



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

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Monday, 22 May 2023

To: The Town Mayor and all members of the Older Persons Sub Committee

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend the **OLDER PERSONS SUB** of Leighton-Linslade Town Council to be held on **Thursday, June 1, 2023**, commencing at **10:00 - 12:00**, to be held at **Council Chamber, The White House**.

**THIS MEETING MAY BE
RECORDED ***

M Saccoccio

Town Clerk

Agenda

1 / OP - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record be kept of the Members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Town Clerk.

2 / OP - ELECTION OF CHAIR 2023-2024

3 / OP - ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR 2023-2024

4 / OP - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. The Localism Act 2011 and the Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare any pecuniary interests, other registrable interests or sensitive interests in items on the meeting agenda, which are not already included in the Register of Interests. Members may choose to declare interests already listed in the Register for clarity and transparency.
2. For disclosable pecuniary interests, Members must leave the room and not participate in discussion or voting, unless a dispensation has been granted.
3. For other registrable or non-registrable interests which directly relate to the financial interest of a Member, a relative or close associate, councillors may speak on the matter only if members of the public may also speak at the meeting. Thereafter, Members should leave the room and not participate in discussion or voting, unless a dispensation has been granted.
4. The Council/Committee/Sub-Committee is asked to consider approving any requests for dispensations to speak/vote on any agenda item in accordance with the Dispensations Procedure.

5 / OP - QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)

To receive questions and statements from members of the public in respect of any item of business included in the agenda, as provided for in Standing Order No.s 3 (e) (f) (g) and 3(h).

6 / OP - MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Older Persons Sub-Committee meeting held on **2 March 2023** (attached) in accordance with Standing Order 12.
2. To receive information updates on matters arising from the previous meeting (if appropriate).

Attachments

[230302 Older Persons Sub draft.docx](#)

7 / OP - MARIGOLD HOUSE UPDATE

By invitation, representative from Central Bedfordshire Council will attend the meeting to give an update on the Marigold House project.

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

OLDER PERSONS SUB-COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2023 AT 1000 HOURS

Present: Councillors G Perham
 J M Freeman
 S Owen - Chair
 T Morris
 R Goodchild

Also in attendance: L Salmon, Head of Cultural & Economic Services
 N Bailey, Cultural & Economic Services Support Officer
 M Jahn, Committee Officer
 C Whitelegge, BRCC (Leighton-Linslade Community Agent)

Joining remotely: I Hanton, Development & Commissioning Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council
 Ranjit Karavadra, Care is Central

Members of the Public: 1

73/OP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies had been received.

74/OP DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made and no dispensations had been requested.

75/OP QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

76/OP MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The Sub-Committee received the draft minutes of the Older Persons Sub Committee held on 17 November 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Older Persons Sub Committee held on 17 November 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

(b) Updates from previous meeting:

Minute Reference 65/OP (Minutes of the previous Meeting): it was confirmed that further letters had been sent to the supermarkets and our local MP regarding the loyalty discounts now only being accessed on-line so excluding some potential users. Support and advice had also been sought from UK Network of Age Friendly Communities on how to address this issue.

77/OP MARIGOLD HOUSE UPDATE

Two representatives from Care is Central and Central Bedfordshire Council provided an update on the Marigold House residential care home project.

The sub-committee was informed the project was running behind schedule and should be completed by the end of the calendar year, when Care is Central would take over the running of Marigold House. The delay time would be used to understand the best ways to integrate and make resources available and build relationships within the community. It was planned to make Marigold House part of the community in Leighton Buzzard with local recruitment and Central Bedfordshire Council providing communications and networking on how these facilities could be used. It was envisaged Marigold House would provide a care home, day centre and individual living schemes. The day centre would aim to provide an enhanced quality of life for older people, offering activities and day trips and the facility could be hired out to community groups in the evenings when not being used.

