



Age Friendly Communities

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To consider a proposal for the Council to work towards becoming an Age Friendly Community.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. **Agree that South Kesteven District Council registers to become an Age Friendly Community and engages in the necessary work to fulfil the criteria.**
2. **Request that the Council's Rural and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee monitor the progress of this work to maximise the impact of this opportunity.**

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting Communities
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Should any budget or investment be required for any of the initiatives identified, then an appropriate business case will be developed to demonstrate the cost and associated benefits to the community.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (Deputy 151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no legal and governance issues arising from this report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.3 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination based on a range of characteristics, one of which is age. It is therefore against the law to treat someone unfairly or discriminate against them on the basis of their age.
- 1.4 In addition to this legal duty, there are many advantages to providing an environment in which people can grow old well and feel supported. Feeling disconnected from society can have an adverse effect on people's mental and physical health, which can in turn lead to increased support being required from the Council and community health services.
- 1.5 The ability to grow old well and live an independent life does not only rely on an individual's personal capability but also on the social and physical environments in which they live. Ensuring the district provides a supportive environment can play an important role in assisting older residents to maintain activity levels and their independence for longer.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Within the Council's Corporate Plan (2024 – 2027) the Council has identified its mission to be 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'. This is under-pinned by the priority of Connecting Communities which aims to enhance the strength, wellbeing and capacity of communities across the district, and work towards providing a cohesive society that all our residents can be proud to belong to.
- 2.2. The population of South Kesteven is forecasted to age significantly. Below are some of the relevant key statistics relating to the age profile of residents within the district:
- 23% of the population are currently aged 65+ which is higher than the national average of 18%.
 - This is projected to increase to 24% by 2028, 27% by 2035 and 29% by 2043.
 - There are more residents aged 65+ than there are under the age of 20.
 - In 2036 more than half of the population are projected to be 50 and over.
 - From the Census information 14% of households consist of a single individual aged 66+.
 - The district has one of the highest proportion of veterans in England and 83% of veterans are over 50.

Age Friendly Communities

- 2.3. The Director of Public Health's Report 2023: Ageing Better in Lincolnshire – Adding Life to Years recommended that all Lincolnshire district councils became Age Friendly Communities. This is an initiative developed by the World Health Organisation to support residents in later life to live healthy and active lives and was developed in consultation with older people around the world.
- 2.4. The [UK Network of Age-friendly Communities](#) is a growing movement with over 75 places across the country having already committed to making their community a better place to age in.
- 2.5. To support the recommendation from the Director of Public Health, the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board set up an 'Ageing Well Working Group' to oversee progress. In addition, Lincolnshire County Council have formed a strategic partnership with the [Centre for Ageing Better](#) with the aim of tackling inequalities for ageing residents, working to make homes and workplaces more suitable for people as they get older, and to challenge negative perceptions around ageing.
- 2.6. The aim of becoming an Age Friendly Community is for local groups, councils, businesses and older residents to work together to make changes in the social and physical environment to ensure they are fit for purpose. This includes looking to address transport issues, improving outdoor spaces, providing volunteering and

employment opportunities, and improving access to leisure and community services.

2.7. To identify the necessary improvements to be made the World Health Organisation has developed a framework of eight domains, these are:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings.
- Transportation.
- Housing.
- Social participation.
- Respect and social inclusion.
- Civic participation and employment.
- Communication and information.
- Community support and health.

2.8. A four-step programme cycle has also been developed to support organisations interested in becoming an Age Friendly Community as follows:

- **Engage and Understand** - gain political commitment, form a committee of stakeholders and gather findings.
- **Plan Strategically** - stakeholders develop a shared vision, to determine the priorities for action and plan how the community will achieve its age-friendly outcomes.
- **Act and Implement** - implement an age-friendly action plan.
- **Monitor and Evaluate** - identify successes and challenges, defining priorities for future improvements.

2.9. Becoming an Age Friendly Community is an ongoing process involving an initial five-year commitment. During the first two years the expectation is that a baseline assessment is undertaken which then informs the development of an action plan which is then delivered over the following years. There is no requirement for the Council to commit to all actions identified.

2.10. Work towards becoming an Age Friendly Community can be incorporated into the valuable work which is already ongoing to deliver the Districts Health and Wellbeing Strategy which was adopted in March 2023. The action plan developed to support this Strategy has five key themes which have been identified to positively impact the health and wellbeing of South Kesteven residents. These include housing and homelessness, activity and wellbeing, the environment and sustainability, economic inclusion and community engagement.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The Council has an opportunity to demonstrate political and community leadership by applying to become part of the UK network of Age Friendly Communities. This would support the Council's corporate ambitions and help the district become a great place to grow old in.
- 3.2. In addition, this would support the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board's strategic ambition to co-ordinate a county wide response to the opportunities and challenges presented by ageing.
- 3.3. Becoming an Age Friendly Community would allow the Council and its residents to access tools, support and guidance from the Centre for Ageing Better and other networks across the UK.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council has the option to do nothing. However, this would not support the Council's corporate ambition to provide an environment which supports all residents to live active and healthy lives.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. Cabinet is requested to provide political commitment to support South Kesteven becoming an Age Friendly Community and request that progress is overseen by the Rural and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee.