

CAERPHILLY 50 PLUS FORUM

OUTLINE BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2017/18

JULY 2017

Introduction

1. The purpose of this Business Plan is to set out how the Caerphilly 50 plus Forum (the Forum) will forge a new direction that builds on the strengths and successes it has developed since 2004 but responds to the challenges of the current climate of resource constraint and looks to maximise the opportunities presented by the new policy agenda of well-being, promoting independence and co-production.
2. This outline Business Plan will be used during 2017-18 to debate and agree the direction of the Forum and through a targeted and focussed Framework for Action, settle the main objectives and targets that will be commenced during this financial year and progressed in 2018-19 and beyond.

Context

3. The Caerphilly Borough 50+ Forum was established in 2004 as part of the Welsh Government's Strategy for Older People. A key role of the forum has been to be a voice for those who are 50+ across the borough, and a group that the Local Authority and other organisations can consult with on issues relating to this age group. The Forum is established as an independent voluntary organisation with a constitution, elected officers and its own bank account. It is run by an elected Steering Group.

Aims and Objectives of Forum

4. The aims and objectives of the Forum, summarised from its constitution (November 2016) include:
 - To promote the interests, participation and engagement of people aged fifty and over in Caerphilly County Borough and provide them with an opportunity to express, publicise and present their views, opinions or complaints. This will aim to contribute to an improvement in the quality of their lives and help to address the effects of isolation, loneliness and poverty.
 - To provide information relevant to residents of the Borough particularly to those over 50 and friends and relatives who care for them.
 - The Forum will fulfil the aims by identifying any area where they can influence the improvement of the well-being of the residents of Caerphilly County Borough over 50 years old.
 - To achieve this, the Forum must seek the views, ideas, opinions and even complaints of members. It must publicise the existence, role and achievements of the Forum. It must encourage the expansion of membership to further the extent of input from members.

5. At its meeting in June 2017 the Forum agreed to adopt as its key aim, the creation of age-friendly communities in Caerphilly County. This will be taken forward using the Guidance on “Making Wales a Nation of Age-friendly Communities” issued jointly by the Commissioner for Older People in Wales and Cymru Older People’s Alliance (2017). The main principles underpinning this approach are set out in 8 domains that encapsulate the Forums objectives, covering:

i. Outdoor space and public buildings

Removing barriers that limit opportunities for people with disabilities or age-related impairments improves accessibility.

ii. Transport

The condition and design of transport-related infrastructure, such as signage, traffic lights and pavements, affects personal mobility.

iii. Housing

The availability of appropriate, affordable housing with a choice of styles, tenures and locations that incorporate flexibility through adaptive features is essential for age-friendly communities.

iv. Social Participation

An age-friendly community enables older adults to interact with others and to take part in social activities.

v. Respect and social inclusion

Age-friendly communities foster positive attitudes to and images of ageing and intergenerational understanding to challenge negative attitudes.

vi. Civic participation and employment

Civic engagement includes the desire of older adults to be involved in aspects of community life that extend beyond their day-to-day activities. The ability to remain employed or find new employment provides economic security

vii. Communication and information

Staying connected with friends, families, events, news and local activities is key to ageing well

viii. Community support and health services

Accessible and affordable health and social care services are crucial to keep older people healthy, independent and active.

Business Analysis

6. As a foundation for this Business Plan, the Steering Group undertook a “SWOT” analysis of the Forum to identify where it should focus its energies and priorities to facilitate further development and improvement and address the challenges that are likely to threaten its reputation and efficient management. The following were the main features of the analysis:

Strengths (Positives/Achievements – see also Annual Report)

- New Constitution
- New Members of Steering Group
- Good website/face book site
- Well-regarded Forum Newsletter
- AGM with community involvement
- Effective campaigns e.g. Blue Badges/ Simon Says
- High quality responses to Government Consultations

Weaknesses (Problems/Causes)

- Recent trends/problems e.g. Resignations, poor attendance levels at Steering group, Reliance on small number of members, Reduced level of Council support
- Lack of Interest / Competition for potential new Steering group members
- Role of Forum – policy/strategic focus – need for more practical and community focussed agenda
- Knowledge of and linkage with other local groups that have older people involved
- No current Business/Development Plan

Opportunities (Possible solutions/options to discuss)

- Building on, not re-inventing, current Constitution etc.
- Developing Steering group contribution
- Recruitment campaign for new members
- New approaches e.g. recruiting people just to be involved in” giving opinions” on -line around themes such as transport, housing etc.
- Approaching other local groups to work with us
- Other models for Steering Group eg. Bi-monthly or quarterly (allowed for in Constitution)
- Further approach re meeting promised by Council re Forum Support
- Use new Age Friendly Communities Guide as our approach forward
- Need for stronger national support for Forums (WG/COP)
- Discuss with Council how they will be meeting their responsibilities to engage with older people (recent legislation, local government reform) and what they want from Forum

Threats (Consequences of no Change)

- Forum will “wither on the vine”
- Good reputation will be damaged
- Forum will be ignored by Council
- Older People will lose a “Voice” to represent them

Following the completion of the analysis at Steering Group meetings in March and April 2017, the Chair of the Steering Group, Dr Ralph Stevens produced his own reflections which is at Annex A and presents a critique of the Forum Business Model, its products and how they meet customer needs and suggestions of how action identified could be progressed.