All Members agreed it was important to evolve what was already on offer at the Duncombe Drive day centre and discuss what could be provided for its users. The Day Care Centre Offer document produced by Central Bedfordshire Council was now a few years old but the principles from this were still followed. It was suggested the sub-committee could look at this document to review it and bring back their thoughts to Central Bedfordshire Council before the next meeting. An invite would be sent out to the members of the sub-committee and a site visit to Marigold House set up for the end of June 2023.

It was hoped that a way could be found to identify people who were lonely and isolated at home since the pandemic and who had no way to meet or socialise with people. Work with social services, the local authority and the Community Agent could help with reaching these people and other methods of interacting with them and their families would be discussed and considered.

Thanks were given to the two representatives for attending the meeting and the sub committee looked forward to further discussions and the upcoming site visit.

78/OP COMMUNITY AGENT SCHEME UPDATE

The sub-committee received an update from the Community Agent on her work since launch of the initiative in September 2022. The Agent was employed through Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity with the town council having sponsored the role for its first two years, with the aim of offering assistance and signposting residents to sources to further help and support on a range of issues.

Visits were being made to the weekly Chatty Café in the TACTIC building where support could be given for blue badge applications, advising on relevant clubs/groups, appropriate taxi services, bus routes/times and signposting to the correct organisation for general enquiries such as benefit applications, completing forms and any loneliness/medical issues. Weekly phone calls had been set up for individual people who were lonely or housebound to encourage engagement. The number of enquiries was increasing through promotion and word of mouth, but at present was manageable for the one part-time Community Agent. If the level of need changed or increased, this would be looked at and re-considered.

Members were informed of a new initiative funded by Central Bedfordshire Council and run by the Tibbs Dementia Foundation where a weekly group meeting would be held to socialise and provide cognitive stimulation. A Dementia Information event was due to be held on 14 March about the Tibbs organisation in Leighton Buzzard.

Thanks were given to the Community Agent for her work with the initiative and members agreed the scheme was proving beneficial to older people and could possibly expand if required in the future.

RESOLVED to note the information.

79/OP TECHNICAL SUPPORT HELPLINE

The sub-committee received an update on the Citizens Online digital support project and tablet lending scheme. Seventeen new learners had been supported this quarter with outreach sessions taking place at care homes and churches.

It was suggested a Steering Group could be set up with all groups using this service so information could be shared and promoted. Citizens On-Line would be recruiting a new manager for the Leighton Buzzard area in due course following relocation by the present contact.

RESOLVED to note the information.

80/OP UK NETWORK OF AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES REPORT

Following the resolution made by the Council on 30 January 2023, the Sub-Committee received an update on the application for UK Network of Age Friendly Communities and WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

The application had been submitted and feedback should be received within the next week. This would be an invaluable resource to drive the 55UP process forward. It was felt a better picture of what was needed in the town was required and a draft survey produced to do this. Members discussed whether this draft survey should be a general blanket one or a shorter more specific questionnaire. It was felt the length of the draft survey provided might discourage people from completing it and a more specific version aimed at the 55Up age group would be more appropriate. Officers would review how to take this forward.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To note the report.**
- (b) To endorse the proposal to carry out a Leighton-Linslade Age Friendly Community Survey to hear views from residents aged 55 and up.**

The meeting closed at 1140 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 MARCH 2023.

Chair

8 / OP - CITIZENS ONLINE DIGITAL INCLUSION UPDATE

By invitation, representatives from Citizens Online will attend the meeting to give an update on the digital support project (report **attached**).

Attachments

[Citizens Online Report June 2023.pdf](#)

9 / OP - COMMUNITY AGENT SCHEME UPDATE

By invitation, the Leighton-Linslade Community Agent will attend the meeting to give an update on the Community Agent initiative (report **attached**).

Attachments

[Community Agent Report- June 2023 .docx](#)

10 / OP - 55UP OVERVIEW AND FUTURE PROJECTS REPORT

To receive a report (**attached**) regarding the current projects under 55UP and to consider the recommendations contained therein with regards to the renewal of the Citizens Online contract.

