

Task & Finish Group – Older Person’s Strategy

1. Background:

This briefing note aims to provide an update to Housing Committee on the progress of the Task and Finish group which was set up to explore the expectations of the next generation, in relation to SDC’s older people’s housing.

The group is chaired by Cllr Jenny Miles, and comprises Cllr Chas Townley, Cllr Julie Job, Cllr Phil McAsey, Cllr Norman Kay, Kimberley Read, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Chris Horwood, Project Officer and other supporting officers. So far the group have met twice and will meet three times in total.

2. Purpose and Objectives:

At the initial meeting the group agreed the Terms of Reference, and discussed how to explore the expectations of the next generation. The group considered a number of forms of consultation and it was agreed that a telephone survey of Stroud district residents would provide a good range of views; the group did not wish to undertake a supporting online survey.

One of the initial reasons for undertaking the survey was the perceived image of ‘Sheltered Housing’ and how attractive it is to future tenants. The task and finish group agreed that they wanted to explore this in more detail and it was therefore included in one of the questions in the telephone survey.

In addition to the survey, members of the group agreed that they would like to undertake further research to understand what SDC’s existing sheltered housing offers to tenants, and to do this, a tour was arranged by officers, where members visited Malvern Gardens, Walter Preston Court and Sherborne House to get a feel for the range of accommodation available.

The group also wished to undertake further research of other successful older people’s accommodation, and a few members of the group visited a private sector scheme at Woodchester Valley Village. As with most of SDC sheltered schemes, the village benefits from a communal lounge which hosts a range of different activities. The group met with representatives of the scheme to compare this private sector offer and explore anything which may be of interest to SDC.

As well as exploring the expectations of the next generation, the group were also invited to recommend and suggest some key aims for the Older Person’s Strategy, which will be drafted to reflect the outcomes of the survey.

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HOUSING COMMITTEE
INFORMATION SHEET (No. H-2018/19-005)
6 December 2018

3. Progress to Date:

In order to progress the survey, quotes were sought from specialist research companies. The group agreed to survey 500 residents of the Stroud District, which included anyone over the age of 18.

The successful company was Future Focus Research (FFR) who provided the most competitive price for the survey and who were also able to demonstrate a wealth of experience in the sector; with the benefit of having previously undertaken research on behalf of Stroud District Council.

The sampling approach carried out by FFR, ensured that the final survey sample represented the target survey population based on the latest 2011 census data.

The fieldwork of the survey was undertaken over the course of three weeks and is now complete, with a full quota of residents surveyed. The findings of the survey are being analysed by FFR and will be presented to the Task & Finish Group at the final meeting on 17th December. The same presentation will then be given to Housing Committee at the next meeting on 5th February 2019.