

Report of the Information & Social Action Manager, Community & Prevention Team, City of York Council.

Approval of application for WHO Age Friendly Communities status.

Summary and Background

1. In 2019 the Health and Wellbeing Board undertook a mid-way review of the joint health and wellbeing strategy and identified that the following priority would be their focus for ageing well for the rest of the strategy's lifetime:

The board's ambition is that York will be the most age friendly city it can be. We will ensure that our Age Friendly programme of work is connected across all ages and parts of society.

2. To achieve this, we joined the Age Friendly Communities Network led nationally by The Centre of Ageing Better.
3. A project plan was developed to deliver the required Baseline Assessments, utilising the WHO (World Health Organisation) checklist. An Action Plan was created, as required, to identify what actions would be implemented for age friendly improvements.
4. On 3 November the Ageing Well Partnership signed off the last baseline assessment and project plan confirming that they would now like us to complete an application for WHO status.
5. This has now successfully been achieved and permission is therefore being sought from the Health & Wellbeing Board to apply for WHO Age Friendly Communities status.
6. Membership in the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) states:

Creating age-friendly environments requires a process across the life course that progressively improves the fit between people's needs and the environments in which they live.

To achieve this a coordinated response is required across many stakeholders, sectors and multiple levels of government. An age-friendly city or community is a place in which people want to grow older.

Age friendly cities and communities foster healthy and active ageing. They enable older people to: age safely in a place that is right for them; be free from poverty; continue to develop personally; and to contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy and dignity. Because older people know best what they need, they are at the centre of any effort by local governments to create a more age friendly community.

The mission of the GNAFCC is to stimulate and enable cities and communities around the world to become increasingly age-friendly. The Network seeks to do this by:

- Inspiring change by showing what can be done and how it can be done
- Connecting cities and communities worldwide to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and experience
- Supporting cities and communities to find appropriate innovative and evidence-based solutions

Main/Key Issues to be Considered

7. Obtaining WHO status requires a commitment to continued age friendly improvements for the city. There is an evolving action plan in place which covers identified actions across all the domains. This provides a framework for continued improvements and therefore delivery against the programme.
8. The Age Friendly York action plan is a standard agenda item with both the Age Friendly Citizen Group and Ageing Well Partnership providing both scrutiny and governance.
9. Although there is not a specific age friendly budget the implementation stage has already demonstrated a range of effective outcomes. As seen in the annual reports. Here are a few examples:

Created 'Take a Seat' in partnership with Home Instead for 50+ businesses in the centre of York to offer a seat or their facilities without needing to be a paying customer.

- Reviewed all benches inside the outer ring-road to mark whether they are age friendly and what condition they are in. Created additional keys for happy to chat benches and proposed new benches.
- Brought Happy to Chat benches to York as a deliberate way of creating social contact.
- Supported a successful application for funding for changing places in York for people with disabilities.
- Raised awareness of how to report damaged paving to reduce the risk of falls.
- Created an intergenerational newsletter to help to share strengths and social contact across generations.
- Distributed hundreds of bus leaflets to people that may not have access to IT.
- Raised awareness of scams and created a 'How to stay safe online page' on Live Well York.
- Created an article to raise awareness to businesses on how to be carer friendly (as people get closer to retirement age they are increasingly more likely to have carer responsibilities).
- Set up an age friendly sensory impairment sub-group.
- Created direct links through citizen focus groups: York Disability Rights Forum; York Bus Forum; York Walkers.
- Created a partnership approach with York Older People Assembly to ensure there is a shared agenda.

10. There is a "progress on a page" approach that enables evidence to be submitted to the two key governing groups around any specific identified action. This can be to: provide a progress update; identify any barriers or evidence delivery against the outcome.