Attachments

[55UP Overview and Future Projects Report.docx](#)

DIGITAL INCLUSION IN LEIGHTON-LINSLADE

Summary Update March-May 2023

During this period, we have continued to build on our work to support the development of digital skills in those aged 55+. We have been evaluating our approach and exploring new ways to reach people. We have promoted the available digital support widely in community locations, at the library and in printed publications such as the March, April and May editions of Bee Local. This has resulted in a steady, but small, uptake of new learners.

We have started to focus more on engaging with contacts within the community, with the intention of trying to reach potential learners where they are – in their interest groups, or when they are participating in targeted health support, for example.

Connectivity can be an issue when offering sessions in community locations and so we have mobile broadband available as a backup for volunteers to use.

Our Digital Champion Coordinator on the project has changed, with Liz Stainsby leaving in mid-March and Sara Caselton-Bone joining in late March.

DIGITAL CHAMPIONS

In this quarter, we have continued to generate new interest in people taking on the volunteer Digital Champion role. We recognise that there needs to be a balance between recruiting new volunteers and numbers of learners. As we are focusing on increasing our reach to learners, we are taking on new Digital Champions who are particularly keen to help with the promotion of the service and are happy to test out new areas - like collaboration with health teams, Open Days, activities in Day Centres and a market stall.

We have met with our volunteers face-to-face on a couple of occasions in this period and this has enabled us to draw on their local knowledge, as well as their experience in the digital support sessions, and it has also allowed us to show our appreciation for the work that they do. As a result, we have discovered new potential marketing opportunities, as well identified an issue with volunteers capturing some of the ad-hoc, informal support that they provide.

We have interviewed 7 new potential volunteer Digital Champions in this period. Two of these have now stopped responding and the start date for one has been delayed due to caring commitments. One has started, another is being inducted into our phone system during May and two are in the pipeline, one following the induction process and one awaiting the DBS Certification.

MARKETING

We continue to promote the helpline and service through social media and by partnering with Leighton-Linslade Town Council e.g. the Council is promoting its 55-Up Project and Citizens Online on the back of the programme for the Summer bandstand concerts. We have also continued with Bee Local, as mentioned in the introduction.

We have a stand at an Open Day at Greenfields Extra Care on the 24th May.

We have been talking to people in the community about what we do, as outlined below.

We are about to trial a more informal approach in our printed marketing, using volunteers' pen portraits and using their first names, for example.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We met with Health Coaches at Leighton-Linslade Health Connections – exploring ways in which we could support their work. E.g. one idea was to have a Digital Champion available at Stop Smoking sessions, to help people use the NHS Stop Smoking App. (Outcomes are better when people use the app, but many people are reluctant to do so due to their lack of digital skills.)

We attended *Jazz Up Your Life* at Astral Park Sports and Community Centre, so that we could chat with people there about what we offer and network with representatives from other organisations, such as Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and Central Bedfordshire Council. One outcome of this was a tablet loan and another was a collaboration (both detailed separately).

We visited Meadow Way Community Centre with a view to holding some sessions there in the Summer.

We are collaborating with Katharine Reedy from the Church of the Good Shepherd drop-in Community Café at Astral Park Sports and Community Centre, with the intention of running some joint sessions. In the longer term, Katharine also intends to become an embedded volunteer Digital Champion.

We have been exploring initiatives to engage people in day centres, care homes and independent living schemes. We have worked in these locations in the past, offering a drop-in digital session, with a degree of success. We are now working in collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council to run sessions offering access to its *Online Day Activities* programme. Activities include: cookery, bingo, low-impact keep fit, arts and crafts and gameshows.

It is very popular with people, once they join, but many find it difficult to access - due to the staff in the homes not having the necessary skills or time to support the sessions. We are hoping that, once we have run a few sessions, people will feel confident to continue independently.

FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS

We have continued to operate in the Chatty Café (at the TACTIC Centre) on a Tuesday 10-1, with two volunteers. The Café itself has varying levels of attendance, which do not seem to directly correlate with the level of requirement for digital support. Returning learners seem to be comfortable in the environment and are broadening their digital engagement by trying new things, such as online games.

