

Ageing in Trafford:

Scrutinising support for older people to lead active, involved and independent lives

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I. Chairman's foreword

People in the UK are living longer than ever before. This is a cause for celebration. Our ageing society presents real opportunities but also raises challenges. Councils and their partners play a pivotal role, as decisions about the design, development and shaping of communities, and the delivery of most services, take place at a local level (Local Government Group, 2010).

The Health & Wellbeing Select Committee has explored how Trafford organisations support older people to maintain active healthy lives and stay independent and connected, as well as how they are involved in the planning, monitoring and delivery of services. This review offers a snapshot of what is in place for older people in Trafford. It is not a comprehensive list or audit of services, so Members acknowledge that certain areas may not be reflected in the following text. We recognise the diversity of older people and the difficulties in defining them. Whilst many organisations refer to 50+ as older, others feel this is too low. Many over 50s are economically, socially and educationally active and healthy; others are more affected by health issues and less connected with their wider community.

We have seen some excellent initiatives including good partnership approaches, although organisations themselves have recommended the benefits of a more coordinated approach to planning and service provision for older people. Many voluntary sector organisations need sustained, basic funding to provide their high quality low cost services. These organisations are ideally placed to understand and provide for the needs of older people in their local communities.

These are some of the emerging themes:

- information provision
- the potential of volunteering and reciprocal help schemes
- the needs and benefits of focusing engagement methods both to reach older people and to harness their skills and experience
- the importance of tailoring initiatives so they are relevant to older people's needs, interests and self-images
- the importance of preventative systems for offering 'a little bit of help' to keep people safe, healthy and socially connected

We would like Trafford Partners to show their pride in our older population, a time when people can hopefully enjoy retirement and growing connections in their local community, supported by and contributing to a range of services. To this end we were pleased to see that Trafford residents consider support for the elderly as a high priority for the borough, as expressed both in a 2010 Mori poll and in a survey of the 2011 Spending Challenge review where 'supporting older people' featured in the top five priorities both times.

The Health & Wellbeing Select Committee would like to thank everyone involved with this scrutiny review, in particular the Communities & Wellbeing Directorate at Trafford Council and other Partner organisations identified below under 'Service providers and key stakeholders') and of course all the older people themselves. We would also like to thank Members of the Committee for their perceptive contributions, hard work and roving research efforts.

Judith Lloyd
Chairman
Health & Wellbeing Select Committee
March 2012

Patricia Young
Vice-Chairman
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II. Background

While increasing numbers of healthy, skilled and experienced people are clearly a resource to society, the frailty and isolation associated with the later stages of old age are a challenge to national and local public services... In 2008 the Audit Commission report 'Don't Stop me Now' concluded that two-thirds of local authorities were not well prepared for an ageing population. Only 28 per cent had well developed cross-cutting strategies, a coordinated range of services and meaningful engagement with older people.¹

The Health & Wellbeing Select Committee chose to focus on growing older in Trafford as a scrutiny review area in the context of our ageing society and within the framework of the government's Ageing Well programme. This programme is delivered by the Local Government Group "to support local authorities to improve their services for older people within a challenging environment of reductions in public sector funding and an unprecedented increase in the number of older people."

This review gave the opportunity to look at how well Trafford partners are catering for the needs of an ageing society and how older people are involved in doing so. The topic of ageing in Trafford has not previously been considered in a scrutiny review. This review fits within Trafford Council's corporate priority: Improving Health and Wellbeing of Residents. It is also aligned to Trafford Partnership key priority: Health & Improved Quality of Life for All. Relevant strategies include the Trafford 50+ Strategy 2010-2013 and Trafford Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2009/12).

The Committee agreed to consider older people according to the UN definition of 60+, however it was found that many in Trafford work to 50+ as a definition. At times information available refers to over 65s.

National policy This review coincides with the government's Ageing Well programme, designed to support local authorities and their partners, including older people themselves, to improve services, promote wellbeing, engaging older people in civic life, tackling social isolation and promoting independent living. The Ageing Well programme is delivered by Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID, formerly the IDeA). The Committee took advantage of resources provided by this programme as well as the Chairman and Vice Chairman attending a weekend seminar.

Older people in Trafford

At 16.2% of the population, the percentage of people over 65 in Trafford is similar to the England average of 15.9. Hale Barns has the highest percentage at 21.8% and Clifford has the lowest at 11.5%². There do not seem to be any particular distinctions between the North and South or between more or less affluent areas of the borough.

"In Trafford, it is estimated that there will be a 23% increase in the number of people aged 65 and above, from 2008 to 2025. It is expected that there will be 25% more people aged 65 to 69 years and a 56% increase in the number of people aged 85 years and above in the same timeframe."³

Service providers and key stakeholders

Older people in Trafford can obtain services from a range of providers in the borough. The Communities & Wellbeing Directorate at the Council is a key provider of social care service to adults. Rated excellent by the Care Quality Commission, it is in the top 25 percent nationally and has a good track record of working with service users, carers and organisations to deliver high quality services. Communities & Wellbeing coordinate the borough's 50+ Partnership Board and work with a number of partner organisations including NHS Trafford, Greater Manchester West, Trafford Housing Trust and other Registered Social Landlords, voluntary and community sectors and other Council departments.

Members would like to thank the following organisations for their valuable input to the review:

¹ A good place to grow older? Practice guide for overview and scrutiny committees. Local Government Group. 2011

² Trafford ward profiles <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/councilanddemocracy/strongercommunities/wardprofiles/>

³ Improving Trafford for Older People Older People's Commissioning Strategy 2009 – 2011 <http://myway.trafford.gov.uk/media/69545/Older%20Peoples%20Commissioning%20Strategy.pdf>

The Council's Communities & Wellbeing Directorate, Senior Community Action, the 50+ Partnership Board, Age UK Trafford, Trafford Partnership, NHS Trafford, Trafford Community Leisure Trust, Trafford LINK, Trafford Housing Trust, the Hub Community Centre, Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre, The Cottage in Altrincham, Trafford Care & Repair, Trafford Carers' Centre, Sale Moor Community Partnership and the St Vincent De Paul Society . In addition to these organisations, other input was also gratefully received through two meetings with the 50+ Partnership Board.

III. Areas of focus

The review's objectives are:

1. For Scrutiny members to become more familiar with issues around growing older in Trafford and the challenges that may lie ahead.
2. To investigate specific focus areas (described below), establishing what systems, initiatives and strategies are in place now and what is planned for the future.
3. To highlight areas of good practice and note any areas that might benefit from improvements in Trafford.
4. To consider significant good practice elsewhere.
5. To raise awareness within the Council and among partners of issues related to the ageing society's needs in Trafford and the benefits of partnership work if this is not already in place.
6. Where relevant, to make recommendations to add value to existing services, networks and relationships.

The Committee selected areas of focus for the review using guidance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny report "A good place to grow older? 10 questions to ask if you are scrutinising local preparation for the ageing society".

1. Involving older people. Are older people involved in all aspects of the work of councils and their partners, including strategic planning, quality monitoring and, where relevant, service delivery? Does the Council support and empower this involvement? Is it actively considering how older people can be supported and get involved in responding locally to government policy on civil society?

2. Maintaining active healthy lives. Are the health needs of older people embedded in health promotion and healthy living initiatives? Do the council and partners provide a range of initiatives to promote the inclusion of older people including measures to promote social networks?

3. A little bit of help. To what extent will the council and its partners retain a comprehensive range of preventative, low level and enablement support to help older people maintain independence and reduce costly interventions down the line?

These questions were considered within the context of severe financial constraints experienced by statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

IV. Findings and recommendations

1. Involving older people

This working group looked at how older residents are **involved** in the strategic planning, quality monitoring and even service delivery of the work of Trafford Council and other partners.

Involving older people is not only desirable for their health and wellbeing, but essential if we are to build resilience into our services and communities. Some insights can be gained by considering some statistics quoted in Brighton and Hove's 2010 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health⁴:

- 90% of over 60s are grandparents providing 26% of the city's childcare
- 13% of volunteer posts are filled by the over 60 age group [30% of respondents to a Trafford survey of volunteers in 2010 were over 60]

From this we can see that older people are an invaluable resource not, as seen by some "a burden on society", and should therefore be involved and valued for their skills, wisdom and experience which can help to shape and deliver services. Recognising these attributes will help empower older people to contribute to the wider society and to lead healthy, active, and fulfilled lives.

To establish how Trafford Council and other partner organisations involve older people and to see what advantages or disadvantages they recognise in doing so, this focus group met organisations including Trafford Council's Communities & Wellbeing service, Senior Community Action and the 50+ Partnership Board, as well as conducting its own small survey.