Action Planning

7. Following the initial completion of the Business Analysis, the Steering Group held an in-depth discussion at its May meeting about the implications for the Forum and how a positive but realistic response could be developed that would provide a new direction for the Forum that encompassed its strengths and achievements but addressed the gaps and challenges presented.
8. The broader context in which this transition of the Forum was taking place was recognised as providing new opportunities to shape the work of the Forum to the legislative and policy agenda for older people in Wales. The Welsh Government has committed to refreshing the Strategy for Older People (2013 edition) which will influence the work of the Forum significantly. It is also supporting the establishment of Cymru Older People’s Alliance as a new Charity with a process for democratically electing members. This will involve the Forum in agreeing to appoint 2 members to the COPA regional committee for the Gwent area – Dr Ralph Stevens and Steve Milsom were nominated at the June Meeting. Then each regional committee across Wales will agree 2 of its members to stand as COPA Trustees. This will improve Forum communications from and to the regional and national levels and extend the reach of its voice.
9. The Forum can also help in delivering the new statutory responsibilities placed on our local authority and health board for the promotion of well-being of older people (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) and The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Forum can also play a role in helping local public bodies address the new co-production duties placed on them, in which citizens and professionals share power and work together to give a voice and control to all people (especially older people) through increased citizen engagement.
10. Fundamentally, it was agreed that the work of the Forum should in future be shaped by Commissioner for Older People in Wales/Cymru Older People Alliance advice in “Making Wales a nation of age-friendly communities - A practical guide to creating change in your community”. As introduced in paragraph 5 above this guide has been produced for local communities who

want to take action to become more age-friendly. It provides external resources and tools which is designed as a standalone tool to be used by communities across Wales. The range of areas of age friendly communities presents a wide canvass of issues to address so it will be necessary for the Forum to agree more specific priorities initially from within those broader areas. For example, housing, transport, social inclusion, carers, dementia would provide a starting point.

11. The Steering Group took into account these local, regional and national influences and produced the following Framework for Action to guide its work in 2017-18 and beyond. Further work will be needed over the coming months to discuss these proposals with the Council, further develop the actions required and how they will be delivered and translate them into key objectives for ratification at the October 2017 AGM.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION TO REFRESH FORUM DIRECTION

Priorities for Action	Comment
<p>Use new Ageing Well 'Making Wales a Nation of Age Friendly Communities' Guide as our approach going forward</p>	<p>This provides a comprehensive framework for the future but would require substantial effort over time and identification of main priorities including Carers and Dementia.</p> <p>Discuss with Council the potential for Forum to contribute to Public Service Board priorities on well-being, reducing isolation and loneliness and co-production.</p> <p>Approach takes the diversity of the community into account, demonstrates clear commitment to promoting equality and inclusion in all aspects of the process.</p>
<p>Further approach re meeting promised by Council re Forum Support</p> <p>Discuss with Council how 50+ Forum can support them on meeting their responsibilities to engage with older people (SSWB Act, local government reform White Paper, Strategy for Older People)</p> <p>Agree what Council want from Forum/what we can provide</p>	<p>This is a key priority as soon as possible after Local Elections.</p> <p>Chair/Vice Chair to meet lead Director and new Older Peoples Champion</p> <p>Our aspirations for support from the Council and the Champion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinators/Council Officer time • Admin support • "in Kind" resources • Maintaining membership database

<p>Role of older people's champion post-election to be explicit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions active involvement • Support to create age-friendly communities • Direct involvement of Forum in Council decisions relevant to older people (e.g. place in Scrutiny arrangements, mechanism for engagement prior to formal consultation)
<p>Developing Steering group contribution</p>	<p>A number of posts remain vacant. Priorities e.g. Events Officer, Web/face-book support to be targeted</p>
<p>Recruitment campaign for new members – to align with October AGM</p>	<p>Publicising the Caerphilly 50+ Forum and Steering Committee, for volunteer recruitment. Use of variety of sources could be explored e.g. web site, face book, flyers, article, newsletter, in Council free newspaper, GAVO register.</p>
<p>New approaches e.g. recruiting people just to be involved in" giving opinions" on -line around themes such as transport, housing etc.</p>	<p>This has worked for other age bodies but requires initial work on advert and on-going co-ordination</p>
<p>Approaching other local groups to work with us/attend meetings</p> <p>Develop role as "agent" for other groups to inform older people</p> <p>Meet other relevant organisations to develop partnership working</p>	<p>Use 'Voluntary Sector Directory' which GAVO publishes</p> <p>Explore whether GAVO membership helpful/feasible.</p> <p>Target Community Networks/Hubs e.g. The Caerphilly Miners Community Centre</p> <p>Need to draft/update narrative to introduce Forum via email and face to face discussions.</p> <p>Outreach tried in 2016 but needs commitment from all SG members to participate</p>
<p>More practical and community focussed agenda</p>	<p>Community events and Care Home visits could be a starting point but requires Events Officer to be appointed first.</p> <p>Work with Council officers e.g.</p>

