

Interim Report Of

**OLDER PEOPLES'
TASK GROUP**

Lancaster City Council
March 2011

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2. Introduction

The Task Group worked with the Older People's Partnership Board as a consultee on the draft Older People's Strategy for the district. The Strategy was ambitious and in an ideal world would have been carried forward by the Partnership once all partners had signed up to it.

On behalf of the Task Group I want to take this opportunity to thank the Older People's Partnership for their hard work and commitment to the draft strategy and I sincerely hope some of the work can be taken forward by the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remember Councillor John Barnes, the original Chairman of the Task Group who worked hard for older people in the district but who sadly died before the work was complete.

I appreciate all the work that the task group came along to support and work with the other partners involved. I believe we all worked amicably together to produce the report and hope that the Lancaster District Strategic Local Partnership will be convinced that this is the right way forward and hopefully will accept our comprehensive findings.

Councillor Sheila Denwood
On behalf of the Task Group

3. Summary of Recommendations

Set out below is a summary of the recommendations that have emerged from the Task Group's work.

Recommendation 1- to Cabinet

- (i) That the Council formally recognises the role of Champion for Older People.
- (ii) That the Older People's Champion be a non executive role.

Recommendation 2 - to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That the outcomes of the Age Concern project – Linking Communities project be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in terms of how services provided by the Council can be developed.

Recommendation 3 – to Cabinet

- (i) That the Council develop an Older Person's Housing Strategy.
- (ii) That a Housing sub group be established to advise on the issues to be included in the Older Person's Housing Strategy.

Recommendation 4 – to The Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership

- (i) That, in the absence of any other partnerships dealing with Older Peoples issues, the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership be requested to host an Older People's public event.
- (ii) That the draft Older People's Strategy be used to inform this event.
- (iii) That a 12 month plan of priorities for Older People be agreed by the partners at this event.

Recommendation 5 – to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to include Older People's issues in their Work Programme on an annual basis.

Recommendation 6 – to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That a Final Report be produced after the outcomes of the LDLSP event have been agreed.



4. Role of the Task Group

The concept of the Task Group originally stemmed from a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Older People's Partnership Board, 50 Forward and Adult & Community Services from Lancashire County Council.

It took some time to get going but eventually the Task Group was established to work with the Older People's Partnership Board on their draft Strategy for Older People in the Lancaster District.

4.1 Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were agreed at the first meeting of the Task Group :

- 1. To oversee the development of an Older People's Strategy for the Lancaster District in partnership with the private, statutory, voluntary and faith organisations as well as older people themselves, including the Forum for the Older Person.*
- 2. The strategy will seek to incorporate the priorities of the Older People's Partnership Board; i.e. increasing financial security and benefit take-up, reducing isolation, creating a culture of prevention and early intervention delaying long term residential care and providing the best quality information and advice.*
- 3. To consider the services provided by Lancaster City Council to ensure that they are appropriate and accessible to an ageing population.*
- 4. To ensure that the policies of Lancaster City Council are relevant to the needs of older citizens.*

4.2 Project Scope

The project was to review and consult on the draft Strategy for Older People that has been produced by the Older People's Partnership Board.

4.3 Membership of the Group

The Task Group comprised of Councillors John Barnes, Susan Bray, Anne Chapman, Sheila Denwood, Mike Greenall, Janie Kirkman, Sylvia Rogerson, Ron Sands and Morgwn Trollinger. Co-opted Members of the Task Group from the Older People's Partnership Board were June Greenwell, Mark Luraschi and Donna Studholme.

Sadly, the Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor John Barnes passed away before the Task Group completed its work.

The Task Group was supported by Peter Loker - Corporate Director (Community Services), Richard Tulej – Head of Community Engagement, Jenny Kay - Democratic Support Officer and Tom Silvani - Democratic Support Officer.

