
Executive

29th January 2008

Report of the Director of Housing and Adult Social Services

Age friendly Cities

Summary

1. A notice of motion has been received from Councillor Ruth Potter (in her role as Older People's Champion) on behalf of the Older People's Assembly. Under standing orders, this requires an officer report to the Executive on the implications of the notice of motion.

Motion

2. The notice of motion states:

BUILDING AN AGE – FRIENDLY YORK

Bearing in mind that older people in York account for 19.4% (35,185) of the population compared with 13.6% nationally, the Older People's Assembly welcomes the recent World Health Organisation Guidance on building age-friendly cities. It invites the Council to support the adoption in York of the following key features in the Guidance in order to bring about significant improvements to the lives of older people locally:

1 A civic culture that respects and includes older people.

2 A Council that regularly seeks the views of older people and reflects their opinions in policy developments

3 Well - maintained and well - lit pavements.

4 Improved repair and renewal of uneven pavements, and visible enforcement of litter laws.

5 Increased attention to gully and drain cleansing and treatment of footpaths in icy weather.

6 Public buildings that are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

7 Improved bus travel with the use of smaller vehicles for routes off the main roads. Ensuring all bus drivers are more passenger focussed and wait for older people to be seated before starting off.

8 Housing integrated in the community that accommodates changing needs and abilities, as people grow older.

9 Friendly and personalised information in plain language instead of automated answering services.

10 Sufficient and well signed public toilets that are clean, secure and accessible by people with disabilities.

11 Sufficient public seating that is well situated, well maintained, and safe.

12 Encouraging commercial premises to make their toilets available to the general public.

Background

3. On 1st October 2007 the World Health Organisation (WHO) launched it's "Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide" to coincide with the International Day of Older Persons. The report was based on 2 main premises:

1st trend - The world is rapidly ageing:

- In 2006, the number of persons aged 60 and older was 650 million.
- In 2025, the number will be almost double: 1.2 billion people will be 60 and older.
- By 2050, there will be 2 billion people aged 60 and over in the world.

2nd trend - The world is a growing city:

- In 2007, over half of the global population lives in cities. By 2030 about three out of five people will live in cities.

4. The report recognises that older people play crucial roles in all societies - by volunteering work, transmitting experience and knowledge, helping their families with caring responsibilities or in paid work. These contributions can only be ensured if older persons enjoy good health and if societies address their needs.
5. The report runs to 82 pages and is international in it's scope. Altogether 35 cities in 22 countries from all continents participated in the study - Istanbul, London, Melbourne, Mexico City, Moscow, Nairobi, New-Delhi, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Shanghai and Tokyo are included along with other cities. It is intended as a guide to support the development of age-friendly cities.
6. Older people themselves were active participants in the project and they decided what an age-friendly city is. About 1500 older people described the advantages and disadvantages faced in eight areas of city living covering:
 - outdoor spaces and buildings,

- transportation,
- housing,
- social participation,
- respect and social inclusion,
- civic participation and employment,
- communication and information; and
- community support and health services

(Older people's concerns and ideas were complemented by some 750 caregivers and service providers.)

7. In the report each of these topics has a checklist which cities can use as a tool for self assessment and a map to chart progress against. An example is given at Annex A - on outdoor spaces and buildings.
8. WHO argue that every city, regardless of its current level of age-friendliness, can use the Guide to improve or monitor any aspect of urban life. It proposes ways to make a city more age-friendly - for example: having affordable transportation costs; providing special customer service arrangements, such as separate queues; holding public events at convenient times; having courteous and helpful service providers promoting and supporting job opportunities for older people; and providing clear information about health and social services.

Consultation

9. The motion has come on behalf of the Older People's Assembly who represent a significant number of older people in York. The WHO report was largely written from the viewpoints of older people involved in the survey.

Options

10. Under the council's constitution the Executive are requested to note the report and forward it with the motion to the next available Council meeting – in this case 10 April 2008.

Analysis

11. The WHO report that lies behind the motion is a lengthy document that covers a very diverse set of international settings. The 8 checklists set out a detailed list of aims and objectives. No work has been done as yet to audit York against these standards and this would be an extensive piece of work involving all departments of the council. However, it could be expected that York would already be meeting many of the standards.
12. The resource implications of meeting these standards or defining what they would mean in the context of York have not been assessed.

Corporate Strategy

13. The aims set out in the notice of motion referred to in paragraph 2 above could be said to support the following direction statements/priorities for improvement set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2007-2011:-

"The council will provide strong leadership for the city using partnerships to shape and deliver the Community strategy for the city" (Direction Statement);

"We will listen to communities and ensure that people have a greater say in deciding local priorities." (Direction Statement)

"We will promote cohesive and inclusive communities" (Direction Statement)

"Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York " (Priority for Improvement)

"Improve the quality and availability of decent, affordable homes in the city" (Priority for Improvement)

14. **Implications**

- **Financial**

There are no financial implications to this report at this stage.

- **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications to this report at this stage.

- **Equalities**

Tackling age discrimination by removing the barriers that create it is one of the key equalities duties for local authorities .

- **Legal**

There are no legal implications to this report at this stage.

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no crime and disorder implications to this report at this stage.

- **Information Technology (IT)**

There are no IT implications to this report at this stage.

- **Other**

There are no known other implications to this report at this stage

Risk Management

15. There are no risk management implications to this report at this stage.

Recommendation

16. That the Executive refer the motion with this accompanying report to the next available Council meeting – in this case 10 April 2008.

Contact Details

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Services

Report Approved

Date 5th January
2008

Bill Hodson
Director of Housing and Adult Social
Services

Report Approved

Date

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *Equalities – Report Author*

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: Global Age-Friendly Cities - A Guide – World Health Organisation – October 2007
(www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Gu.)

Annexes: A: Checklist of age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings