

Older People's Assembly

Minutes of Public Meeting & AGM held on:

Wednesday 16th March 2016, commencing at 2pm,

Council Chambers, Civic Centre, Southend-on-Sea.

COMMITTEE:

Mike Grimwade	Chairman	Lynda McLernon	Treasurer
Derek Iles	Vice-Chairman	Mike Dolby	Committee Member
Molly Dennis	Committee Member	Alan Grubb	Committee Member
Dave Monk	Honorary President		

No.	Item	Speaker	Time
1	Welcome, Introduction, Apologies & Declaration of Interests: (All members having a vested interest in items on this agenda should declare their interest if relevant).	Chair/Secretary	5 minutes
2	Minutes & Matters Arising: (2 nd December, 2015)	Chair/Secretary	5 minutes
3	Correspondence:	Chair/Secretary	5 minutes
4	Annual Reports & Election of Committee Members: 1. Chairman's Report 2. Treasurer's Statement 3. Election of Committee Members	Derek Iles Lynda McLernon Shidaa Adjin-Tetty (Independent Election Observer)	20 Minutes
5	Delivering the Older Peoples' Strategy: Report on Implementing the Strategy, service changes and how the budget will impact on support for older people.	Simon Leftley Director – Department for People Southend Borough Council	40 minutes
6	Wells Legal: -an update on legal issues relating to care planning, wills, power of attorney etc.	Andrew Wells Wells Legal	30 Minutes
7	Zumba Fitness: - the physical benefits of Zumba and how it can help with co-ordination, balance and memory.	Wendy Traxler Zumba Fitness	5 Minutes
8	Question Time: - Open forum for questions. Advanced notice of subject is an advantage to enable relevant information to be obtained ahead of the meeting to inform the discussion.	An open forum for questions whether related to this agenda or not	Chair discretion on time
9	Close of meeting:	Chair	

Agenda Item 1	
Welcome, Introduction Apologies & Declaration of Interests:	
1.1	Mike Grimwade began with details of a revision to today's speakers: Simon Leftley (of SBC) sends apologies and in his place Sarah Baker of SBC to represent him. Andrew Wells (of Wells Legal) is unwell and John Gillies (of Adams & Greenwood) has stepped in at eleventh hour and will talk about funeral planning.
1.2	Apologies were received from Barbara Armitage, Jill Allen-King, Brian Dillon and Mike Assenheim. Dave Monk also sent his apologies along with a written address for the meeting. MG read this on his behalf – the message apologised that DM would be 'on-air' and so unable to be with us and DM sent his support for the OPA and its very vital role as a voice for the over 55's and pledged his ongoing support.
1.3	No declarations of interest were received from the Assembly.
Agenda Item 2	
Minutes & Matters Arising:	
2.1	The Assembly agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held 2 nd December 2015 as an accurate account of that meeting, and these were duly adopted and signed by MG.
2.2	There were no matters arising.
Agenda Item 3	
Correspondence:	
3.1	No new correspondence had been received.
Agenda 4	
Annual Reports & Election of Committee Members:	
4.1	1) Chairman's Report The Chairman MG addressed the Assembly with a review of the year and particularly commented on the success of the Active Aging Event at Victoria Shopping Centre. He commented on future involvement and also thanked his committee for their work and support during the year.
4.2	2) Treasurer's Annual Report LMc presented the Interim Annual Statement of Account for 1 st April 2015 to 14th March 2016 (copies given at the meeting to all in attendance) and explained its main points i.e a total spend of £2,383.83. The income for the year less expenditure with a closing balance of £3,071.89. LMc report also detailed the individual funds together with a brief explanation of those monies that are ring-fenced. No questions were received from the floor and so on a show of hands the accounts were accepted and adopted and signed by MG. LMc highlighted that there is no anticipated further expenditure before the accounting year end and that a revised covering statement would be used to prepare the final account as at 31 st March using the figures as presented at this meeting. Ratification of that final report would be sought at the June meeting and also accompany the accounts sent for external examination.
4.3	3) Election of Committee Members: MG confirmed that the Treasurer and two of the committee members had served a two year term; all three were willing to stand for re-election. Lynda McLernon, Alan Grubb and Molly Dennis were on a show of hands duly re-elected. One new committee application had been received from Jill Allen-King and Jill was on a show of hands elected. Interest had been expressed from one other but that application was still pending.
4.4	There was a special note of thanks from one OPA Member – Mrs Mitchell – who spoke in praise and gratitude of the Assembly Times and with appreciation to all those who make an input to its content. She explained how informative and helpful it was to her and others in the OPA.
Agenda Item 5	
Delivering the Older Peoples' Strategy:	
5.1	Sarah Baker began by briefly introducing herself as the Group Manager for Service Transformation and that she has a 31 year tenure in Adult Services. She then