11. There is an established method in place to enable any new actions to be submitted and approved.
12. It needs to be recognised that there are a number of challenges in the city to ensure everyone's interests are represented. The recent challenges by the 'Blue Badge' community are a good example of conflicting needs. However, having an age friendly process in place ensures there is a greater voice for older people and that their views are represented. Having an age friendly process also enables mitigations to take place where a decision may have a detrimental impact on some older people. Age Friendly York created the initiative Take a Seat; assessed all the benches in York to determine which are age friendly and helped create an accessible map as mitigations. It can therefore be argued that as there will be continued conflicting challenges, in a historic tourist city, that in fact, it's even more important to embed this age friendly commitment and associated continuous learning, reflecting human learning systems thinking. Embracing the values of the social model of disability and inclusive design principles, should also complement age friendly cities status.

Consultation

13. A co-produced approach was taken to develop each baseline assessment which then informed the action plan. This included: discussions at community centres; surveys both electronic and paper; citizen discussion groups; themed group discussions with organisations; community groups; councillors and other stakeholders. All decisions go through both a citizen group and stakeholder group before being submitted for approval through the Ageing Well Partnership.

Options

14. The options available are to:
 - Apply for WHO status
 - Remain part of the age friendly community but not apply for WHO status
 - Withdraw from the age friendly community through the Centre for Ageing Better and determine an alternative method to deliver against the ageing well arm of Health & Wellbeing strategy.

Analysis

15. As WHO status is “working towards” then there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate a commitment to listening and responding to the needs of older people on a wide range of issues
16. The co-produced approach with encouragement for the people of York to be active citizens and part of the solution very much aligns with the ethos we strive to have in York
17. [The Centre for Ageing Better](#) is an excellent resource that provides a wide range of information and awareness of the impacts to older people.
18. There are weekly national meetings with the age friendly communities, sharing good practice. This provides opportunities for continual improvement.

Strategic/Operational Plans

19. This proposal is submitted as a method to deliver against the ageing well arm of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
20. This initiative also contributes to delivery with other strategies. For example: Transport Plan and Dementia Strategy. It also supports the delivery of the development of the Information Strategy and Social Isolation Strategy.

Implications

21. Financial

There are no financial implications

Human Resources (HR)

There are no HR implications

Equalities

There would be a risk that older people were not represented as well if a decision was made not to remain part of the age friendly communities.

Legal

There are no legal implications

Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications

Information Technology (IT)

There are no IT implications. [Age Friendly York](#) is currently held on the City of York Council website with this being an initiative led by the council.

There is the challenge of ensuring information reaches older people who do not have access to IT. The Age Friendly action plan therefore identifies the need for electronic community notice boards with messages delivered through the community website Live Well York.

Property

There are no property considerations

Other

There are no other implications

Risk Management

22. The only risk identified is that stated in point 13. However, there is a clear argument that more has been achieved by having an Age Friendly York initiative than was achieved before this was put in place. Once there is an Access Officer in post then this will strengthen the approach further of ensuring there is a citizen voice in influencing decision making.

Recommendations

23. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to consider:
 - i. Recommended option - approval to submit an application for WHO Age Friendly Communities status.

Reason: Significant work, as identified in the annual reports, has been achieved over the last two years to:

- a. Listen to the voice of older people and representative groups;
- b. Identify issues that are important to older people;
- c. Create clear action points;
- d. Create a method for accountability;
- e. Clearly demonstrate where actions have been achieved;
- f. Celebrate what's good in the city for older people;
- g. Improve awareness of options available for older people.

Contact Details

Author:

Carl Wain
Information & Social Action
Manager
Communities & Prevention
Team
City of York Council
carl.wain@york.gov.uk

Joe Micheli
Head of Communities
Communities & Prevention
City of York Council
joe.micheli@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Laura Clark
Assistant Director–Customer &
Communities
City of York Council
Tel No 551706

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Wards Affected:

All

**For further information please contact the author of the report
Background Papers:**

All relevant background papers must be listed here.

1. Getting Out and About – Baseline Assessment (online only)
2. Your (leisure) Time – Baseline Assessment (online only)
3. Your (employment) Time – Baseline Assessment (online only)
4. Your Information – Baseline Assessment (online only)
5. Your Service – Baseline Assessment (online only)
6. Your Home – Interim Baseline Assessment (online only)
7. Project Plan (online only)
8. [Action Plan](#) (online only)
9. Annual report 2021-22 (online only)

Annexes

None.