Survey results A survey was devised to gather information on how older people are involved in shaping, delivering and monitoring services. The survey was sent to key organisations in Trafford. Responses were received from Trafford Leisure Trust, NHS Trafford, Trafford Housing Trust, Trafford Partnership and three Trafford Council directorates, Environment, Transport & Operations, Economic Growth & Development, and Communities & Wellbeing. A summary of feedback features as an appendix, with key messages below.

- Organisations have a variety of means of involving older people in shaping, delivering and monitoring services using surveys, forums and user groups, as well as being board members or volunteers
- About half the respondents are guided by Trafford's 50+ Strategy; organisations' own written strategies tend to cover all target groups. Some have a staff member allocated to taking a lead on older people's issues and a couple have dedicated staff.
- The benefits of involving older people are acknowledged to some extent both in ensuring they input to services so they are correctly tailored for their needs and to harness their knowledge and life experience.
- Respondents' partnership work is a key method for involving older people and reaching more isolated people; however they would also welcome developing a more coordinated approach among agencies.
- Most respondents consider that Trafford is making good progress towards preparing for an ageing population.

Some responses showed a recognition that older people can fall into categories of people who are hard to reach, but not much explicit information was given about how working with them, reaching them and benefiting from their input might differ from other age groups. The input of older people does not seem to be celebrated in the way that, say, younger people's involvement can be.

⁴ Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, Brighton & Hove 2010
<http://www.brightonandhovepct.nhs.uk/about/documents/3559CouncilDPHReport2011newlores.pdf>
Brighton and Hove Older Peoples Council Annual Report 2010-11 www.olderpeoplescouncil.org

50+ Partnership Board and 50+ Strategy Involvement of older people is a key priority of Trafford's current 50+ Strategy. Its objectives in relation to public engagement state the intention "To increase the number of people aged 50+ giving their views about public services and increase representation from minority groups who may not currently be involved." The 50+ Board's strategy is a well written practical document for Trafford organisations and in particular refers to and guides the work of the Council's Communities & Wellbeing Directorate and that of Senior Community Action who monitor its implementation. It would benefit other organisations if it had a higher profile in Trafford, for example featuring on the Trafford Partnership website and at their relevant meetings. The group noted that elsewhere, Cumbria Council offers a leaflet summary of their own strategy for older people, making it even more accessible for older people and their carers⁵.

Encouragingly, the December 2011 50+ Partnership Board meeting discussed opportunities for representation of the 50+ Board to raise the profile of older people's issues within the Strong Communities Partnership.

Senior Community Action discussions largely centred on information dissemination and actions affording 'A little bit of help', both covered later in this report. As an organisation themselves, they are a key means through which other bodies in Trafford can involve and be informed by older people; further references to these roles appear below.

Communities & Wellbeing at Trafford Council have well developed engagement practices in place, cross-cutting their different services and involving older people and service users in diverse ways; they are described below at some length for the benefit of any organisations reading the report who should wish to develop their own engagement practices.

1. Strategic Planning

Over the last six years Communities and Wellbeing has rapidly developed its capacity to engage with older people, to get them more involved in developing local services and provide them with excellent access to services. We have provided strong local leadership and engaged with a wide variety of partners – not least the older people themselves, to kick start the process. It has now gathered momentum to the point where engagement of older people is the norm and we are seeing improved outcomes for older people as a result.

A key success factor has been the clear direction given by '**Our Lives, Our Voice, Our Future**', a **50+ strategy** written with older people with clear messages about what they want to see changed. Our role was to give older people a voice, and to bring together the relevant stakeholders to enable that voice to be heard.

The strategy and the **50+ Partnership Board** have enabled older people themselves to be highly instrumental in improving services and access to information. The 50+ Partnership Board oversees the implementation of the strategy. A local older person also sits on the NW Forum on Ageing and feeds back to the Partnership Board.

As part of this strategy we jointly commission a **Community Engagement Worker** with Trafford PCT to particularly lead on the involvement of older people. This work began as the **50+ Voice Network**, a local forum of people aged 50+, set up as a means of engaging large numbers of people to inform the work of the 50+ Partnership. The group has refocused itself recently to have a greater impact and influence on local services. [*now Senior Community Action*].

Communities and Wellbeing also use a range of forums and groups to guide the development of services. These include:

- a. **Carers forums**- for anyone looking after a relative who is ill or disabled. These forums have high levels of participation from older carers. Additionally work is taking place with Altrincham Hub to look particularly at issues affecting older carers.
- b. **Citizens Reference Board**- Communities and Wellbeing use this group of citizens and service users to support the development of services mainly around the personalisation agenda. It is currently looking at quality assurance for people receiving personal budgets.

⁵ <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/327/946/39505113521.pdf>

- c. **LINK Social Care Sub Group** - Trafford LINK has a specific group looking at issues affecting older people looking into residential and dementia care specifically.
- d. **Voluntary & Community Sector Health & Wellbeing Forum**- this group is made up of representatives from voluntary sector groups with a number of organisations providing services directly to older people.

Trafford Council and PCT are currently beginning work on refreshing our **Joint Strategic Needs Assessments** and older people's groups and individuals will be asked to contribute views on current services, needs of older people and assets within our communities.

1.2 Quality Monitoring

Communities and Wellbeing also have a **citizen assessor scheme**. This forms part of our standard inspection of services such as residential care and home care. Citizen assessors are trained to support the review of services and particularly play a role in interviewing people who are using the services and their families. In reviewing all commissioned services, Communities and Wellbeing also seek the views of people using the service and their families giving them opportunities to offer their opinions on the quality of the service in a confidential, anonymous manner.

Communities and Wellbeing also operate a **dignity in care award** for services to apply where they provide high quality, personalized care and citizen assessors currently assist in determining whether services should be awarded. Citizen assessors are also used in the interview and decision making process when new services are tendered for.

Communities and Wellbeing also fund **Trafford LINK** who are responsible for local citizens influencing the development of services and investigating their quality. LINK is working with Communities and Wellbeing to develop a mystery shopping scheme for health and social care services.

1.3 Delivery of Services

An example of where the 50+ Strategy led to delivery of services by older people was the **Bogus Callers group** aimed at reducing the incidence of older people being victims of bogus callers. The Trafford 50+ Partnership Board were clear that there is a role for older people to help others feel safe and as a result people aged 50+ made a film that appeared on community Television channels across Trafford.

Communities and Wellbeing provide funding to **Age UK** to develop a number of schemes where older people themselves volunteer to deliver services within the community. Examples include:

- a. A contribution to Age UK's advice and information volunteers providing support to peers
- b. A contribution to the silver surfer scheme where peers assist older people to learn to use the Internet
- c. Warm homes project where volunteers make home visits and support individuals with advice, information and support around keeping warm and well- including practical advice around heating and support to engage with community activities.
- d. Specialist community-based day support for people with dementia run by highly trained and experienced staff with a small number of supporting volunteers.
- e. A shopping service supported by volunteers which helps older and vulnerable people who would struggle to collect their own shopping.

Several other services are commissioned by Communities and Wellbeing involving older people, including Time-banking; further information is provided in section 3 , A Little Bit of Help.

Neighbourhood Forums Trafford Council's Area Services team find that over 50s represent the largest group attending general neighbourhood forums, attracting often vocal and active local citizens who themselves are efficient at spreading information by word of mouth to others.

Good practice elsewhere At the Ageing Well seminar attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, recommendations of good practice for involving older people included running expert panels of older people to advise services, undertaking regular scrutiny work and having an Older People's Champion. This role can be taken by a Member of the Executive or even an independent person who would take an active role to ensure older people's issues are appropriately taken into account.

Summary and recommendations

Older people are of course a varied group that can equally be hard to reach or enthusiastically involved. For the latter, there appear to be multiple opportunities for getting involved in shaping, delivering and monitoring services in Trafford. Older people may have more time available than younger people if their paid work or childcare responsibilities have reduced.

In the survey and elsewhere, it was found that older people's issues were sometimes bundled as part and parcel of wider strategies without a specific focus, meaning that their opportunities for involvement could be neglected compared to others'. There are also concerns about recognising who is not being reached – probably 'older' older people, those who are more isolated, frailer or have lifestyles that affect their involvement – and finding ways to reach them and interest them.