As mentioned, by meeting face-to-face with volunteers, we have discovered that some of the more ad-hoc support offered by them was not being recorded. This is because they felt that '*it wasn't much*'. Examples include:

- Helping a lady (V) create a contact for someone that had called her.
- Helping a gentleman (M) wipe the hard drive of 3 old computers so that he could take them to be recycled.
- Helping a lady (F) to delete old emails on her phone and also to check the storage capacity and usage, as she was worried that her phone was getting full (when it still had around a 3rd of the storage free). She also wanted help backing up photos from an old laptop, so that she could then put them onto a new laptop which she intended to purchase.
- Supporting a lady (J) to book her COVID vaccination.
- Helping people who were stuck logging-in and worrying about saving their passwords, or advising people about creating safe passwords.

We have learned from this and intend to change the way data is captured moving forward.

A little help can make a big difference!

G, who is 79, had her hip operation cancelled on two occasions at the last minute. She received notification of her new operation date at fairly short-notice and needed to have a blood test prior to her hospital admission. She did not feel confident to book this online and, every time she tried to phone, she said that she was in a queue and did not get through, which she found very stressful. She seemed genuinely worried that it might impact her having the operation. With guidance she was able to input her details and book her blood test online, which was a great relief to her.

When learners ring up the free helpline, they continue to be given the choice of remote support, attending the drop-in session or a one-to-one session with a volunteer.

Most choose face-to-face support. During this quarter, we have supported 8 new learners, and 11 repeat learner sessions.

TABLET LOAN SCHEME

The tablet loan scheme was launched in early December 2022. Our Digital Champions continue to promote it.

We met **AH** at Jazz Up Your Life who said that she would be interested in accessing *Online Day Activities*, but it would not be much fun on her small phone.

When asked '*Would a tablet make a difference?*', she said that it would and so we let her know about the Scheme. She was particularly interested, as she was looking into a house exchange with her housing association and said that she would be able to see available properties online more clearly. This was particularly pertinent as she has issues with her sight. In the past, she has also suffered with agoraphobia. With the support of her friend, she was able to attend the Chatty Café to collect her tablet. Moving forward, she will drop into the café when needed, for support with using the tablet, and her friend will also help.

FUTURE PLANS

We will be introducing a new online session form for volunteers to capture learner data easily. It has been designed to be filled in quickly, with drop-down selections and will encourage the capturing of any 'good news' stories on the spot.

By recruiting a broad range of volunteer Digital Champions, we hope to be able to capitalise on some of their local contacts and skills to 'get the word out' and broker some new community activities.

We plan to have a market stall to explain and promote the service, as well as offer ad-hoc support, on Tuesdays 20th and 27th June.

Will we run a session incorporating *Online Day Activities* at Westlands Residential Home.

We plan to promote the service in the newsletters of a health centre and school.

We will contact interest groups – such as those exploring Family History, to see if it would be helpful for a volunteer to attend a couple of sessions and provide digital support.

Leighton-Linslade Community Agent Update

1 February – 30 April 2023

Older Persons Sub-committee 1 June 2023

Key highlights:

- Over 90 residents have received support from the CA since starting on 1 Sept 2022 (38 residents supported between 1 Feb and 30 April 2023).
- The largest number of enquiries concern **transport** (requests for help with Blue Badge applications), **money/benefits** (primarily Attendance Allowance claims) and issues around **support for carers**.
- The majority of enquiries are from, or concern, people over the age of 76, many of whom need support to find specific help eg. care services, or to apply for financial support or Blue Badges. Most of these require a home visit due to the severity of their health conditions.
- Good working relationships have been established with Citizens Advice Leighton-Linslade, local social prescribers (Health Connections coaches and BRCC's Community Wellbeing Champion), Tibbs Dementia Foundation and Carers in Bedfordshire to enable cross referrals where appropriate.
- Organisations/groups/events visited Feb-April: Chatty Café, Citizens Advice Leighton-Linslade volunteers meeting, Carers in Bedfordshire, Tibbs Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Group at St. George's Court, Cedar Finches Residents' Group, Tibbs Dementia Information Event at Hockcliffe St Baptist Church.
- Client feedback:

You will be pleased to hear the Blue Badge turned up by the return of post. I Have used it already to go shopping and for a visit to the optician. Thank you so much for helping with all the forms. At this stage I needed help. It has been a godsend to me. Thank you so much. MC, Linslade, March 2023

Many thanks for all the help you gave my Mum with her Blue Badge application. It is so much appreciated and ultimately I'm not sure our application would have been successful without your kind assistance. DF, daughter of client in Linslade, April 2023

My mother has been lucky enough to have a volunteer from Helping Hands visit her. My mother is 95 and cannot get out on her own. She has had a lovely lady who has many things in common with my mother and is a perfect volunteer. She has enjoyed two visits and been out for afternoon tea. She is looking forward to the next visit. Thank you so much! JB, daughter of client signposted to Leighton-Linslade Helping Hands, April 2023.

Leighton-Linslade Community Agent Outputs (February – April 2023)	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Total no. of residents supported (new enquiries):	11	15	12	38
No. of residents provided with information/ signposted to other sources of support:	4	5	4	13
No. supported with more detailed needs than the provision of information/ signposting (thus becoming 'clients')	7	10	8	25
Nature/no. of issues raised:				
Money matters (including benefits, eg. Attendance Allowance)	5	6	5	16
Home Security/safety		1		1
Home/garden maintenance				
Carer support	4	3	2	9
Health (including mental health)	1	4	4	9
Social activities (including volunteering)	2		1	3
Transport (including Blue Badge)	7	8	4	19
Other	2	3	1	6
Contacts:				
Total no. client contacts made (visits, phone calls, emails, etc)	19	36	23	78
Total no. one to one client meetings with clients at their other preferred venue – White House, Chatty café etc	2			2
Total no. home visits to clients	4	6	9	19
Total no. community groups visited (these were: Chatty Café, Cedar Finches, Tibbs CST Group, Tibbs Community Information event)	4			
Total no. professional partnership connections initiated: (Tibbs Dementia Foundation, Carers in Beds)	1		1	

Leighton-Linslade Community Agent Outcomes (February – April 2023)	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Total no. clients reporting feeling more supported and / or connected to the community (based on feedback form response*)		2	1	3
Total no. clients reporting a greater sense of independence through info and resources to make choices and decisions (based on feedback form response*)		2	1	3
Total no. of clients gaining financial value through additional benefits secured or savings made **	2	7	2	11
Total no. people referred to professional support agencies via Agent	4	6	2	12
Total no. of people referred to Leighton-Linslade Helping Hands via Agent	2		1	3
Total no. of people referred to other community organisations / activities via Agent	3	2	1	6
<p><i>*NOTE: very few forms were sent out during the period due to casework being ongoing or client circumstances – figures for the year (Sept 22 – Aug 23) will be reported at the next meeting</i></p> <p><i>** NOTE: it's often difficult to monitor financial outcomes as Community Agent signposts clients to other agencies for detailed benefit advice/checks and outcomes not always reported. Above figures represent cases where clients have been personally supported with benefit or blue badge applications by the Community Agent.</i></p>				
Resident/Client sources (info not always given):	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Bee local magazine			2	2
About Town				
Posters/flyers	1			1
Word of Mouth	2	1	4	7
Local agency/organisation (eg. CAB, Health Connections, BRCC CWC)	5	4		9
LLTC website or office	2	1	1	4
BRCC website	1			1
Social Media				
Other (TACTIC lunch, Jazz Up your Life, Time Banking)	3			3
Returning clients		2	2	4
Resident/Client demographics:	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Male	3	6	4	13
Female	8	9	8	25
Aged under 55			1	1
56-75		4	3	7
76-85	3	4	4	11
Over 85	5	4	3	12
Age not given	3	3	2	8



Older Persons Sub- Committee

Date: 1st June 2023

Title: 55UP Project Overview and Future Programmes

Purpose of the Report:

To inform Councillors of current programmes offered in the 55UP project and future considerations

Contact Officer:

Nina Bailey, Cultural and Economic Support Officer

Corporate Objective/s	55UP Project- seeking to tackle loneliness and isolation with older people in the community	
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	Future consideration to funding streams for current and future 55UP projects.
Human Resources	No	
Operational/Service delivery	Yes	Contact with Citizens Online up for renewal 31 st October 2023.
Procedural/Legal	No	
Risk/Health and Safety	No	
Environmental Aims	No	

1 RECOMMENDATION/S

Should the Committee be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To note the report
- 1.2 Consider options for extending digital inclusion programme

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Older Persons Subcommittee was established in early 2021 from the Older Persons Task and Finish Group. The main focus of the Sub-committee was seeking to tackle loneliness and isolation within the older community.
- 2.2 Within the first 18 months, the 55UP project delivered two rounds of grant schemes offering up to £2000 for local community groups to enhance well-being and leisure opportunities for older people. The groups supported included: The Friday Club, Music 24, Buzzard 50+ Sports and Social Club, Leighton Buzzard Art Society, Greenfields Resident Forum, Phoenix Singers and Jazz Up Your Life.
- 2.3 The 55UP Project provided funding for Leighton Linslade Helping Hands, a voluntary Good Neighbour scheme, to develop a website with URL and web hosting funded for 3 years (until January 2024). The project also funded two rounds of publications for the Information Booklet for Older People (The Yellow Booklet) until 2024. The booklet provides a wide range of information and contact details for health, transport and voluntary opportunities. It is created and managed by the Patient Participation Groups from Bassett Road, Salisbury House and Leighton Road Surgeries. 4000 copies have currently been printed of the 2022 issue. On August 5th 2022, the Town Council 55UP Project hosted a successful launch party of the new edition of the booklet.



3 BUDGET

- 3.1 When the 55UP Project was first established, a budget of £80,000 was ringfenced from the 2021-2026 Future Projects Fund for the programme.
- 3.2 In 2022, a revenue budget of a further £9,000 was agreed by the Cultural and Economic Committee to support with costs of the potential continuation of the digital skills project and other future 55UP programmes.

- 3.3 The current remaining budget for 55UP is £27,556.70. Beyond this, there is currently no funding identified to continue with the project once the remaining budget has been exhausted. Accordingly, direction will be sought as to whether the project is to continue (and if so in what format) and how this is expected to be funded.

<u>Older Persons Budget 2023</u>	
Initial budget from 'Future Projects Fund'	£80,000
2022 C + E Revenue Budget	£9,000
Total allocated budget	£89,000
<u>Spending so far</u>	
Digital Inclusion	£39,205.01
Directory- Yellow Booklet	£3,000
2 Rounds of Grants	£11,014.59
Community Agent (part funded from OP Budget)	£8,176
55UP Survey	£47.70
Remaining Budget:	£27,556.70

4 CURRENT 55UP PROGRAMMES- DIGITAL INCLUSION

- 4.1 In October 2021, Leighton Linlade Town Council (LLTC) funded the charity Citizens Online to create a digital support programme. This now offers free over the phone and face to face digital support, including weekly drop- in sessions at the Chatty Café.
- 4.2 In December 2022, Citizens Online, LLTC and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BedsRCC) 'You can do IT' digital inclusion scheme partnered together establishing a free tablet or router loan as part of our digital inclusion offering. Learners can loan a tablet or router free of charge for up to 6 months with further technological support from the Citizens Online Digital Champions. As of May 2023, there are currently 2 tablets on loan and 1 router.
- 4.3 The current contract with Citizens Online is up for renewal on 31st October 2023. The initial contract was for 2 years in the amount of £34,488 +VAT. 55UP currently has sufficient funds to extend the contract for a further year at approx. £17.500.
- 4.4 It is recommended that Councillors consider whether they would like Citizens Online to continue to deliver the digital inclusion programme or for supporting

officer to explore other potential organisations such as BedsRCC You Can Do IT. Options for the digital inclusion programme can be presented to Councillors in August 2023. It is also suggested that Councillors consider the future of the digital inclusion project beyond the next financial year as this will have budgetary implications moving forward.

