

Meeting of the Senior Persons' Council
on 14th March 2013
at Faygate Village Hall, Faygate RH12 4SG

NOTES

Attendees:	Barry Mursell	(BM)	- Chair, Broadbridge Heath
	Judith Hollingdale	(JH)	- Resident, Henfield
	Keith Barraclough	(KB)	- Resident, Billingshurst
	Paul Smith	(PS)	- Resident, Nuthurst
	Carole Duffy	(CD)	- Resident, Horsham
	Eva Matschy	(EM)	- Resident, Horsham
	Dot Davidson	(DD)	- Resident, Mannings Heath
	Lesley Ainslie	(LA)	- Resident, Henfield
	Betty Ogden	(BO)	- Resident, Henfield
	Michael Jarvis	(MJ)	- Resident, Horsham
	Margery Hewitt	(MH)	- Resident, Rusper
	Pat Dean	(PD)	- Resident, Upper Beeding
	Janice Leeming	(JL)	- CEO, Age UK Horsham District
	Frank Bocking	(FB)	- Resident, Billingshurst
	Ken Jones	(KJ)	- Resident, Rusper
Officers:	Clare Ebelewicz	(CE)	- Snr Yth & Older Persons Officer, HDC
	Shirley Gardner		- Administrator, HDC
Cllrs:	Kate Rowbottom	(KR)	- HDC Cllr & Pride of Place Champion
	Kenneth Longhurst	(KL)	- Parish Cllr, Billingshurst
	Paul Leany	(PL)	- Parish Cllr, Billingshurst
Visitors:	Laura Ward	(LW)	- Forest School
Apologies:	Bryan Sunderland	Cllr Francis Haigh	Cllr Sue Rogers
	Joyce Shaw	Alison Vine	

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies (inc. Member update)

2. Notes of the last meeting

All agreed they were a correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising not elsewhere covered on the Agenda

None

4. Correspondence received since last meeting

None

5. Presentations From Guest Speakers

- Silver Surfers – Laura Ward, The Forest School

LW updated everyone on the IT course, 'Silver Surfers' run by Forest Boys School. This is part of the school's Community Programme, promoting intergenerational work and provides an important opportunity for older and younger people to come together. It is thought to be an ideal opportunity for old and young alike, who may not have contact with grandchildren/grandparents.

Asked to facilitate courses of interest some years ago, Forest School started with 'Mr Chef', a course providing basic cooking skills for older men in the Horsham district. 'Silver Surfers' followed on and things grew from there. Forest decided, as part of its on-going community work, they would deliver the courses themselves and, being funded through the school, they continue to deliver both courses.

These courses also give young boys the opportunity to volunteer in giving 1:1 attention / support to older people participating in them.

Silver Surfers is a 4 week course of 2 hours once a week in the afternoon & evening, and is advertised locally. Aimed at people with few computer skills, it is normally for groups of 6-8 people. Groups are taken through process of switching on computer, letter writing, accessing internet and email - the aim is to go away with these basic skills.

Mr Chef runs for four hours in an evening and covers 3-4 dishes, which can then be taken home by the participants. A 'knock on' effect of this course was found to be the friendships made by those attending.

Last year the school applied to 'Awards For All' for grant and now, due to successes, continue to run courses and also go out into the community, seeing people who find it difficult to travel to the school.

Forest School also work with Age UK Horsham District running sessions on African Drumming, art, music and holding coffee mornings.

Comments/Questions were invited:

PS said he had previously been on one or two computer courses but now found things have changed, the most difficult part being the language and the new 'jargon'. He realised this is sometimes essential but wondered if, on the Forest course, there is an attempt to speak in normal language. **LW** confirmed they do not use too much 'jargon' and try to keep it to a minimum.

LW said attempts have been made to source company/individual to visit people in their homes but this is proving difficult due to necessary safety checks etc. It was recognised this could be a bit of a barrier for some people. **JL** suggested that if there are gaps regarding this, Age UK may be a help, as Age UK Horsham District have range of home delivered services.

KL queried whether it was the Governors who help the school and allow the community courses. **LW** said the Awards for All grant, received by the school, enabled the courses to be run but now that this funding has ceased, the school and Governors feel this is a good thing to continue and support it. Not all schools will have this facility but Forest School is open until 10pm for various activities, although much of this depends on capacity of staff.

CE felt this was an opportunity for members of the SPC to 'take back to their community' the ideas they have heard, and speak to their local schools if they felt this was important for the local community.

PS asked about funding and any written material available. **LW** said there was money in schools not 'ring fenced' and the school can choose how this is used. Also confirmed there was written material associated with the courses.

FB endorsed the intergenerational work which he felt should be encouraged and **BM** said there was a need to 'badger' local schools on schemes in the district and what can they do.

Anyone interested in the courses at Forest School to contact **CE** in the first instance.

JL reported she was setting up IT courses at Age UK Horsham District.

BM mentioned that some people can't afford a computer and **DD** queried what schools do with old computers. **LW** said most are recycled or go off to schemes to be disposed of/recycled and added they can be quite old and would need work on them to be available for re use. **LW** will make enquiries. **LA** knew of gentleman in Henfield who reconditions computers from Steyning Grammar School and these are then given away to local older people. **CE** also mentioned Rock IT in Brighton and Hove area.

DD said there was ongoing concern regarding the new system of Universal Credit only being accessible on line.