The Communities & Wellbeing Directorate successfully consult and involve older people in the creation, shaping, delivery and monitoring of different services. Far from "ticking the engagement box" with one or two particular methods or route to being involved, there are diverse means and different opportunities. Although it is Communities & Wellbeing who have the obvious remit regarding services for older people, other Council Directorates are equally responsible for running services that involve older people and would benefit from engagement strategies tailored to older people. Likewise there could be a stronger profile for older people within Trafford Partnership. This may be changing as the Chair of 50+ Partnership Board is now a representative on the Trafford Partnership Diverse Communities Forum and the Stronger Communities Board, and so able to raise issues concerning older people. Older people do not form one of Trafford Partnership's thematic groups.

The recommendations below regarding Involving Older people are also pertinent to the other focus areas insofar as good engagement practices are essential for implementing the objectives of *Maintaining Active Healthy Lives* and providing *A Little Bit of Help*.

	Recommendations	Recommended to
1.1	In the context of planning for and serving an ageing society, Trafford Partnership could develop a higher profile for older people's issues, for example by means of its own thematic group. It can help promote the 50+ Strategy and its further implementation across Trafford organisations.	Trafford Partnership
1.2	Trafford Council and other partners should review relevant strategies recognising older people as a diverse group. There should be tailored engagement methods rather than bundling older people among 'hard to reach groups'. There are many resources detailing tried and tested methods of engagement with older people. ⁶ The good practice of Communities & Wellbeing could be promoted to other directorates and partners via their Equality & Diversity team.	Trafford Council Directorates and other members of Trafford Partnership
1.3	The Executive is invited to clarify the role of Older People's Champion, with a clear remit, job description and annual plan of activities. The Older People's Champion is invited to attend Scrutiny to provide updates on progress.	Trafford Council Executive

⁶ **Engagement resources.** (1) Communities & Local Government Community engagement toolkit. http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/community-engagement-toolkit?page_id=&page=1

(2) Department of Work & Pensions. <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/products-tools-goodpractice/>

(3) Camden beacon learning network and engagement toolkit <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/council-and-democracy/plans-and-policies/awards--initiatives/beacon-for-the-positive-engagement-of-older-people/camden-beacon-learning-network-update.en>

2. Maintaining active healthy lives

The working group focused on the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. Members recognised the importance of maintaining active healthy lives for the physical, mental and social benefits these bring about. Issues that can affect older people's ability to remain active include the availability of locally-based activities, the range of activities on offer, how they are promoted as well as people's own interests and confidence levels. There can be extra challenges for older people in maintaining adequate nutrition levels such as finance, access to shops, knowledge about healthy eating or physical illness.

The Committee would like to thank Helen Darlington, Health Improvement Manager at NHS Trafford, for bringing together colleagues and partners for an information briefing hosted at the new Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre. Whilst this event was hosted in Partington, it should be noted that the projects referred to below run in different parts of Trafford, not just Partington, unless otherwise mentioned.

The Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre opened in September 2011 as a partnership project between Trafford Council, NHS Trafford and blueSCI (a social enterprise that supports people experiencing emotional or psychological distress). It combines several services including a GP Health centre, a library, a café (run part-time by blueSCI as a listening support project called Ear4U and part time as a commercial venture) as well as housing other projects and offering meeting rooms.⁷

It is a lovely bright welcoming space with an upbeat atmosphere. The café seems to be well used, especially by older people who eat there as well as taking meals home with them. The walls are furnished with boards holding information relating to the *Five Ways to Wellbeing* (Connect, Be active, Keep learning, Give, Take Notice); a method of promoting and maintaining mental health and resilience. Included here is information specific to older people as well as other notices that older people could identify with including 1-1 computer classes, craft sessions and post-cancer support, among others. There are many leaflets in the foyer including from Age UK. An over 50s group, Engage, operates from the Wellbeing Centre running a range of activities including crafts, physical activities and outings.

1. NHS Trafford Health Improvement team. NHS Trafford developed (over a ten year period) and now commissions a peer education exercise programme designed to prevent falls in the over 65s, Healthy Hips & Hearts. Occasional health promotion materials are targeted to older people, for example a *Warm & Healthy Trafford* leaflet about support for vulnerable people (funded by the Department of Health and run by a partnership of Trafford organisations). The NHS Trafford website includes a short page with information about Healthy Hips & Hearts and a link to the NHS Choices website giving information on common health complaints. Together with blueSCI, NHS Trafford runs the Wellbeing website which signposts to some groups and services for older people if a search is undertaken.

Financial pressures have meant there is no longer a post responsible for health promotion of older people. Some project continuity has been provided by out-sourcing activities such as Healthy Hips & Hearts. Described below are a range of health activities running for older people as well as activities not specifically aimed at older people that also take on their interests. Mental health issues affecting older people, in particular dementia, were not within the remit of the review but are of course a key delivery for NHS Trafford with regard to services for older people.

2. Trafford Community Leisure Trust. Several physical activity schemes are run for older people. **Healthy Hips & Hearts**, commissioned by Trafford NHS, is a weekly activity aimed at those wishing to keep active and mobile in a safe and social environment. The sessions are followed by a cup of tea and a chat with the group and are either free or cost £1.00. They are available at 18 different venues. All sessions are run by volunteers, most of whom are older people, who attend five days training. The sessions are well attended – more by women than men - and show positive outcomes for physical and mental health. They hope to expand in the south of

⁷ More information at <http://www.bluesci.org.uk/services/about-us>

borough.

Stay Active are sessions identified on leisure centres' exercise timetables as being "Suitable for any ages and all abilities". These can include yoga, beginner aerobics, aqua-aerobics or stretches.

Active Trafford is a concessionary pass available to encourage particular groups to access leisure facilities including swimming, gym, racquet sports, exercise classes and golf. It is aimed at people over 60 as well as people who are unemployed, on low income, full time carers or have a disability. Access is via self-referral or via referral from health professionals. Following consultation with the 50+ Voice Network (now Senior Community Action), changes were made to their promotion leading to more people accessing the services from less affluent parts of the borough. Currently more than 100,000 visits annually are by people over 60 to Trafford Community Leisure Centres with Active Trafford. There is also a physical activity referral scheme for people with health issues who would benefit from increasing activity levels. Health professionals make referrals allowing for five free visits to a leisure centre. Both of these schemes are also under review at the time of writing.

Nordic Walking & Stride is a scheme run by volunteers offering walks set at different levels of ability and open to any age group. Those run during the day-time generally attract mainly older people. The walks are tailored to a range of interests and abilities, including a Trafford Centre walk for those less inclined to go into the countryside.

The working group heard that these various schemes are publicised on the internet, through leaflets in doctors surgeries and in libraries among other places.

Although the above mentioned projects are well devised and popular, the working group felt the older population could benefit from more promotion of the relevant activities on the Trafford Leisure Trust website and in their leisure centres, and elsewhere around the borough. The website homepage offers no welcome for older people and the activities page does not refer to activities that could interest older people. The website does offer an area for Under 16s as separate sessions are offered for child protection reasons. However this could be interpreted as young people being made more welcome than older people. Their customer feedback has shown that branding an activity for over 50s can put off some older people who consider it may be too low ability level and the 'Stay active' sessions are designed as accessible for all abilities. However this information is not on the activities page either but is four clicks away from the homepage⁸. 'Active Trafford' information, about concessionary rates is under "Brands" which is possibly not an obvious place to look.

During a visit to leisure centres in Sale and Urmston, Members were concerned to find that images of people exercising were all of young, fit, slim people, which may not encourage participation by the over 50s. Likewise, within the centres, information was focused towards young people. On request at reception, a friendly and more informative interaction took place.

Senior Community Action told Members that they felt an approach of equality of access for all meant that the Leisure Trust might no longer be meeting the needs of older people compared to others.

Members understand that leisure centre cafés had to close for financial reasons as, being a charitable organisation raising its own income to reinvest in the business, Trafford Community Leisure Trust could not sustain non-income generating facilities. However cafés could provide an incentive to use the facilities as well as a sociable meeting point for older people so it is hoped that were circumstances to change some might be reinstated, especially at facilities not close to other cafés.

⁸ <http://www.traffordleisure.co.uk/activities/exercise-classes/class-descriptions/>

3. Public Health Nutrition, Environmental Health, Trafford Council. This Council-based post is funded by NHS Trafford with a role mainly focused on food businesses. A *Healthy Choices* award is run for all premises selling food to the public, including luncheon clubs. When scoping took place they noted some difficulty in accessing groups for information regarding older people's interest or needs in nutrition education and initiatives. There was mention of possible plans to carry out healthy eating education for carers and care homes through Trafford's *Our Food Network*.

4. Fit for Life, Partington is a lottery funded project aimed at reduced childhood obesity. The project has found that involving grandparents has a mutually beneficial effect on the children and grandparents. Healthy eating has been promoted in *Cook & Eat* sessions. Similarly physical activities organised for children also involve the older people. An Edible Wellbeing Garden project is being developed that is expected to use the growing knowledge of older people, working with children to grow healthy foods. Following concern at the lack of competition or choice due to there being only one food store in Partington, this project now runs a scheme selling fruit and vegetable bags at an affordable £1.00 each. There are also plans to look at meals on wheels provision.

5. Health Improvement Officer, Partington This post organises a range of health activities, such as salsa for all ages including participants in their 70s. The particular remit around alcohol awareness has involved organising an inter-generational play with young people from Broadoak School. Activities are also run for older people at the new lottery funded building, The Fuse, including table tennis and physical activity classes.

6. Council health projects

The Council's Communities & Wellbeing Directorate assisted the creation of an older people's dance group, Dance Discovery. Dance sessions have run in a variety of locations including a nursing home, a church hall and a day centre. A mix of participants join in including people who have had strokes, falls or with mobility impairments. A permanent dance session is now held weekly with over 30 people attending.

An **Over 50's Youth Club** is being developed by Senior Community Action together with partners from Timperley Sports Club, Sport Trafford and NHS Trafford to promote older people's health and well-being. Taster sessions have included Tai Chi, salsa dancing, new age kurling, golf and health walks. These are aimed at promoting the idea of a youth club, gaining support from local volunteers and seeing what activities people are interested in. The steering group is currently engaging with potential participants about how the club should be organised and promoted.

Other projects elsewhere

- 2012 is the European Union's Year of Active Ageing. "It links in very closely to the aims of Ageing Well and the European Commission is looking for national, regional and local government, social enterprises, the voluntary and community sector, and the wider business community to make specific commitments during 2011 and 2012 to promote active ageing"⁹. Trafford organisations may wish to investigate whether special projects or campaigns might be run or whether existing ones might be shared through this initiative. Manchester Council, for example, is 'Making Manchester A Great Place To Grow Older'¹⁰.
- Wrexham County Borough Council produces a range of health promotion leaflets directly tailored for older people covering safe drinking, sex, retirement and exercising.¹¹
- The Health Pro Elderly database list a vast number of health promotion projects in the EU.¹²
- Some areas have specific strategies for older people's health promotion, for example, Bolton NHS¹³

Summary and recommendations

As people get older they are more likely to be spending more time in their local community so it is

⁹ <http://europa.eu/ey2012/>

¹⁰ http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/file/11912/summary_manchester_a_great_place_to_grow_older_2010-2020

¹¹ http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/life_events/retirement/health/index.htm

¹² <http://www.healthproelderly.com/database/>

¹³ http://bolton.nhs.uk/Library/strategies/HP4_Older_People.pdf

important to have a range of initiatives to support active healthy lives across the borough. The working group considered that many people over 50 can have a tendency to become more sedentary and that a small amount of exercise and healthy eating have positive physical and mental impacts. This is likely to reduce the need for more costly cures and care. This age group will benefit both from activities that suits their interests and abilities as well as promotional messages that they can relate to. This includes positive images of older people taking part in activities.

The Committee found a good level of partnership work in running several positive and inspiring initiatives to maintain physical fitness, often with a social element alongside. However it is not clear whether older people across Trafford are getting either the information about what they can become involved in or are able to identify that opportunities are relevant to them. The Committee felt there was more scope for targeted awareness campaigns for older people around issue such as healthy eating, alcohol awareness (linked to preventing falls) and sexual health awareness.

It was noted that there should be scope for increasingly coordinated approaches once the Council, as currently proposed, assumes formal responsibility for public health services.

The Committee would recommend Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre as an inspiring example of a partnership effort offering a range of services targeted to the whole community and all ages. Fit4Life is notable for recognising and dealing with issues beyond its original child-focused remit to both support and use the knowledge of older people.

Recommendations regarding information provision are made in section 4 of the report.

	Recommendations	Recommended to
2.1	More examples of targeted materials for older people. Focus group work with older people could help establish if some of the 'one size fits all' marketing of initiatives and general health promotion is reaches older people or whether more tailored messages and images are necessary for them to identify with and respond to.	NHS Trafford Trafford Community Leisure Trust
2.2	Further prominence should be given to the 50+ Strategy's 'Health & Social Care' aim: "Set up more activities and projects that prevent health problems and keep people physically and mentally well for longer" be given further prominence among partners and seen as a key strategic objective in future updates of the strategy document; and that an annual promotional campaign with taster sessions be run.	Members of Trafford Partnership
2.3	Sessions such as Healthy Hips & Hearts and Stay Active should be supported and expanded where possible and offered to care homes. Future planning should recognise the growing numbers of older people that will benefit from the activities.	NHS Trafford Trafford Community Leisure Trust
2.4	Activities for older people should be promoted in the same way as for younger people, using leaflets, posters and prominent website information.	Trafford Community Leisure Trust
2.5	With more people living longer, the nutritional needs of older people should be focused on with possible joint initiatives or campaigns here around healthy eating; these be taken into sheltered housing and care homes.	NHS Trafford Members of Trafford Partnership
2.6	Further work should be done with GPs, practice nurses, community practice nurses, district nurses and allied health professionals, to sign-post patients to healthy activity initiatives.	NHS Trafford Trafford Community Leisure Trust
2.7	Partners could consider the potential benefits of making commitments to promote active ageing within the context of the European Union 2012 Year of Active Ageing.	Members of Trafford Partnership
2.8	Organisations delivering on the above recommendations should where possible involve older people as volunteers to shape and run the services.	Members of Trafford Partnership

3. A little bit of help

This focus group looked at some of the preventative, low level and enablement support to help older people maintain independence and reduce costly interventions at a later stage.

Residents with high dependency needs were considered more likely to be connected to necessary services, as were those in supported housing or with Trafford Housing Trust, so Members focused on people in less high dependency need. The working group considered how older people are able to live independently in their own homes, both through their own actions and with the formal and informal support systems available. In considering this, they looked at health and safety as well as social connections.

The Committee heard about a variety of initiatives run by the public, private and voluntary sectors in different parts of Trafford; however the scope of the review did not afford the opportunity to assess the range of services available across the borough so no comments can be made on possible gaps in services geographically.

Members recognised the importance of support systems and networks in residents' own geographic area to allow for older less mobile people to have access to what they need locally. They considered how people can be helped to build and maintain their social networks, finding that faith networks such as church communities can be some of the most active and reliable means.

Members heard from organisations about the services they provide as well as speaking to older people about what services and support they use or have heard of. Visits were made to the Cottage in Hale which is a daily coffee morning run by and for older people in a Council-owned building, and the Hub in Altrincham, a friendly and welcoming community centre run by the Baptist Church and hosting several projects for all ages and members of the community¹⁴. It is acknowledged that these resources represent significant area of good practice, which, as indicated above, may not be readily available in all areas of Trafford. Members also attended the Age UK AGM, held a meeting with Senior Community Action and attended two meetings of the 50+ Partnership Board.

3.1 General awareness of support services

People at The Cottage had all heard about Age UK - mainly because one of the users is a volunteer in an Age UK shop. They knew that the churches all helped elderly residents and most of them had the *Telecare* "button" although they admitted being a bit lax in how they wear it. Most felt that they knew where to get help if needed, supported each other and thought Trafford was doing a good job. Here and elsewhere it seemed that people were not aware of the transport solutions available to them, for example that older people too frail to use a bus pass could exchange them for taxi vouchers through GMPTA.

The Committee visited The Hub during a *Good Companions* session where they noted that frailer older people were themselves being supported by (younger) older people to attend. A pastoral support team tries to identify people in need to support them; they are of course mainly church linked. Members found that one connection with an organisation can be effective to link people to other organisations and support services. However there remained a worry about people who are not being reached through any of these connections. But it was beyond the scope of the review to establish whether there are active organisations in all parts of Trafford that serve to connect people. Members visiting the Hub were met with many enquiries about Council services, suggesting a need for enhanced information provision.

Awareness of support services will be helped by the poster directory referred to in the information section below.

¹⁴ It is supported by Trafford Council (owners of the building) and run by Altrincham Baptist Church. Support and funding is also received from Trafford Housing Trust and many other Trafford organisations.

3.2 Practical help, and safety in the home

Safety at home is a priority area for the 50+ Partnership strategy which states the intention that “People aged 50+ will feel more confident living in their home environment and any risks will be minimised”. This is carried out through various means including extra care housing schemes, a falls prevention service with NHS Trafford, a *Telecare* group (see below) and safety awareness schemes such as Trading Standards’ awareness raising about bogus callers, support for Neighbourhood Watch or Homewatch, gating and other projects. There is a comprehensive list of activities planned in this area for the period covered by the strategy.¹⁵

Telecare. Members heard a presentation at the 50+ Partnership Board meeting about the support available through the growing range of *Telecare* electronic systems helping people to stay safe and independent in their homes. Developments include text alerts to take medication, trackers for people with dementia who may wander and systems for seeing if people are moving in their homes or even making food and drink. These systems are supported by Communities & Wellbeing as well as by Trafford Housing Trust. Information seems well distributed through GPs, as well as being sent out with Council tax information and promoted at shopping centres and luncheon clubs. In the last year Telecare users have risen from 800 to 1187. Some concern was expressed that technology might come to be seen as replacing low level personal care with consequent risks for increased social isolation.

Voluntary sector services. Members heard satisfaction with **Age UK Trafford** services, considered professional and reliable, whilst one of the Members failed to receive a timely or helpful response from a commercially run homecare service offering shopping, cleaning, laundry, accompaniment to appointments, assistance at mealtimes and other charged services. They took nearly a week to return the call despite the message saying urgent information on their services was needed for a resident. Age UK Trafford runs a wide range of different services for older people including dementia services, Telecare brokerage, a day support centre, a home library service¹⁶, a Handy Help Service and Traders Register, information and advice, Silver Surfer computer courses, a hospital dining companions project as well as incoming generating services such as insurance and charity shops.

Repair services for older people are available through Trafford Care & Repair, Age UK’s Handy Help and Register service and from the Council’s Trafford Active Citizens’ Team. All appear to be in high demand and fully stretched, showing a big need for small repair services from reliable organisations for sometimes vulnerable older people. Members expressed the view that in their experience, some older people would be happy to pay on a sliding scale for such accredited services, mainly valuing the trust and reliability element rather than prioritising low cost services.

The **Centre for Independent Living** offers advice, advocacy and brokerage, for instance in finding personal care assistance and using personal budgets.

Council reablement services are provided for people on a short term basis to help them regain or maintain as much independence as possible. If people are then assessed as needing ongoing support then a plan is drawn up with the individual to establish what support is needed.

Home visits by paid carers. Care is available to help people get dressed, washed, eat and for other help in the home, through care workers from external providers who visit the homes. On two or three occasions concerns were expressed to Members about the quality of care given on home visits, most especially on the amount of time the care givers spend in the home with some reports of shortened visits not providing adequate help.¹⁷ Communities & Wellbeing have a framework in place for monitoring all approved home care providers to ensure high quality; this includes regular

¹⁵ Trafford 50+ Strategy

¹⁶ The Home Library Service was transferred from Trafford Council to Age UK in January 2012. Not to be confused with the mobile library service (run by Trafford Council), the home library service is for people who are completely housebound and could not access the mobile library.

¹⁷ See report **Close to home: An inquiry into older people and human rights in home care.**
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/inquiries-and-assessments/inquiry-into-home-care-of-older-people/close-to-home-report/>

visits with citizen assessors, feedback from service users, weekly performance monitoring meetings with each provider, spot checks and a service improvement programme where concerns are identified. Personal budgets are also monitored through the Direct Payments team as well as proposals for citizen involvement in rating services and supporting individuals to quality check their own services. All individual's needs and care provision are reviewed annually. Councillors would like to seek further assurance regarding the monitoring procedures of services provided by third party companies and whether the roll-out of personal care budgets will afford people more tailored support and also monitoring.

A **snow helpline** was first set up by Communities & Wellbeing in 2009/10 in conjunction with the Carers' Centre to support residents, particularly frail or older people, during periods of severe winter weather. It was successful in galvanising volunteer involvement. However it was not well known about in the community, for example Councillors were not aware of the support to advise residents. Since requesting wider communication of the Snow helpline, it has been well advertised including in the Council's magazine, Your Trafford.

The Communities & Wellbeing Directorate runs the **Trafford Active Citizens Team** of volunteers to complement the work of Trafford's Social Workers and Re-ablement team. Their tasks include driving, helping with shopping, accompanying for social visits or outings.

Communities & Wellbeing at the Council provide some funding support to several organisations commissioned to provide services in this area including Age UK and Senior Community Action. Some of these projects are directed at carers of older people – who are often themselves over 50 - such as the Carers Centre, the Alzheimers Society, the LMCP Care Link for South Asian carers, the Stroke Association, Crossroads for carers and several others. Another annual Council initiative is Toasty Trafford, run in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust and the NHS, to help residents reduce their rising energy bills while keeping their homes warm.

The Health & Wellbeing Select Committee has this year also scrutinised Personal Budgets in Social Care. Trafford Council's well developed personalisation programme enables older people in receipt of personal budgets to purchase practical support services. Particularly important for older people is the focus on encouraging delivery of these support services within the local community and by local people. On the positive side personalisation is offering individuals more choice about the services they access but there are worries that this could lead to a reduction of other traditional services such as day centres and thereby contribute to social isolation.

Initiatives elsewhere

SPRINGBOARD (Starting a Proactive Response, Introducing New Gains, Benefiting Older-people and Reducing Dependency) is a partnership project in Cheshire that has successfully reached a significant number of older people, including more isolated people through collaboration of the fire service, the Council and Age UK, as explained in this extract from their newsletter.

SPRINGBOARD "goes beyond the traditional fire service HSA (health and safety advice) model, which involves a simple but effective fire risk assessment. The partnership has enabled CFRS (Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service) to access existing electronic databases to identify and help people who might require extra help. This has resulted in them arranging to visit more than 47,000 people aged over 65, not only to offer potentially life saving advice, but also to refer people to other agencies or arrange for additional services and support."¹⁸

3.3 Social networks, mutual support and tackling social isolation

From informal support among friends and family to more formalised projects, Members saw the value of being connected to social networks that provide social and practical support. They noted that whilst residents might be safe and secure at home, and economically comfortable, this would not protect them from social isolation. Loss of friends and family, mobility problems, ill-health and low income can make older people prone to social isolation or loneliness, and this in turn can be linked to depression. Here, as in other focus groups' discussion, a regularly arising question was 'how do you reach the hard to reach?'

¹⁸ Their newsletter contains information on more wide-ranging projects. Well worth a read <http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/Assets/springboard%20newsletter%20nov10%204pg%20p2.pdf>

At a national level, there is growing awareness of issues around older people's social isolation. The *Campaign to End Loneliness* has researched the impact of loneliness on health and wellbeing and emphasised the importance of older people knowing about opportunities to stay connected in their local area. "Almost half of people surveyed said they did not know, or were unsure if they knew, of any organisations or services that could help them if they became lonely."¹⁹

Members heard about projects in Trafford and elsewhere that find innovative ways to offer help and connect older people in different situations and with differing needs or interests.

Recognising different levels of interest in and access to the internet (elaborated in section 4), the **internet** does offer obvious opportunities for connections through emailing or discussion forums, for example related to hobbies or health issues. Skype, the free or low cost software (depending on how it is used) for phone or video chat has great potential for offering interactions. This is covered under Information in the next section. Some innovative packages linking different services and supporting people in the community are being developed by <http://www.health2works.com/>.

Many successful projects for older people are run by volunteers, many of whom are themselves older people. The last few years have seen a growing development of **reciprocal** based projects such as Timebanking across the UK. Timebanking is a system whereby people carry out tasks for each other and no-one's work is rated differently from another's. Communities & Wellbeing are developing this model through work with specific organisations. For example, the Salvation Army will be running a peer support project for older people in their own homes that reduce the need for social care services. The Manchester Jewish Federation, recognised for its achievements as Trafford's only 'Investors in Volunteers' organisation, will also be providing community support to vulnerable people within the community entirely run by volunteers. If these go well other organisations will be supported to expand their work by including Timebank-type volunteering. Such schemes are empowering for older people, showing their ability to contribute experience and skills rather than being more passive recipients of help.

Other projects supported by Trafford Council to connect older people include:

The **Cyril Flint volunteer befriending** project links volunteers with older people to reduce isolation and loneliness. This was funded through Communities & Wellbeing's new Community & Volunteer Innovation Fund to support community-based innovative services for vulnerable people as well as encouraging more volunteering projects. Also part of above scheme, Flixton Girls school is buddying pupils with older people in sheltered accommodation.

NHS Trafford is funding a '**Know your neighbour**' pilot initiative likely to run in Broadheath and involving the Design Council, blueSCI, CAB and Trafford Council among others. The aim is to introduce people to each other, with beneficial opportunities for people who are isolated, including of course some older people.

