



Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Cabinet Member for Property and
Public Engagement

Age Friendly Communities

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the progress of South Kesteven District Council becoming part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Agree that the Rural and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee receives a six-monthly progress report as part of the scheduled South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan update.
2. Note the progress of the work by Council Officers to proceed with an application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 This is a progress update to ensure that members remain briefed on this issue.

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 in turn can 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. Particularly pertinent to this report, the Corporate Plan recognises that South Kesteven has an aging population.
- 2.2. At a meeting of Cabinet held on 5 November 2024 it was agreed that the Council proceeds with an application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities. Subsequently, engagement between Council Officers and partners has commenced to fulfil the criteria set out by the Centre for Ageing Better. A copy of the Cabinet report is provided in **Background Papers at point 6 below**.
- 2.3. The Council will need to follow the four-step programme as set out by the World Health Organisation (WHO), with the first step being 'Engage and Understand'. As political commitment has already been obtained, the next steps are to form a committee of stakeholders and gather findings.
- 2.4. Resource has been identified from appropriate service areas across the Council to create an operational group which will be the driving force behind the application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.
- 2.5. The group consists of the following service areas:

Leisure Services: The Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead will be the key contact and will Chair meetings to ensure agreed actions are carried out.

Community Engagement: This team will work to ensure that the voice of our local communities is represented. The team holds a budget which will support the age-friendly action plan and manages several funding pots through which community-led projects can be supported. This team has a long-established relationship with the voluntary and community sector of the district, and holds an extensive database of contacts.

Communications: This team will be responsible for ensuring all PR and consultation is carried out in an age-friendly manner.

OD and Change: A researcher from this team will support in the creation of the baseline profile and further data required to establish how age friendly South Kesteven currently is.

Housing: To gather insight and data, setting up a housing voices platform or similar.

2.6. In order to fulfil the initial requirements of becoming a member of the National Network the Council needs to produce a baseline profile document over the next twelve months, which will establish how well it caters to the needs of older people across eight domains. The eight domains will assess the following areas:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Housing
- Transport
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

A copy of East Lindsey's Baseline Profile can be found in **Appendix A** as an example.

2.7. It is the intention to proactively promote opportunities for older people to be actively involved and their views incorporated into the work we do. At this initial stage we will engage, both through questionnaires to agencies working with older people, and with older residents themselves, to ascertain their lived experiences. This work will help form our baseline and the creation of a more detailed survey as the work progresses.

2.8. A strategic steering group is also being formed which will meet on a quarterly basis. This will include older people from across the district and partners that work with older people. The individuals that sit in this group will champion the work, collect data and feedback, and help establish what the baseline profile is within South Kesteven. As work progresses, this group will also scrutinise the effectiveness of the action plan and its delivery.

2.9. One of the actions already identified is the creation of an older people's forum and/or an ambassador scheme. The benefits of this include assurance that the voice of older people is being heard within the Council's work and the services being delivered. This forum will be utilised for consultation and learning from lived experience as well as providing an opportunity for residents to champion progress in their local areas. The involvement of the Council's Community Engagement Team will be key to ensuring all voices are heard, including those from disadvantaged communities.

2.10. In addition to the above, Officers have met with the Age Friendly Communities Officer at East Lindsey District Council to gain insights regarding the process which they started in 2019. This will ensure South Kesteven District Council is taking the right steps to meet the application criteria, along with the learning from neighbouring authorities.

- 2.11. The deadline to submit an application to The Centre for Ageing Better (CFAB) is the 28 March 2025. Applications to join the Network will be reviewed week commencing 7 April 2025. It is the Operational Group's intention to submit an application by this deadline.
- 2.12. Should the application to the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities be successful, work will commence to produce the baseline profile. Further support and resources will also be available from the network.

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 ambition and help the district become a great place to grow old in.
- 3.2. In addition, becoming a member of the Network would support the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board's strategic ambition to coordinate 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. Cabinet has approved the Council working towards becoming an Age Friendly Community and therefore the option to do nothing has been discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. At the meeting of Cabinet held on the 5 November 2024 it was requested that Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the progress of the Council's work towards becoming an Age Friendly Community to maximise the impact of the opportunity.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1. *Age Friendly Communities* – Report to Cabinet, Published 28 October 2024, available online at:
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s43999/Age%20Friendly%20Communities.pdf>

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix A - [East Lindsey District Council Baseline Profile 2021](#)

