

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

REPORT OF ADRIAN STASIAK, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES & BENEFITS to the: **CABINET: 11 JANUARY 2011** **(Author: Laura Apps-Green, Community Development Officer)**

OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To recommend the appointment of an Older People's Champion and the formation of an Older People's Forum for Breckland.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Appoint an Older People's Champion for Breckland and support the formation of an Older People's Forum.

Note: In preparing this report, due regard has been had to equality of opportunity, human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental and risk management considerations as appropriate. Relevant officers have been consulted in relation to any legal, financial or human resources implications and comments received are reflected in the report.

3. Information, Issues and Options

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 More than a quarter of Norfolk's population is aged 60 or over, and over the next two decades this figure will rise to over a third of the county's population. More locally, over 25% of the population in the Breckland district are also aged 60 and over and we are experiencing similar demographic trends. Older people are healthier and living longer and are more likely to remain independent and live in their own homes for longer. Consequently, a significant elderly population need services, support and guidance from Breckland Council on a regular basis to maintain this level of independence.
- 3.1.2 In October 2010, the Sustainable Communities Team, in conjunction with the local East Harling community and 22 partner organisations, teams and services held a pilot "Golden Age Fair". The fair had been inspired by the work of Fenland District Council, who has been nationally recognised for their work to improve the lives of older people living in their district.
- 3.1.3 The fair was a market stall style information and participation event, giving visitors the opportunity to discover what services are available to them to help them lead more comfortable and fulfilling lives. The partners involved in the event included: St John Ambulance, Pension Service, RNID, NCC Trading Standards, Alheimers Society, Breckland Benefits Advisor, Care & Repair, Walking for Health, Norfolk Fire Service, Environmental Services, Energy Savings Trust, Falls Service, Teleshopping, Switch Over Help Scheme, Age Concern, Flagship Housing, Crossroads Care in Norfolk, Homewatch, PHS Housing, One-stop-bus, Harling Social Support Group, Community Health Officer and East Harling WI.
- 3.1.4 The people that attended gave very positive feedback on the event. A feedback survey was issued to each delegate and 100% of those returned said that the event had been of benefit to them and that each stand holder had been helpful. 76% said that the event was excellent and 24% said they thought it was a good event.
- 3.1.5 Respondents also made the following comments, "*Do it again in the future*", "*It is very*

reassuring to have this type of event from time to time. Thank you very much to all concerned. The free gifts and delicious tea was much appreciated”, “Nice to have an exhibition of things that are available with explanations by qualified persons”, “Very civil and most helpful”.

- 3.1.6 It is clear that there is a real need to work more closely with our older residents in the future.
- 3.1.7 Breckland is the only district/borough in Norfolk that doesn't have an active Older People's Forum to support / champion the interest of older people.

3.2 **Best Practice**

- 3.2.1 The appointment of a Young Person's Champion for Breckland (Member appointment) has had a positive effect on the delivery of Breckland Council's youth engagement programme. It has led to the creation of the Breckland Youth Council, the development of new grant schemes aimed at young people, young people being recognised in the Youth Pride Awards, peer mentoring and raising awareness of politics in schools. Also, a new campaign is being launched called the Yes Campaign, which aims to break down barriers between older and younger generations.
- 3.2.2 The Older People's Champion will be based on the same model as the Young Person's Champion for Breckland (Member appointment) and will complement the provision for the younger generation.
- 3.2.3 Having an Older People's Champion is commonplace in many councils. For example, Fenland District Council has been nationally recognised for their work in helping older people lead more comfortable and fulfilling lives by enabling access to services and information. An Older People's Champion (Member appointment) is well placed to lead and provide direction for much of this work.
- 3.2.4 There is a Norfolk Older Peoples Strategic Partnership Board, which is a thematic group within Norfolk Ambition (LSP). This was launched in 2007 to ensure that older people across Norfolk receive the services relevant to them and which they need to help them remain living independently in the community. The Partnership also works to improve joint working between different partner organisations.
- 3.2.5 The Partnership involves older people fully at all stages of developing services and in decision making. It also shares information and good practice across agencies and identifies gaps in services and highlights areas of concern to older people.
- 3.2.6 All the district Older People's Forums in Norfolk have elected representatives to sit on the Board and there are currently 10 older people who go to Board meetings, as well as someone from the Carer's Council. Breckland Council has – to date – had no formal representation at these meetings.
- 3.2.7 In 2005 several Norfolk agencies worked with older people to produce the Older People's Strategy: 'Living Longer, Living Well'. This described changes in health, social care, housing and other services which are affected by government policies, social needs and people's aspirations. The Strategy was updated in 2009. This formed the background for many developments in services for older people in Norwich and Norfolk, and continues to influence the way statutory and voluntary organisations build their services for older people. The Partnership makes sure that agency commitments to support older people are being carried out. The Board meets every three months and monitors progress towards key objectives in 'Living Longer: Living Well', and asks for regular reports.
- 3.2.8 It is recommended the Breckland Council support the formation of an Older People's Forum, in line with the other authorities in Norfolk. This forum will be linked to the countywide partnership structure and the Breckland Local Strategic Partnership. The Older People's Champion will chair this group and ensure that service development and provision takes account of the views and needs of older people.

3.3 **Options**

- 3.3.1 To appoint an Older People's Champion for Breckland and support the formation of an Older People's Forum.
- 3.3.2 To not appoint an Older People's Champion for Breckland and not support the formation of an Older People's Forum.

3.4 **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

- 3.4.1 Breckland is the only district in Norfolk without an Older People's Champion or forum/partnership to ensure that service development and provision takes account of the views and needs of older people.
- 3.4.2 25% of the population in Breckland is aged 60 or over and there is a proven need to give targeted support and assistance to help people over 60 lead more fulfilling and independent lives.

4. **Risk and Financial Implications**

4.1 Risk

None

4.2 Financial

None.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 None

6. **Other Implications** [*Insert statement or confirm 'none' as appropriate at each sub-paragraph*]

- a) Equalities: Working to ensure that service development and provision takes account of the views and needs of older people.
- b) Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998: None
- c) Section 40, Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006: None
- d) Human Resources: None
- e) Human Rights: None
- f) Other: [e.g. Children's Act 2004] None

7. **Alignment to Council Priorities**

- Building Safer and Stronger Communities
- Prosperous Communities
- Your Council, Your Services

8. **Ward/Community Affected**

8.1 All Wards

Background Papers

Living Longer, Living Well – The Norfolk Older Peoples Strategy, Next Steps 2009 - 2011

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