Initiatives elsewhere. During the course of its review, the working group learned about a number of initiatives in place across the country, which offer helpful models to assist in addressing older people's needs. These include:

Dorset Partnership for Older People Programme (POPP) is based on developing supportive communities that enable older people to remain living in their own homes for as long as they wish. Jointly funded by the NHS and Council, led by older people and the voluntary sector, projects include community development workers who support local activities and opportunities for older people, 33 'cluster leaders' with localised responsibility to build supportive neighbourhoods, 66 Wayfinders who raise awareness of local services, senior forums, and 'Where I live' online information tailored for older people.

Gazing at the 4 walls: Voices of older people experiencing social isolation in Belfast was research project run in Belfast. They found that "older people's ability to participate and

¹⁹ <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk/information-on-loneliness/listening-to-you/>

prevention of social isolation relies directly and to some extent exclusively on their ability to get out and about from their own home.” Barriers they uncovered to getting out included health and mobility, information, transport, having someone to go with, motivation and safety worries. They also noted that older people becoming carers for older relatives can also severely affect their ability to maintain other social connections. They worked with focus groups of older people to come up with four initiatives to encourage participation and reduce loneliness:

- Volunteer befriending schemes.
- Door to door transport for shopping or social outings.
- Good Morning phone calls from a local organisation to check people are well.
- A register of trained volunteers who can give specific help as needed.

Many Councils and Partnerships have **websites** specifically for older people to provide information about services, how to get involved, what’s on and so on. For example, a partnership project in Leeds runs www.olderpeopleleeds.info with resources covering support, carers, disability, health and wellbeing, home neighbourhood and community, leisure and learning, money, rights advice and advocacy, transport, work and volunteering.

Southwark Circle describes itself as a social network for teaching, learning and sharing in their local community. As well as volunteers offering practical support, there are also reciprocal exchanges and a programme of social activities, all welcomingly described on their website at www.southwarkcircle.org.uk.

There are documented examples of successful **Timebanking** for older people run in London, showing the range of tasks they can both give and receive and demonstrating that those involved “... give something back and so enjoy an increased sense of value”²⁰.

Men in Sheds is an original project in Cheshire that has been successful in bringing together men who are isolated or going through challenging changes to socialise and share skills. <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshire/Our-services/Every-Man-Needs-a-Shed/>

Nationally, there are considerable learning resources shared by all sectors as well as through the government’s Ageing Well programme and also the Department for Work and Pensions; for example their ‘Resources for professionals to help respond to our ageing society’²¹.

Summary and recommendations

Factors that help older people maintain independence in their own homes and reduce social isolation include connections with local networks (especially belonging to faith groups), local activities for older people and specially devised projects including volunteering or other reciprocal arrangements. Innovative online schemes can also have a positive impact. Organised activities can involve practical tasks, information sharing, lunches, hobbies, sports and so on. Partnership based projects seem most likely to be effective in identifying and reaching people as well as being more sustainable. Transport is crucial to older people’s ability to join activities outside the home.

Trafford shows an inspiring range of initiatives, innovative projects and inspiring instances of good cross-sector partnership work offering ‘a little bit of help’, for example in community centres such as the Hub and at the Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre among others, and through many of the voluntary sector projects in part supported by the Council.

Unfortunately some organisations are so stretched that they are reluctant to advertise their services as they would be unable to take on further clients or members. In the voluntary and community sector in particular, there were many activities such as luncheon clubs, hobby-based groups and practical support organisations that could do well to be given a higher profile but might also be inundated with higher numbers than they can cope with.

The Communities & Wellbeing Directorate is committed to supporting older people to stay

²⁰ <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/goodpractice/olderpeople/pages/londontimebank.aspx>

²¹ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/products-tools-goodpractice>

independent in their own homes and this is reflected in the range of initiatives supported. However Members are concerned that stretched finances and further planned cuts may mean reduced spending on these kinds of preventative initiatives that support independence, due to the obvious need to target support towards the most vulnerable. Proposals for the Adult Social Care consultation state that “Promoting independence continues to be a key part of the support people receive.”²²

Members note the current consultation on the Future of Adult Social Care proposes significant cuts to funding of voluntary sector contracts. “We have a range of contracts with various voluntary sector organisations. We want to consult with them about collaborative working and new ways of providing services at lower costs. We could reduce costs by £280,000.”²³

However continued funding support for voluntary sector organisations can help maintain cost-effective and efficient services particularly in conjunction with developing income-generating social enterprises or labour-sharing Timebanking schemes. Projects need not shy away from making charges to clients where reasonable as there is a willingness to pay for affordable and especially trust-worthy services.

Members noted the importance of initiatives offering ‘a little bit of help’ in serving to prevent future interventions that can be costlier to service providers and detrimental to older people’s longer term well-being.

Good information provision and dissemination is key to providing ‘a little bit of help’; and this is covered in the Information section’s recommendations in section 4.

	Recommendations	Recommended to
3.1	Service providers need to ensure that preventative systems and initiatives offering ‘a little bit of help’ are well developed and sustainable to suit the changing demographics of our ageing society.	Members of Trafford Partnership
3.2	Recommendations from this review are requested to be taken into consideration in the Adult Social Care consultation. Members would like an analysis of the proposed impact of the £280,000 cuts in contracts with the voluntary sector including how this would affect services for older people.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council
3.3	Members would like to be directly informed by email of any consultations on services potentially affecting vulnerable groups before they are publicly launched.	Trafford Council
3.4	a. Initiate or expand projects that build networks enabling older people to be active, connected and informed in their local communities, including volunteering and reciprocity where workable as well as intergenerational projects. b. Consider the buying power of older people by encouraging local business sponsorship of such projects. c. Publicise findings of successful projects to encourage organisations to develop similar ones.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council; and Members of Trafford Partnership
3.5	More volunteering opportunities with and for older people could be developed.	Members of Trafford Partnership
3.6	Communities & Wellbeing is requested to provide Members with feedback on systems in place for monitoring paid carers’ visits including the time spent in each home, and initiatives to ensure these are robust in relation to external commissioned provision and care funded via personal budgets.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council
3.7	Carry out more work on identifying and reaching the hard to reach who may be at risk of loneliness, especially those not connected with a faith group or other social networks, to	Members of Trafford Partnership

²² <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/consultations/do.asp?ID=362> Adult Social Care consultation 2012

²³ CWB Adult Social Care consultation

	positively engage them with their communities (see also recommendation 1.2).	
3.8	Workshops on running as a social enterprise could benefit repair and maintenance organisations among others to reduce funding needs and raise the number of clients reached.	Members of Trafford Partnership
3.9	Members are concerned that Telecare services are complementary to other support and that their deployment does not lead to increased social isolation. Those commissioning Telecare services should ensure customers use their buttons effectively.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council Trafford Housing Trust
3.10	Partners should continue to support and help develop elsewhere community projects like the Hub in Altrincham, combining projects for all ages, using paid staff and volunteers to run a variety of activities in partnership with other local organisations.	Members of Trafford Partnership
3.11	Older people and their families should be made more systematically aware of relevant services to their needs; more detail in section 4.	Members of Trafford Partnership

4. Cross-cutting themes

4.1 Reaching People: Information coordination and dissemination

What support services or activities for older people exist and how they are communicated to older people in Trafford was a thread running through this review. Although there are a number of organisations providing information (such as Age UK, Senior Community Action, local community centres such as the Hub in Altrincham and the Partington Library & Wellbeing Centre; religious communities; and also the 50+ Board for organisations), ultimately there is not currently one organisation or system ensuring information of interest to older people and their carers is gathered in one place and regularly disseminated to organisations and individuals. There was an element of chance as to whether people were connected, with faith group membership a prime means of receiving information and support.

Early on during the review, Councillors from two focus groups recommended the production of a leaflet or poster to share information about and promote services for older people in Trafford. This was mentioned at their meeting with Senior Community Action where it transpired that they had just completed a member survey of information sharing. As well as recommending methods of information dissemination, action arising from the survey's findings include the production of a directory of services for older people in a poster format suitable for noticeboard display. Senior Community Action welcomed Councillors' offer to input ideas gathered from their research. These are outlined in the appendix and include suggestions of organisations, practical services, advice on how to maintain an active healthy life, how to have their say and emergency contacts.

Information gathering and dissemination is a key aim of Senior Community Action to "... ensure people aged 50+ receive as much information as possible about local services, support and events, as well as national consultations or important changes in government or health care services. At present this information is sent to all members along with copies of the Senior Community Action Working Group minutes, and distributed at public meetings and events. Word of mouth is an important part of information sharing and one of Senior Community Action's strengths is how members pass on information amongst friends, neighbours and through local groups."²⁴

They undertook a survey around information sharing in late 2011 that reflected many of the same findings of Councillors during this review.