	<p>proceeded to a comprehensive PowerPoint Older Peoples Strategy presentation on behalf of Simon Leftley entitled “Promoting Wellbeing & Independence” in which she outlined the current demographics of the area, the challenges, key priorities, health and social care integration, the changes to the Care Act and their vision for the services of the future. She went on to explain how the Older People’s Assembly might help in the development/transformation process and concluded with questions from the floor.</p>
5.2	<p>Q. One member (from The Brambles) highlighted the anguish caused by a break-in at her sheltered scheme and the contrasting concerns with residents having to choose between CCTV versus a breach of their privacy. Moreover she was concerned that although new window locks were installed some time ago some ground-floor flats were omitted but acknowledged that some were also left unlocked by residents.</p> <p>A. SB empathised and concurred this was an issue.</p> <p>MG noted that the Care Act states you should be pro-active, but also went on to say that some useful information and referral details provided by the Council have been axed: namely the Outlook magazine. Alternatives for local residents include Evening Echo (which has to be bought); or free papers (which are pre-empted by anti ‘junk mail’ signage). MG reassured that OPA are currently in dialogue over this issue.</p>
5.3	<p>Q. One member VH asked “where are the stats supporting people getting back in their home and, you cannot do everything that the PowerPoint aspires to”. He further observed that SBC is in general a facilitator and not a service-provider.</p> <p>A. SB stated that an earlier stage of intervention may help ensure a better service, and noted “people need to be in the best place at any point in their lives” – noting also that they need to assess <i>if</i> the home is the best place for them. This would in turn empower people to help themselves. SB stated she has a timescale in which to collect data from the community to this end. It is then hoped this fact-finding and engagement programme will benefit the services going forward.</p> <p>Q. VH challenged that after a similar fact-finding enquiry 3 years ago surely this information must already be available and what progress has been made?</p> <p>A. SB quantified that much data was still missing for those people ‘on the cusp’ of these surveys, and whose details would not have been included. Therefore she championed a new approach whereby asking not “what you need from us” but “when do you need us” – so quantifying the expectation of the service. SB said how she is “confident we can do things differently”.</p> <p>MG although noting there was a lot of ‘jargon’ in the presentation, reassured members they could always lobby to get speakers back again to answer questions. <i>(Copies of the PowerPoint are available on request)</i></p>
5.4	<p>Q. Another member SL had an innovative idea (having overheard students’ concerns with having to repay tuition-fees) whereby students cover their accommodation and study-costs by working for Older People in care-homes or their private residences (thereby offsetting a growing debt by providing companionship and help for the elderly and especially the house-bound). SH thinks such agreements may be reached using NHS. SH had previously prepared a document – a copy of which has been sent to David Amess and SL offered a copy for SB if interested.</p> <p>A. SB commented that she would pass the suggestion to Simon Lefley. MG offered a word of caution about CRB checks and students’ abilities/ qualifications in looking after the elderly without proper experience.</p>
5.5	<p>Q. MD (Committee member) asked SB “how will you work with other departments?” Southend council has a bad reputation for involvement with bus-service providers, its highly-priced entertainment, and its long waiting periods for</p>

