local" in service delivery or do not fit the "older people" objective well enough.

Name of Organisation	Understood Aims	Contact
Lifeline (Central Beds Council)	24 hour personal alarm service	lifeline@centralbedfords hire.gov.uk
Seated Exercise	Exercise for less mobile	0300 300 5125
Carers in Bedfordshire	Support for carers	contact@carersinbeds.org.uk
Cruse – Bereavement Care	Counselling + 1:1 support	www.cruse.org.uk
Day Centre, Duncombe Drive	Whole day care to older people referred by social worker. Day respite care.	01525 372676
Lip Reading & Managing hearing loss	Helping those with impaired hearing	Mb.lipreading@gmail.com
Parkinsons UK	Social support group for people with Parkinsons	01582 667483
Royal Voluntary Service	Supports older people to stay independent at home and in their communities.	0845 6080122
Sight Concern Bedfordshire	Advice, support, befriending service for those with impaired sight.	01582 655554
Age UK	Gardening, handy person, home help, money advice, housing issues, etc, for older people,	01234 360510
Contact the elderly	Tackling loneliness and social isolation among older people.	0800 716543
Helping Hands	Friendship and a helping hand to frail, older, sick or lonely people in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade.	07581 799273
Link Senior Citizens Association	Meets at Duncombe Drive 7pm on last Monday of month for social evening with music and a cuppa.	01525 372936
Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Hospital Transport	For patients who do not qualify for NHS transport to and from hospital.	07873 497633
Leighton Buzzard U3A	80 interest groups for the over 50s.	membership@llu3a.gmail.com
Contact The Elderly	Network of volunteers organise free monthly Sunday tea parties for over 75s who live alone.	www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk
Tea Dances	Monthly tea dances 2-4.	Loren.barnard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Cinnamon Trust	Volunteers visit housebound owners with pets to walk them etc.	01736 757900
No-one!	Getting-started computer help for older people beginners.	
Carers Cafe	3 rd Thursday of each month 1-4, Scout Hut, Grovebury Road	Jane.baker@carersinbeds.org.uk
Neurotones Choir	Pages Park station – for people with issues after strokes, Parkinsons etc	Catherine.maclean@eput.nhs.uk
Come and meet each other	Salvation Army Citadel, Tuesdays & Thursdays, for older people	

7. Finally, officers are asked to bear in mind the officer time commitment that will be involved in running such a scheme over the next two or three years, and to inform councillors if and when additional staffing costs need to be budgeted for.

8. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That this Committee proposes to Policy & Finance Committee a growth item of £150,000 to finance a 2020/2021 grant-bid scheme for older people organisations in the town, based on individual schemes with a notional £10,000 limit; the emphasis to be on schemes that antidote loneliness and promote health and well-being among older people in and around Leighton Buzzard and Linslade.
2. That the Town Clerk be asked to bring forward any staffing implications arising from this proposal.

Councillors Russ Goodchild and Steve Owen
On behalf of the Lib Dem Group
20 November 2019