- Word of mouth and faith communities are the most common ways of information sharing
- Most people rely on information delivered through their door, for example mail-shots or local newspapers
- Public meetings and information events are a key part of information gathering but their members felt events were often poorly publicised with many people hearing of the event after it has passed.
- People want to receive information at the usual places that they go to, including first and foremost libraries and local shops, but also community centres, at events, on noticeboards and in local papers.

Among their recommendations arising from the survey Senior Community Action advise that "Partners should improve event promotion to ensure as many people as possible are able to attend, especially if using the event to communicate an important message or give out information. Local newspapers should be contacted when key information is to be communicated, and could also be used to promote events. The Senior Community Action mailing list can also be used to send out information to the 50+ age group, if partners wish to do this they should contact Lynsey Cottle at VCAT on 0161 962 7266."

Senior Community Action commits to include all groups working with 50+ on their mailing list to receive regular news and occasional information packs. They recommend other organisations to do this same: "Partners should consider sending all information to local groups and faith

²⁴ Senior Community Action Information Sharing Survey November 2011

buildings.”

Elsewhere in Trafford, Age UK provides information and advice services, on the internet and through its telephone hotline.

Successful information sharing projects elsewhere including LinkAge Plus, piloted by six local authorities and their partners in health and the voluntary and community sector to find innovative ways to break down traditional organisational and financial barriers and to join up services. “The LinkAge Plus pilots inspired multiple access points to all services including personal callers, telephone, electronic and paper communications. This holistic, ‘no wrong door’ approach to services, also recognises the importance of outreach activities which aim to ensure that even the most difficult to reach older people are not excluded, but are actively encouraged to engage with services available to them.” Several case studies found the principles could be replicated in a variety of contexts.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/ageing-society/products-tools-goodpractice/linkage-plus/>

In making any recommendations about improving information sharing about services, the Committee also wishes to note that some organisations fear the extra attention that publicity might get them as they are already fully stretched; however the more widely all services can be publicised, the wider the choice should be.

Information provision and the internet

“Internet access should play a key role in successful ageing and help build links across generations and geographies for the UK’s older people, yet millions remain excluded from social, financial and developmental opportunities that the vast majority of the UK population now takes for granted.” (<http://raceonline2012.org/>)

The benefits of internet access for older people are massive: access to information, social connections with friends and family, online shopping for the less mobile, saving money through online transactions, increased wellbeing through easy connections with friends and family (including Skype for phone and video calls) and learning opportunities among others.

The Committee is keen to balance the wide-ranging opportunities afforded by new technologies with the recognition that many older people may prefer paper-based information. During their meeting at the Hub in Altrincham, Members faced a polite onslaught of questions about Council services that could well have been answered with reference to previously existing A-Z of services provided to all residents. Members felt that the majority of people they met, being well over 70, were unlikely to search the internet for information and should have information supplied to them. Although those not using the internet can phone the council for information and advice, this will not give them a broad overview of all services available.

Figures show that “58% of people aged 65 and over have never used the internet and to date only 15% of older people have used Local Government websites to find information”²⁵ Having said this, figures also show that “4 million of the UK’s 40 million Internet users are over 65, busting the myth that you can be ‘too old to use the Internet’. Over 65s also spend longer online than any other age group at 42 hours on average per month, and they are the fastest growing user group on Facebook, now with 678,500 users.” (<http://raceonline2012.org/>)

The Committee heard of different projects to support older people becoming confident online. In Trafford, Age UK runs an IT peer training project and some inter-generational projects are being supported by Communities & Wellbeing.

The Committee welcomes the continued developments of the Adult Social Care website, My Way, with its growing content for residents and professionals. However its navigation systems can be somewhat convoluted and would benefit from a more streamlined look and removal of possibly superfluous ‘choices for someone else’ which all seem to lead to the same information. It would also benefit from more off-line signposting to it.

²⁵ Ageing Well weekend seminar, October 2011; Councillor Mrs Young.

There is concern among members that the Communities & Wellbeing consultation document on the Future of Adult Social Care features a proposal to cut advice and information services by £136,000.

Projects elsewhere. Good practice examples were identified during the course of the groups' work including the following.

- *Adopt a Care Home* (<http://go-onadopt.com>) is an initiative encouraging young people from schools, colleges and the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme to go into care home and get residents online and also help them store their photos and memories online. (<https://www.finerday.com>)
- Wrexham County Borough Council publishes a comprehensive 50+ Directory which supports the Welsh Assembly's Strategy for Older People. Produced in conjunction with Age UK, the directory covers "Fun, Finance, Leisure and Health" and is a 73-page treasure-trove of useful information²⁶
- Schemes in other parts of the country include Skype groups, where people who are connected to the internet but living in some isolation through mobility or for geographic reasons, can be connected by (free or cheap) video calls to interest groups.
- *Village agents* are volunteers working to keep older people connected by bridging "the gap between the local community and the statutory and voluntary organisations able to offer help or support."²⁷
- The *Wayfinders'* project, as reported by Councillor Mrs Young from her attendance at Ageing Well Seminar, work through Age UK to "to signpost and support people who wish to find out what is available in the services to suit their needs. They are available at decision making meetings for older people. Everything is done to encourage the elderly to stay in their own homes, lifts are arranged to ease access to luncheon clubs, activities etc and help is given with form filling and other problems. All initiatives are led by older people."²⁸

Recommendations

	Recommendations	Recommended to
4.1	<p>Support Age UK and Senior Community Action as key information-sharing organisations for and about older people in Trafford, and to support economies of scale:</p> <p>a. Support the Senior Community Action's poster-based directory by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assisting its dissemination to residents as a centre-spread feature in Your Trafford magazine and/or with Council tax information - helping to promote it in libraries - uploading it to relevant internet sites including the Council's A-Z and My Way - considering a more comprehensive directory comparable to Wrexham Borough Council's if funding or sponsorship were obtainable. <p>b. Support Senior Community Action to take on a role of information gathering and dissemination, filtering through them information for libraries, noticeboards, community centres and</p>	<p>Trafford Council, Communications team</p> <p>Members of Trafford Partnership</p> <p>Members of Trafford Partnership</p>

²⁶ http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/life_events/over50_directory.pdf

²⁷ www.villageagents.org.uk

²⁸ <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/dorchester/our-services/wayfinders-project/>

	about events. c. Recognise the role of Senior Community Action, sharing information about them with your clients or members via your communication systems; likewise sharing information about your initiatives with Senior Community Action to assist their dissemination.	Members of Trafford Partnership
4.2	Explore with libraries the potential for creating areas specifically to share information of interest to older people; or to have occasional campaigns to highlight such information.	Trafford Council
4.3	Ensure that information is not solely internet based and in particular consider re-publishing of the Council's A-Z of services (note this was requested during the Volunteer review in 2010), perhaps with sponsorship from the private sector.	Trafford Council
4.4	Ensure that older people are not excluded from internet-based services and can take advantage of new technologies by promoting the development of internet training and services that will give older people confidence on the internet, in particular through peer and cross-generation projects. Encourage older-people friendly internet design with easy navigation, sensible fonts, easy-on-the-eye background and font colours and no unnecessary animations.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council and Members of Trafford Partnership.
4.5	Investigate 'no wrong door' approaches, with a trial of projects similar to LinkAge, including local volunteer older people's champions responsible for collating and sharing information at a ward level.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council
4.6	More offline promotion of the My Way website to direct users to its comprehensive content and simplification of its navigation structure	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council

4.2 Volunteering

Volunteering is another theme cutting across all focus areas of the review:

- as a means by which older people can be involved in shaping, delivering and monitoring services
- as a way to stay active and healthy; and as well as way in which 'active & healthy' schemes # are delivered
- as a way in which a 'little bit of help' is provided or swapped

During the Health & Wellbeing Select Committee's review of volunteering in Trafford in 2010, around 30% of respondents to an online survey of current volunteers were over 60. Evidence shows both the immense contribution of older volunteers in running valuable services as well as the positive impact volunteering has on their wellbeing and in connecting them to their communities. Research has shown that volunteering "not only increased sense of purpose, but volunteers also reported less pain and reduction in depression. ... The literature has demonstrated that volunteers have more social ties than non-volunteers, and that volunteers are more connected with the community. Volunteering generally provides a broader and more diverse network of interactions than other types of social activities. Volunteers make social ties with other volunteers, the clients they serve and the staff of host organisations"²⁹.