	<p>blue-badge applicants and others, many of these are interlinked but clearly not dealt with cross departmentally.</p> <p>A.SB simply stated these issues “would need to be considered in the wider forums”</p> <p>MG noted that applications for blue-badge can come about suddenly, so asked if could there be a way to ‘fast-track’ them?</p> <p>SB deferred this to the ‘Department of People’ .</p>
5.6	<p>Q. LMc (Treasurer) asked “what changes might we see on level of service? Will they be affected by the cuts in budget? And how will the funding affect those services which are clearly already unable to cope with demand i.e . Enablement Team 6-weeks support but often the service is oversubscribed and so person remains in hospital/respite when ready to come home?”</p> <p>A. SB deferred to the SBC’s position regarding early intervention <i>making all the difference</i>, and therefore providing the appropriate support. SB reassured that a lot of work was being done with the ‘re-enablement team’ to this end: saying “if SBC can get this right, everyone will get what they need, when they need it – some of it is not about money but yes the first six weeks are key.”</p>
5.7	<p>DI asked what SBC is doing about rectifying the shortage of adequate staff, because people do not want to come into this type of work (the caring-professions).</p> <p>A.SB’s response was that SBC are advertising more, and trying to promote care profession but stressed there are still shortages of staff in this area of work in care-homes etc..</p>
5.8	<p>MD started to ask another question, but SB had a meeting to go to, so had to leave the Assembly at this point, urging MD to submit her question via E-mail.</p>
<p><u>Agenda Item 6</u></p> <p><u>Adam and Greenwood (published speaker on behalf of Wells Legal unwell):</u></p>	
6.1	<p>John Giles of Adam & Greenwood Funeral Homes introduced himself (as a returning speaker) and gave a general overview into funeral-planning – citing two ways of making funeral arrangements: Type 1 – via a Will stating precisely what finances are to be used, and how you wish to be buried/cremated. Type 2 – you arrange to set up a pre-paid funeral plan at today’s prices (via a specialist company such as Adam & Greenwood) and via a Trust so that when you die the complete cost of the funeral is met from this fund regardless of the market cost at that time. JG also noted that such companies as Sunlife and AXA provide similar services, however a note of caution was offered with for example Co-Op and Golden Charter as these plans hold your funds but it is a set amount which does not take account of inflation – whereby in years to come a funeral would accrue additional costs which would not be met from the plan. Moreover other companies such as ‘Golden Leaves’ do not include ‘third-party’ costs such as the crematorium fees and only the funeral directors charges being covered by this plan. JG advised researching the companies first before embarking into paying fees such as ‘at time of need’ as these could also incur hidden expenses at the time of a funeral. JG then invited questions from the Forum.</p>
6.2	<p>Q. SL stated she was an organ donor, but asked if donating her body to medical science could offset the cost of a pricey funeral?</p> <p>A. JG informed her that in order to donate a body to science it has to be ‘in a good condition’; death having occurred ‘by natural causes’. However, once medical science has finished with the body it is quite likely that they may return the body years later to the NOK to arrange and fund funeral/disposal ! JG advises having a ‘back-up plan’. There is a distinction between donating a body to medical science and being an organ-donor.</p>
6.3	<p>Q. D-S (OPA member) questioned the security of monies held in Trust by any company – such as Adam & Greenwood – what if they no longer exist at the end of the clients’ tenure?</p>

	A. John Giles reassured (several times) – that any monies held in Trust are guaranteed by the Government in the event of a funeral directorship/company ceasing trading whereby funds are deferred to another funeral company to fulfil the planning arrangements. JG informed that in this way, no finances should be lost, since they are bound by law.
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Agenda Item 7

Zumba Fitness:

7.1	Wendy Traxler introduced herself and explained the average age of her ‘Zumba Gold’ group – low-impact for the more mature student - is between 65-75 years. The health benefits of Zumba include improved mobility, improved memory from learned choreography, better balance, and co-ordination. She invited members to consider joining her Zumba groups (a Latin-inspired dance/fitness workout) which are held at various locations around the county. Costs per session £5, WT left some leaflets for OPA members. Wendy advised that she would be prepared to provide additional classes but venues were hard to find and school-halls are often more expensive due to extra fees to cover presence of caretakers. WT currently holds the nearest class at St. Andrews Church Hall, Church Road, Shoebury from 10.45am -11.45am on Wednesday mornings.
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Agenda Item 8

Question Time:

8.1	Q. MW asked whether the traffic lights at West Road can be re-synchronised with its pedestrian crossing. Currently they let traffic through at the same time as allowing people to cross the road! A. MG will forward this to SBC for investigation.
8.2	Q. BW asked whether pedestrian phasing can be extended to allow people with reduced mobility to actually reach the other side of the road without traffic flow recommencing. Other members of OPA concurred. A. MG. Will take this issue for SBC to action.
8.3	Q. D-S questioned the OPA spend of £1,500 on print costs as this was half the allocated OPA budget, he thought this was too high a proportion. He asked why members were not all sent electronic copies since this was the age of on-line solutions. A. LMc repeatedly explained that the allotted grant-monies were specifically for these costs and this spend was legitimately as per the conditions. Moreover, the full OPA membership had already been given an option to have electronic copies rather than hard copy mailing and to dates only 1 request for this! DI commented that access to a website was costly, intrusive and often unreliable. Given the resources available to most OPA members, there was a marked preference for sitting quietly and reading The Assembly Times in its hard-copy format. The majority of those present concurred and somewhat vocally expressed their preference for the hard copy. No further questions.

Agenda Item 9

Close of Meeting: MG closed the meeting by thanking all who had attended and welcomed the new committee. He further thanked Shidaa Adjin-Tetty for his support and serving as the independent observer for the election process.

9.1	Next Public Meeting will be Wednesday, 1st June 2016.
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