The Task Group gratefully acknowledges the contributions and evidence freely given by:

Jan Finch – Deputy Chief Executive Wyre Borough Council
Mark Luraschi – Locality Commissioning Manager – Lancashire County Council
Donna Studholme – Help Direct Manager
June Greenwell – Chairman of Older People's Partnership Board

Rainbow Centre, Morecambe
 Friendship Centre, Lancaster
 Members of the Older People's Partnership Board
 Chris Hannah and Kathy Sinclair – Housing Officers – Lancaster City Council
 Geraldine Moore – Age Concern Lancashire

4.4 Timetable of Meetings

Date of Meeting	Who Gave Evidence?	Issues Scrutinised
10/08/09	Jenny Kay – Democratic Support Officer Mark Luraschi – Locality Commissioning Manager – Lancashire County Council Donna Studholme – Help Direct Manager	Terms of Reference and Work Programme Background and current situation Work of Help Direct
06/10/09	Jan Finch - Deputy Chief Executive Wyre Borough Council Mark Luraschi – Locality Commissioning Manager – Lancashire County Council	Good practice regarding Older People existing in Wyre Draft Strategy
28/01/10	Task Group and members of the Older People's Partnership Board	The core themes in the draft Strategy for Older People
09/11/10	Jenny Kay – Democratic Support Officer Chris Hannah and Kathy Sinclair Housing Officers – Lancaster City Council	Mapping Exercise of Council Services Role of the Council within the Supporting People Framework and the role of Council Housing for Older People.
18/01/11	Geraldine Moore – Age Concern Lancashire Jenny Kay – Democratic Support Officer	The Linking Communities Project Draft Strategy

The Task Group also undertook two site visits – one to the Rainbow Centre in Morecambe and the second to the Friendship Centre in Lancaster. Both are good examples of what can be provided for Older People to engage their minds and bodies away from their own homes.

5 Documentary Evidence Considered

The production of the Draft Strategy included a number of references to publications and documentation. The Task Group did not consider in any depth any of these documents as separate entities, but scrutinised the Draft Strategy as a whole and the evidence it contained.

Information from the Office for National Statistics is included in the report.

6. Status of Report

This interim report is the work of the Task Group, on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and where opinions are expressed they are not necessarily those of Lancaster City Council.

Whilst we have sought to draw on this review to make recommendations and suggestions that are helpful to the Council, our work has been designed solely for the purpose of discharging such work in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Accordingly, our work cannot be relied upon to identify every area of strength, weakness or opportunity for improvement.

This report is addressed to Overview and Scrutiny. It has been prepared for the sole use of the Council and the Task Group takes no responsibility for any Member or Officer acting in their individual capacities or to other third parties acting on it.



7. Background and Context

7.1 Background

The definition of an older person in the UK is someone over the age of 50.

The span of being an 'Older Person' takes you from turning 50 to maybe over 100 years of age – over 50 years. In those years people's needs change dramatically. Most older people lead wholly independent lives until they are in need of health and social services to help them.

Information from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) projects the population to rise most quickly for the oldest age groups.

The country is going through rapid social change with the population growing older and more people living longer than ever before. This has been a gradual process with life expectancy growing steadily over the last century but in 2007 for the first time, there were more people over state pension age than there were children. We are living in an ageing society now not tomorrow. It is predicted 25% of children born today will live to be 100.

The number of people aged 85 and over is likely to more than double over the next 25 years from 1.3 million in 2008 to 3.3 million by 2033. The number of centenarians is projected to increase over the same period from 11,000 in 2008 to 80,000 in 2033.

Despite the forthcoming increases in state pension age, the population of state pensionable age is still projected to rise by 32 per cent over the next 25 years. In contrast, the population of working age is projected to rise by just 14 per cent.

7.2 Older People's Partnership Board

The Older People's Partnership Board was established in 2006 and shortly after this Lancaster was chosen for 'Link Age+' pilot. The Older People's Partnership Board lead the steering group for this project which was known locally as 50 Forward. The 50 Forward project was the basis for the County Council's Help Direct Service which continued the work that had been started by 50 Forward.

The Council was approached by the Older People's Partnership Board to work on producing a Strategy for Older People in the Lancaster District which the Council and its partners could sign up to.