5 CURRENT 55UP PROGRAMMES- COMMUNITY AGENT

- 5.1 The Leighton-Linslade Community Agent project was established in September 2022 (run through BedsRCC). Funded by LLTC, the role seeks to help vulnerable and isolated residents access services and support that they need either in person or by signposting them to appropriate services. Support includes help with completing forms such as Blue Badge applications, making informed choices about health and transport, supporting carers and feeling less isolated living at home. The role is currently funded for 14 hours per week.
- 5.2 The current contract with BedsRCC for the Leighton Linslade Community Agent runs from September 2022- March 2025. Funding has been ringfenced in the amount of £34,793 for the duration of the current contract.

6 CURRENT 55UP PROGRAMMES- AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- 6.1 In January 2023, the Town Council passed a resolution to enrol Leighton Linslade Town Council as a member of both the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities and the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. This provides an international platform to share good practice and support communities in adapting their structures and services to meet residents' needs as they age. Supporting Officer has weekly webinar calls with the network hearing about current good practice across the UK over a range of issues affecting older people.
- 6.2 The Network suggests using a 'Programme Cycle' structure (see below) to understand current concerns of residents. 55UP is commencing step one 'Engage and Understand' by carrying out a 55UP Leighton-Linslade Age Friendly Communities Survey.



6.3 The Survey will be live from May 18th until 7th July 2023. It aims to capture the current views of residents aged 55 up across a wide spectrum of issues including community, public buildings/spaces, transportation, health, social interactions and current/future 55UP initiatives. An initial 55UP survey took place in 2020, with Covid- 19 affecting individuals lives in so many ways. It is possible residents now have different priorities and concerns.

6.4 Full updates on the findings of the survey will be presented at 17th August 2023 Older Persons Sub Committee.

7 CURRENT 55UP PROGRAMMES- MARIGOLD HOUSE

7.1 Central Bedfordshire Council’s Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People (MANOP) Team is currently building a 63-bed residential care home on Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard to replace Westlands Residential Care Home when it closes in 2023. When Marigold House opens, “Care is Central”- a Central Bedfordshire Council owned company will manage the care home. There are some delays to the build and is currently expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

7.2 Once the building is complete, Leighton Buzzard Day Centre, currently located on Duncombe Drive, will be moved to Marigold House. It is expected to be open Monday- Friday and attendance is on a referral basis.

7.3 Representatives from the MANOP Team are providing regular updates to Councillors and Officers, alongside a working group of CBC and LLTC officers to help ensure Marigold House is integrated into Leighton-Linslade.

8 FUTURE PROJECTS

8.1 Additional workstreams are being actively explored to see how the 55UP project can further support older people. Loneliness and isolation in older men

was identified previously by Councillors as an issue they were keen to address. Supporting Officer has been in dialogue with the local ambassador of Mens Sheds to help facilitate the establishment of a Mens Sheds Project in Leighton-Linslade. Interested parties will be meeting early summer in the hope of taking the project forward.

- 8.2 Supporting Officer has been in dialogue with The Royal British Legion on West Street to explore the potential of a 55UP Lunch Club which would include a discounted food menu and occasional entertainment. This would seek to complement the already established Chatty Café, which takes place on Tuesdays 10-1pm at the TACTIC Centre.
- 8.3 A further project to be explored by Supporting Officer is an Intergenerational Project in collaboration with the TACTIC Centre and local schools helping to connect older residents with younger. The opening of Marigold House may present itself as an opportunity for this project and will be explored by officers within the Marigold House working group.

End.