	<p>dementia, carers, social events, computer training for older people, intergenerational activities</p> <p>Forum could provide social opportunities for their members</p>
<p>Small Group to work on Business Plan to demonstrate professional approach</p>	<p>Simple plan needed. Need to decide period for plan, budget plan and monitoring arrangements. Prioritise small number of issues to progress initially.</p> <p>Volunteers from SG needed</p>
<p>Other models for Steering Group e.g. Bi-monthly or quarterly (allowed for in Constitution). Officers (all posts filled) meet regularly with less frequent meetings of a more diverse forum membership including professionals/other bodies</p>	<p>Agreed to hold this in reserve for time being but could be considered later in year if Council support does not materialise</p>
<p>Agree Budget spending plan</p>	<p>Good sum available (£5,300) – need only a small buffer. Also need plan to raise income in future including applying for Grants.</p>
<p>Develop capacity/interest in older people helping to complete research on issues relevant to older people</p>	<p>Models of engaging older people in research (e.g. Swansea University, Commissioner’s Rapporteurs) could be offered/used with the Council</p>
<p>Communications – the range/impact employed can they be improved?</p>	<p>Newsletter and Website provide strong starting point but need on-going support and contributions. New COPA structure will improve information upwards/downwards from National level.</p>
<p>Updating Web Site</p>	<p>Requires support for Chair from someone with IT skills and from all SG members in providing material on regular basis</p>

Timetable

12. The following outline timetable will be utilised to progress the actions described in this Business Plan
- May/June – meeting with Council and Champion following Elections
 - 15 June Meeting – Discuss draft Plan: how and who will implement Plan
 - July/August Meetings – finalise Forum Action Plan and Objectives
 - September – agree actions that require AGM approval

- October – Agree new approach for Forum at AGM
- November onwards – address prioritised objectives

Priorities 2017-18

13. In May and June, the Chair and Vice Chair held positive and constructive discussions with the Director of Social Services (Dave Street) and newly elected Older People's Champion (Cllr Barbara Jones) about the future of Caerphilly 50+ Forum. It is clear from these discussions that Caerphilly Council are supportive of the new direction the Forum wants to take and are keen to work with us to help us achieve our objectives. Following discussion at the July Forum meeting, these initial priorities have been agreed for 2017-18:

Recruitment of new members including strengthening of the Steering Group – the Council has offered to utilise its publicity resources to help raise awareness of the Forum and help recruit new members and also through its Volunteering Policy for staff examine whether any suitable individuals can be identified to support the Forum

Maximising the role of the new Older People's Champion – working with Cllr Jones to identify and plan how her experience and commitment can be best harnessed to strengthen the Forum. Planning an impactful AGM in the Autumn is the first action to be addressed.

Isolation and Loneliness - ensuring the Forum is contributing to the County responses to this new national policy objective to tackle the adverse impacts of isolation and loneliness amongst older people. This will in the first instance be taken forward through:

Carers – partnership working with the Carers Strategy Co-ordinator and Carers Group

Loneliness – partnership working with the Local Health Board co-ordinator for the Friend i mi/Friend of mine initiative

Isolation - examining how the Forum could develop a volunteer Gardening Support scheme

Further priorities will be identified in the coming months and moving into 2018-19 as new members are appointed to the Steering Group and key officer roles are filled. The writing and issue of the Autumn and Spring Newsletters and revamp of the Forum Website will also be progressed as priorities.

Resources

14. The Forum has a comparatively healthy financial position with monies in the bank totalling £5,300 at the end of the 2016-17 financial year. The expenditure items that would normally be included in the budget are:

- *Newsletter*
- *AGM costs*
- *IT costs*

- *Web site/Facebook costs i.e. enhancements*
- *Project Costs*
- *Training Costs*

15. In tandem with the production of this Business Plan, a budget plan for 2017-18 will need to be produced to make effective use of the resources available. Over the coming months, the Steering Group will need to agree an income maximisation plan to ensure it has the resources to deliver the enhanced aspirations set out in this Plan. That might involve seeking support from other organisations including the Council and in the future applying for grants.

Monitoring Arrangements

16. With the production of this first ever Business Plan for the Forum comes the requirement to monitor its effective delivery against targets, assess the risks of delaying or failing on any agreed objective and putting in place mitigating remedial action where necessary. Given the nature and size of the Forum and its Steering Group and the small levels of funding involved, any monitoring process need to be proportionate and realistic. The following framework is proposed for 2017-18 and onwards:

- Standing Monthly Agenda Item - Business Plan monitoring (including spend) with risks assessment on a RAG red/amber/green basis
- Months 3, 6, 9 additionally evaluate progress in previous quarter
- Month 11 discuss Business Plan for 18/19
- Month 12 Evaluate progress in year, agree Plan for next year

Conclusion

17. This outline Business Plan has been agreed by all members of the Forum Steering Group at its meeting in August 2017.

This Plan was approved by the 50+ Forum Steering Committee at their meeting on 8th August 2017.