The Partnership was required in its Terms of Reference to :

"To promote strong local partnerships with agencies and stakeholders in Lancaster district which deliver a cohesive crosscutting strategy for older people."

Hence the commissioning of the Draft Strategy.

The Draft Strategy was commissioned by the Older People's Partnership and this was the starting point for the Task Group's work.

At the first meeting of the Task Group, Members amended the proposed Terms of Reference which was :

'To develop an Older People's Strategy for the Lancaster District in partnership with the private, statutory, voluntary and faith organisations as well as older people themselves, including the Forum for the Older Person.'

This was changed to :

*'To **oversee the development of** an Older People's Strategy for the Lancaster District in partnership with the private, statutory, voluntary and faith organisations as well as older people themselves, including the Forum for the Older Person.'*

The Task Group agreed that it did not have the expertise to produce an actual Strategy for Older People but it could oversee the work that the Older People's Partnership was undertaking and act as a consultee on the work.

7.3 The Draft Strategy

The Draft Strategy contained a number of themes and aims within it for Older People in the district.

Themes and Aims

- Keeping well and staying in touch

Older people will have good social networks and access to a range of activities

- Income

Older People will have sufficient income to maintain their quality of life and the opportunity to work if they want to

- Housing

Older People will have suitable and decent accommodation

- Safety

Older People will be safe and feel safe in their home and in the community

- Transport

Older People will have improved access to services via public or community transport

- Health, health care and social care

Older People should be able to stay healthy, well and independent for as long as possible. If needing care they and their carers should receive suitable support.

The Draft Strategy also included a number of recommendations linked to these themes and aims for the Council and its partners to sign up to.

The initial Draft Strategy was felt to be a little overwhelming in terms of length and in need of reducing. In light of this it was agreed to hold an informal workshop for Members of the Task Group and the Older People's Partnership Board. This event took place in January

2010 and the information gained at this event would be used to update and streamline the Draft Strategy.

7.4 Gathering evidence

Whilst the Task Group waited for the work on the Draft Strategy to be undertaken, it visited the Rainbow Centre in Morecambe and Friendship Centre in Lancaster. Task Group Members were welcomed with open arms at both of the centres and were shown the facilities and activities that took place there.

The Task Group invited Jan Finch, the Deputy Chief Executive from Wyre Borough Council to a meeting. Jan kindly gave the Task Group an overview of the work and good practice undertaken in Wyre in relation to Older People.

At a later meeting, the Task Group heard a presentation from Housing Officers on the Council's involvement within the Supporting People framework and its work as landlord to older people living in Council owned properties.

At the last meeting of the Task Group, the Chairman of the Older People's Partnership Board advised Members that the Partnership Board would cease after its next meeting. The Board had agreed that it could no longer fulfil its Terms of Reference and should, therefore, come to an end. The Chairman advised that the Draft Strategy which had been amended to a more readable shorter form would be amended to reflect this change.

Officers advised Members of the Task Group that the City Council could not take ownership of the Draft Strategy but it could refer it to the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership to conclude. This would give the Strategy ownership and a way forward.

The Task Group agreed to submit this interim report to Overview and Scrutiny to report its findings and recommendations so far.

8. Findings

From early on in the Task Group's work it was clear that the Council, along with its partners, needed to highlight the work that was undertaken for older people and champion the cause for older people at a strategic level.

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Barnes represented the Council on outside bodies who referred to him as the Older People's Champion but this role was not formalised.

It was felt by the Task Group that this should be a recognised role elected at Annual Business Council for a back bench Councillor who had the energy and passion for this cause. The Champion will liaise with the Cabinet Member who has responsibility for Older People within their portfolio.

An Older People's Champion will emphasise the importance of seeing older people in a wider context, not just as recipients of Council services but as valued members of our society. The Champion will ensure that older people's wishes and preferences are taken into account in decisions made by the Council. They will be the voice of older people in the district.

