

Area North Committee – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008

## 11. Enhanced Area Working: Supporting Older People in Area North

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### Purpose of the Report

To inform Members of the progress of the service enhancement programme to address the priority of supporting older people in Area North.

### Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Members note and comment on the report, including the recommended next steps in Section 3 to complete the current service enhancement programme for older people.

### Background

The Area Committee has previously recognised the importance of supporting older people to access and influence local services, and has noted the significant numbers of older people within Area North. The new Somerset Local Area Agreement includes the themes of **enjoy good health and well-being in later life** and **be able to access good quality, affordable health, social and well-being support easily**.

The Area North Development Plan includes the local priority to **promote and enhance activities and services for older people** and in February 2008 an allocation of £10,000 was made to support a programme of work designed around improving local quality of life for older people. The main aims were to:

- enhance local access to services
- promote new or extended community led activities for older people, supporting volunteers
- promote partnership working between service providers affecting a range of issues including health and well-being, financial security, home safety
- build on existing programmes and activities (e.g. Active Living Centres, Community Active Lifestyles)
- improve on existing levels of engagement with older people's groups, to help identify and address issues faced by older residents and community groups

The budget was allocated towards the cost of six information sessions and a programme of small grants (up to £200) to encourage locally led activities. Both aspects built on previous good practice and involved a range of partners and SSDC services throughout the planning stages.

### 1. Service Enhancement Programme

#### a) Information Drop-In Sessions

Information sessions for the over 60s were held in Somerton, Curry Rivel, Langport, Stoke sub Hamdon, Martock and South Petherton during June and July 2008, with free transport being offered. The transport was provided for the first three locations by South Somerset Links and for the others by Nippy bus.

Thirteen agencies attended or were represented and their evaluations are summarised in Appendix A.

Approximately 165 people attended the sessions and all expressed their appreciation of the information on offer and the friendly atmosphere. People came with a variety of expectations, ranging from simple curiosity to very specific questions. Some sample comments and queries are included in Appendix B.

The total cost of the afternoons was £765.87.

### b) Small Grants

The programme was advertised through the local press, parish magazines and parish councils and all known groups and agencies were also contacted. The application process was kept as simple as possible with a one page form to complete. Details of the grants awarded are contained in Appendix C.

All groups were asked to return an evaluation form and photos where possible at the end of their activity and a summary of those comments received to date is included in Appendix C.

### c) Overall Summary of Service Enhancement Programme

Activity	Input	Output	Outcomes
Information drop-in sessions	Time to plan and co-ordinate events (Community Development Assistant)	6 sessions	165 people attended and received advice.
	Time attending sessions (representatives of agencies)	13 agencies represented	Range of advice given, including booking of home visits and referrals. Those attending passed information on to friends.
	£292.37	Free transport to sessions	Enabled 24 people to attend who would not otherwise be able to do so.
	£300	Free blood pressure and blood sugar testing offered by CAL team	69 people tested with 38 (64%) referred to GP/practice nurse regarding blood pressure. 54 tested for blood sugar levels with 13 (24%) being referred.
	£173.50	6 halls hired	Accessible, familiar venue in each location
Grants programme	Time – Community Development Assistant (CDA) and member of Area Support team	28 applications processed	26 grants awarded

	£4,791	26 grants (see Appendix B)	Additional activities: 14 x coach outings 8 x social events with refreshments and outside entertainment 3 x educational courses 1 x relaxation course
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Costs of service enhancement programme for older people:

Transport	£ 292.37
Health testing	£ 300.00
Hall hire	£ 173.50
Grants	£4,791.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,556.87</b>

#### d) What went well?

- Information sessions (Appendix A)
  - Actual afternoons were well received
  - Willingness of partner agencies to attend and provide information
  - Free transport where used
  - Led to increased co-ordination between agencies
  - Networking on the day useful to agency representatives
  - Array of information made available in one place
  - Some of those who attended passed information on to neighbours and friends
- Grants (Appendix C)
  - Ease of application/simplicity of form appreciated
  - Encouraged some groups to be more adventurous in their choice of activities
  - Encouraged interaction between some groups
  - Activities opened to non-members

#### e) What could be improved?

- Information sessions
  - Attendance at some
  - Uptake of free transport offer
  - Location – take to the villages
- Grants
  - Too early to say if grant support will have led to longer term outcomes. This can be monitored at a later date.
  - Clear that cost of transport is an issue for many groups – if this obstacle can be removed, other activities could be undertaken by the groups.

#### 2. Further Information and work carried out

- This year has seen a change in the organisation of, and responsibility for, day centre provision across the County. In addition to the work carried out as prescribed by the service enhancement programme, the CDA has arranged meetings between other agencies (e.g. the Community and Active Lifestyles Officer and the newly-appointed

South Somerset Homes Activities Co-ordinator, SCC Development Worker and Age Concern Development Workers) that have directly led to improved interaction between the services.

- A £500 grant has been made towards the Golden Oldies singing project that will be starting in Somerton in the autumn, following its launch in Crewkerne on 22 September. The charity is sponsored by HSBC, Tesco, Bupa, Age Concern, South Somerset Homes (with funding also coming from SSDC's Arts Development budget).
- Links have been made with volunteers. They are vital to the continued provision of services and activities and preliminary work has begun to encourage them to join a County register of volunteers.
- The local Pensioners' Forum is interested in establishing a branch in the Somerton area.

### 3. Recommended next steps

- The CDA will continue to liaise with Age Concern, SCC, SSH and CAL team and develop a networking circle to plan further information sessions in 2009.
- Follow up with groups that received grants.
- The cost of transport for outings is clearly an obstacle for local groups. A detailed study into ways to alleviate this would be useful.
- Produce a more detailed and wider database of local groups and agencies (within confines of data protection rules).
- Co-ordinate the production of an A4 sheet listing the contact points for services available to older people.

### Financial Implications

Of the original £10,000 allocated, £5,957 has been spent leaving a balance of £4,043.

### Implications for Corporate Priorities

- Objective 9: Identify and address the particular issues affecting rural areas.
- Objective 11: Work in partnership with others to improve the health prospects for all.
- Objective 14: Maintain above 90% the people who generally feel safe in their communities.

### Other Implications

Local Area Agreement Themes:

- Theme 18: To enjoy good health and well-being in later life.
- Theme 19: To be able to access good quality, affordable health, social and well-being support easily.
- Theme 29: Develop strength and role of community groups and voluntary organisations.
- Theme 34: Improved joint working.

**Background Papers:** *Report on Improved Area Working – ANC December 2007*  
*Supporting Older People in Area North – ANC February 2008*