Volunteering allows people to experience a productive role which can be an issue for some post-retirement and after children have grown up and left home, a time when there can be fewer connections and structure to one's life. Older people have a means of actively engaging with their communities as well as supporting others through volunteering so it is something that should be valued, encouraged and developed.

²⁹ For example see The impact of volunteering on successful ageing: a review with implications for programme design in the Journal of the Institute for Volunteering http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/VA-Documents/VA9_1/article2_lee_brudney.pdf

Recommendations

	Recommendations	Recommended to
4.7	The profile of older volunteers should be raised, celebrating the mutual benefits afforded by all in their involvement.	Members of Trafford Partnership
4.8	That guidance be produced on the most effective ways to involve older people in volunteering.	Trafford voluntary sector

4.3 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is a document produced by Trafford Council, NHS Trafford and Trafford Children and Young People's Service to ensure that the social and health care needs of Trafford are jointly understood and served. The following extract from the 2009/12 version describes its role and the opportunities for input. "In order to ensure that our understanding of local needs is as complete as possible we will consult with local communities, patients, service users, carers and service providers on the strategies that are informed by the information contained in this document. The outcomes from these consultations will then be used to refine and further inform our priorities and plans for developing health and social care services in both the short and long term." The JSNA is currently being refreshed, with input welcomed from residents and organisations in Trafford. The deadline for input is April 2012.

Recommendation

	Recommendations	Recommended to
4.9	That themes emerging from the scrutiny review and its recommendations are included in the process of refreshing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment where relevant.	Communities & Wellbeing, Trafford Council

Appendix: Older People's Information Leaflet

Information provision and dissemination was a thread running through this scrutiny review for each of the focus groups. Early on during the review, Councillors had recommended the production of a leaflet or poster to share information about and promote services for older people in Trafford. This was mentioned at their meeting with Senior Community Action where it transpired that they had just completed a member survey of information sharing. As well as recommending methods of information dissemination, action arising from the survey's findings include the production of a directory of services for older people in a poster format suitable for noticeboard display. Senior Community Action welcomed Councillors' offer to input ideas gathered from their research. These are offered below.

Suggested leaflet content

1. Organisations. As Senior Community Action has its own list, specific organisations supporting or providing services for older people are not being itemised here, however it is suggested that any organisation mentioned is approached and happy that they could deal with the additional exposure such publicity achieves. These could include national organisations like Action on Elder Abuse and the Campaign to End Loneliness.

2. Practical Services. The leaflet could make general references to help available from different agencies such as adult social services, GPs, CABs and NHS Direct as well as information on:

- **Help with transport** Ring & Ride; bus passes and how these can be converted into taxi vouchers for more frail older people; transport to hospital.
- **Telecare** protection and support services
- **Help with small repairs** such as those provided by Trafford Care & Repair, Trafford Active Citizens Team and Age UK; only if they can they deal with the additional publicity

3. Maintaining active, healthy lives. Without listing specific groups' details, suggestions can be made of types of organisations that may be available locally. These could include: Luncheon clubs, Over 50s groups, Activity clubs such as singing, crafts (eg Knit & Natter groups), dance, gardening; Women's Institute; Trafford Leisure Centre with its Active Trafford programme including Healthy Hips & Hearts; Worthington Park Green gym; Walking groups via Sport Trafford; Learning opportunities, eg via U3A (University of Third Age) or Trafford College Faith groups

4. Healthy eating. Information would be available from NHS Trafford

5. How to have your say

6. Emergency contacts

Older people and their families would benefit from emergency contact numbers including the new police number 101, staffed 24 hours locally for cases less urgent than 999.

End note As some content will become out-of-date, a publishing date should be included with a link to an online page with up-to-date information. This same information could feature on more than one website, for instance on 3ST, the new voluntary sector infrastructure organisation, Trafford Wellbeing, and on Trafford Council's My Way website and other websites.

How do Trafford organisations involve older people?

The survey was sent to key organisations in Trafford. Responses were received from Trafford Leisure Trust, NHS Trafford, Trafford Housing Trust, Trafford Partnership and three Trafford Council directorates, Environment, Transport & Operations, Economic Growth & Development, and Communities & Wellbeing.

Please outline how you involve older people. For example in shaping, delivering or monitoring services. Organisations have a variety of means of involving older people including surveys, involvement as Board members, forums, coffee mornings and user groups.

Does your service have a written strategy around work with older people? Do you have specific staff with a brief around older people? Most do not have a written strategy focused on older people although some have engagement or other strategies intended to cover all residents. About half have a staff member either allocated to or taking a lead on older people's issues. Reference to working to the Trafford 50+ Strategy was made by Council directorates including Communities & Wellbeing, Environment Transport and Operations and Economic Growth & Prosperity.

What do you see as the benefits of involving older people in your organisation and what impact has involving them had on your organisation? The benefits of involving older people are acknowledged both to ensure services are correctly tailored for their needs and also to harness their knowledge and life experience.

How do you identify and reach more isolated people?

Services take referrals from other agencies coming into contact with older people and partnership work seems to be a key method for reaching people. The Council's Communities & Wellbeing directorate employ a community engagement worker and use different media to reach older people.

If you could involve older people more in aspects of your service given different circumstances, what would these be? Respondents gave mixed responses from wanting no additional involvement to suggesting specific areas such as more older volunteers, and more older older people (70s, 80s) involved. The current financial climate restricts resources available for some involvement schemes.

If you asked older clients 'are we age friendly?', what do you think they would answer?

All respondents thought people would mainly say 'yes'.

Do you work with other organisations in Trafford on involving older people?

All respondents work in partnership with other Trafford organisations on involving older people, most particularly Communities & Wellbeing. But although there is partnership work in place, overall there is not a strong feeling of a coordinated approach from these organisations.

Are you familiar with Trafford's 50+ Strategy? If so how it is used in your service?

There was good awareness of the 50+ Strategy and some level of being guided by it. Communities & Wellbeing noted "We also provide the capacity to ensure that other organisations report on their progress. We co-ordinate and provide support to the board."

Are you familiar with or involved with the 50+ Partnership Board? Three respondents attend; one is familiar with the 50+ Board but doesn't attend and three said they didn't know about it.

Overall do you think your organisation is well prepared for the ageing society?

Organisations thought they were fairly well prepared for the ageing society or 'getting there'; no suggestions were made for improvements. Similarly, most considered that Trafford as a borough is 'getting there'.

Appendix: Documents featuring in the report

Trafford

1. Age UK Trafford Annual Report
2. Improving Trafford for Older People: Older People's Commissioning Strategy 2009-2011, Commissioning and Service Development Adult Social Services, Trafford Council
3. Senior Community Action. Information Sharing Survey. November 2011.
4. The Future of Adult Social Care in Trafford, Consultation, Communities & Wellbeing December 2011
5. Trafford 50+ Engagement refresh document December 2011
6. Trafford 50+ Strategy 2010-2013
7. Trafford Council: The Future of Adult Social Care Consultation
8. Trafford Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2009/12)

National

1. A good place to grow older? Practice guide for overview and scrutiny committees. Local Government Group. 2011
2. Audit Commission: London TimeBank: Reciprocity in the community
3. Better Life. Not a one way street: Research into older people's experiences of support based on mutuality and reciprocity. October 2011
4. Close to home: An inquiry into older people and human rights in home care, Equality & Human Rights Commission
5. Communities & Local Government Community Engagement Toolkit
6. Department of Work & Pensions: Ageing Society tools for good practice
7. Dilnot Commission on Funding of Care & Support
8. Health Pro Elderly: database: models of health promotion for older people
9. Listening to You: the baseline report from the Campaign to End Loneliness
10. Living Well At Home Inquiry. - All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People. July 2011
11. Centre for Public Scrutiny Ageing Well programme resources
12. Pride of Place: How Councillors can improve neighbourhoods for older people, Age UK
13. The impact of volunteering on successful ageing: a review with implications for programme design in the Journal of the Institute for Volunteering

Other authorities and elsewhere

1. Age UK & Dorset Partnership Wayfinders project
2. Bolton NHS Primary Care Trust: Health Promotion Strategy for Older People
3. Camden Council - Camden beacon learning network and engagement toolkit
4. Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service: Springboard newsletter
5. European Year for Active Ageing & Solidarity between Generations 2012
6. Promoting health and wellbeing for older people: A summary of Cumbria County Council's Commissioning Strategy for Older People and their Carers 2007 to 2016
7. Wrexham County Borough Council, Health Promotion leaflets for older people
8. Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, Brighton & Hove 2010
9. Brighton and Hove Older Peoples Council Annual Report 2010-11;
www.olderpeoplescouncil.org