Role of the Older People's Champion

The Task Group suggests that the role of the Older People's Champion could include :-

- To assist the Leader and the Portfolio Holder by advising on service issues which support and encourage active, independent and healthy lives for older people in the district.
- Identify, challenge and help to eradicate age discrimination.
- Ensure that older people are fully able to make their views known, individually and through their organisations, as appropriate. The Champion is a facilitator and an advocate for older people. They are not there to put forward their own ideas of what older people need.
- Forging and maintaining links locally with older people's organisations, forums and groups.
- To raise the profile of older people within the district and their needs in the development of policy across all areas of the Council.
- Acting as a spokesperson to promote the positive aspects of the Council's work with older people.
- Encouraging older people to play a fuller role in shaping the policies of the Council and in designing its services.
- Working to promote positive images of older people as citizens, and to combat stereotyping and age discrimination.
- Take an interest in the quality and availability of information for older people, ensuring that it is appropriate, easy to understand, free of jargon, and accessible to people who have visual or hearing difficulties.

In conclusion, an Older People's Champion has a vital part to play within the Council ensuring older people's views and issues are heard and that they are taken in to account in the decision making process.

Recommendation 1 – to Cabinet

- (i) That the Council formally recognises the role of Champion for Older People.
- (ii) That the Older People's Champion be a non executive role.

At one of the later Task Group meetings, Members were informed about the Linking Communities project. Age Concern successfully won Big Lottery funding for the three year project which sought the views of older people on local services to see whether the involvement of local communities result in better provision. Carnforth had been chosen as one of the project areas.

The Chairman of the Task Group with an Officer attended a conference to hear more about the Linking Communities project and at this conference invited Geraldine Moore from Age Concern Lancashire to a Task Group meeting to hear more about the project.

The project will build on data that has already been collected both nationally and locally and will involve thorough consultation with older people, service providers and commissioners in the project area.

The Research

Through the use of discussion groups and questionnaires researchers will help older people and communities:

- to think about wants, needs and resources
- to develop an understanding of the options for services
- to propose changes to services for their localities
- to better use and develop resources to support older people
- to develop projects in their own communities
- to measure the impact that involvement in community projects has on the wellbeing of the individuals.

The Ward Councillors for Carnforth have been invited to take part in the Project to share their knowledge of the area.

The Task Group felt this was an important piece of work that was taking place in the district and that the outcomes of the project should be considered further once it was complete.

Recommendation 2 – to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That the outcomes of the Age Concern project – Linking Communities project be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in terms of how services provided by the Council can be developed.

The Task Group heard evidence from Council Housing Officers on the role of the Council within the Supporting People Framework. Supporting People was a national grant funded programme which funded partnership working with the Council, Social Services, Health and the Probation service. Its aim was to prevent vulnerable people experiencing crisis which resulted in costly interventions. It also enabled vulnerable people to live independently through housing related support.

The older people's Supporting People service was currently under review. Consultations were underway and the findings would decide the future delivery of the service.

The Task Group heard about the work undertaken by Council Housing within the district for older people. The Council owned 575 units of sheltered accommodation, 309 units of community alarm accommodation, over a 1,000 private sector community alarm clients and 233 Telecare clients. The Council had been awarded a number of accreditations for its good work in this area. These services were funded by Supporting People, Telecare and the Council itself.

Local authorities normally produce a Housing Strategy for their district every five years. Lancaster City Council's last Housing Strategy was published in 2005. In order to prepare a new Housing Strategy for the Lancaster district, a new Housing Needs and Demand Study was commissioned in December 2010, which will provide robust data to inform the Council's next Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan, setting out the housing priorities for the Lancaster district for the next five year period. Work will commence on the Lancaster District Housing Action Plan once the final report from the Housing Needs Survey has been produced in May 2011.

One of the key actions in the Lancaster District Housing Action Plan will be to produce an Empty Homes Strategy, and an Older Persons Housing Strategy. The Lancaster District Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2008, and a mid-term review of the District's Homelessness Strategy is currently underway.

The Older Person's Housing Strategy will focus on the needs of older people within the district, and will consider the existing housing provision within the social housing and market housing sector, identify whether the existing stock is fit for purpose and what action is needed, as well as identifying what new housing provision is required in the Lancaster district. As housing for older people and housing support cannot be planned or delivered in isolation, the Review of Housing Related Support Services currently being undertaken by Lancashire County Council's Supporting People Team will be integral to the development of the Older People's Housing Strategy. This Review aims to develop a clear framework for the commissioning and provision of older people's specialist housing/tenancy support services across each district in Lancashire, and will determine at district level, the most appropriate types of services/service models eligible for funding through the Supporting People Framework. The Review of Housing Related Support Services will inform the re-procurement of services by March 2012, and the Lancaster District Older Persons Housing Strategy will be produced in line with future commissioning plans being approved for older people.

Recommendation 3 – to Cabinet

- (i) That the Council develop an Older Person's Housing Strategy.
- (ii) That a Housing sub group be established to advise on the issues to be included in the Older Person's Housing Strategy.

With the demise of the Older People's Partnership Board, there is no driving force behind the draft Strategy that has been produced. The Task Group was requested to take ownership of the Strategy but the Council was not in a position to do this. It was felt by the Task Group that the Council and its partners had a joint responsibility to take forward this work.

Officers had liaised with the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership (LDLSP) Manager to discuss possible ways forward for this piece of work. The LDLSP had held an event to promote Climate Change for the districts' stakeholders and partners. It was suggested that the LDLSP could host an older people's public event. At this event the themes and recommendations within the draft Strategy could be used as a starting point to agree a list of priorities and a plan of how these could be achieved within the following 12 months by the partners and organisations present.

The Task Group could then take this list of priorities and produce a Final Report and ask Council to sign up to these recommended priorities for the year.

Recommendation 4 – To the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership

- (i) That, in the absence of any other partnerships dealing with Older Peoples issues, the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership be requested to host an Older People's public event.
- (ii) That the draft Older People's Strategy be used to inform this event.
- (iii) That a 12 month plan of priorities for older people be agreed by the partners at this event.

The Older People's Partnership Board had requested the Task Group to ask Council to set up a committee to specifically deal with older people's issues. It was agreed that it was unlikely that Council would agree to this as it had obvious resource implications and in the current economic climate the Council would not introduce new work areas that were not identified in the Council's Corporate Priorities.

Officers suggested that a way forward which was less resource intensive but kept older people's issues on the agenda, was to include it on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme. The Committee could devote a meeting each year to older people's issues or deal with any items as they emerge.

Recommendation 5 – to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to include Older People's issues in their Work Programme on an annual basis or alternatively as they emerge.

It was felt by the Task Group that it could not take the draft strategy any further at this stage and, with the end of the Older People's Partnership Board, the work needed to be picked up by the LDLSP.

Members feel that the Task Group's work is incomplete but at this stage it could do no more.

The Task Group agreed that a Final Report should be produced once the LDLSP public meeting on Older People's issues had taken place and priorities had been agreed by the stakeholders at the event.

Recommendation 6 – to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That a Final Report be produced after the outcomes of the LDLSP event have been agreed.

9. Conclusion

The timing of this Task Group was a little unfortunate. The redrafting of the Draft Strategy took some time and then following this, as the Task Group was winding up its work, the Older People's Partnership Board decided to come to an end as it was no longer fulfilling its Terms of Reference.

The obvious way forward for the Older People's agenda is through the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership.

The ageing population has a voice that needs to be heard. It would be helpful if the Council and its partners enabled this growing percentage of our population to be heard.

At this stage and in light of recent events, the Task Group is not able to make many strategic recommendations in terms of older people's services and the adoption of a formal strategy for older people in the district, but it feels that the introduction of an Older People's Champion would show the Council's commitment to the cause.

As mentioned in the report, Councillor John Barnes had acted informally as the Council's Older People's Champion and was referred to by many as our Champion. It would be a fitting tribute to the work he did if the Council formally adopted the role of Older People's Champion for the Council.