JL mentioned one of the services run at Age UK Horsham District covers the area of benefits and seek to ensure older people get the maximum benefits they are entitled to. Her team was being trained at moment on the new Universal Benefits system.

6. Reports from Members who have attended Events/Meetings on Behalf of the Senior Persons' Council

- BIOPICCC (Built Infrastructure for Older People in Conditions of Climate Change) Report

CE mentioned at last meeting that a Member's Seminar had been held. Report had only recently been received so Officers had not chance to digest, therefore no copy available today.

7. Update from on Senior Persons' Council's Executive

- Action Plan – Update Against Progress

BM asked for volunteer to take on the post of Administrator for the SPC Executive Group. Anyone interested to let **BM** know.

8. Updates on Senior Persons' Council's Projects

- Target Hardening of Older People Properties

BM reported that at the last meeting he had requested help from other SPC Members to form a small sub-group, but no one had offered. **BM** explained that he has therefore not taken this further, and there had been no meeting with the Council. **CE** commented that she felt that the sub-group needed to meet before a meeting with the Council was had.

BM asked for opinions on whether Members felt this was still an important issue that the SPC should pursue. It was felt it was.

BM asked for suggestions on what we think should be 'standard' for new properties being built in the Horsham District. Various suggestions put forward included:

- spy hole
- door chain
- built in key safe
- plugs installed half way up wall

ACTION: **CE** to talk to Greg Charman, Community Safety Mgr and Caroline West, Principal Planning Officer regarding this group having a voice and championing needs of older people with regard to suggestions identified at the last meeting.

FB suggested approaching building firms direct as they may take it on board themselves.

JL asked if PfaAP Group would be involved. The Group could be a link on this issue, as over the next 15 yrs we could see a 60% increase in people over 65 yrs. **ACTION:** **CE** to circulate 2011 census analysed against those from 2001

9. Updates on Consultations the Senior Persons' Council has been invited to respond to or has responded to:

- Meeting between Greg Charman and **BM** still to be arranged.
- At last meeting there was discussion on the new Green Waste collection proposals that the Council sought to introduce. This included the new proposed charge which is required to be paid by Direct Debit. Members of the group had been invited to comment on this and, as a result, **BM** had written to Cllr Andrew Baldwin, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for the Environment. Response was received which **BM** read to the group.
- **MJ** questioned the statement made that the cost of £29.00 p/yr is less than 60p per week as, if 'take up' of this was 5, 6 or 7 months into the period, the full payment amount would still be

required. He also queried with the Council that the sticker, which needs to be placed on lid of bin, can be lost due to lorry damage and was advised that drivers/lorries will know which properties were included in the new scheme. **JL** raised the possible link to PfaAP Strategy.

- **CE** received information from WSCC about current parking zone consultations and provided details on schemes proposed in Billingshurst and Horsham. **KL/PL** said majority of Billingshurst people work at Gatwick, Crawley or London and nothing has been done about parking at the station. **KR** said attempts are being made to buy land nearby the station to build a car park. .

10. New Issues the Senior Persons' Council may wish to consider:

- IT (Discussion following issues raised at last meeting and presentation from Laura Ward)

PS said that many older people have or have had no contact with computers before and with more services requiring them to go on line, this is an increasing problem. It was felt representations need to be made to keep facilities/services non-computerised.

Further to details of courses at Forest provided by **LW**, **JL** reiterated there are IT courses held at Age UK. Jan Wise is out in the community with initiatives on this, and Information Advice Service will provide details of many ways to pay.

New systems may make things easier (e.g. the Computer 'Tablet' with touch screen which displays 'squares' rather than asking person to follow a process) but people will need training.

MJ suggested that even if knowledge was there not all older people were willing to use computers for all services, e.g. online banking. **BM** said although he has no problem with online banking, not all have access to a computer/internet and companies need to make allowances for this.

- What issues would you like to highlight?

DD mentioned that she couldn't access the Health and Wellbeing website without registering and added that health checks were available this week, but only for people aged 40yrs – 74yrs. She raised the query with the Health and Wellbeing Hub on what happens when someone has passed this age (i.e. 75+), but there didn't seem to be an answer on this. **KR** pointed out that a person also can't attend for a health check if suffering from existing high blood pressure.

CE explained that District Councils had been commissioned by Public Health to run Health and Wellbeing services, with much criteria set out by the NHS. **Action:** **CE** to ask Howard Collins or Anna Camp to attend next meeting regarding the age criteria.

KL asked why HDC charge disabled people to park in disabled bays when they are able to park on double yellow lines as long as no obstruction is caused. A member of the group commented that some disabled people don't want to be treated any different to able bodied people.

CE said there are two levels of exemptions, and there is no charge for higher level exemption. It was suggested that the issue is raised with the Access Forum chaired by Cllr Andrew Baldwin.

Action: **KL** to put to Access Forum and **CE** to ask representative from Parking Services to attend future meeting.

11. Publicity Update

- Parish Magazines
- HDC Older Persons Web Page (<http://www.horsham.gov.uk/community/3406.aspx>)

12. Senior Persons' Council – Member Update

- Contact Details

If there are any changes please let **SG** know to update on distribution list.

13. Newsletters and Publications of interest to the Senior Persons' Council

JL said Age UK Horsham District publishes the Arun magazine and are looking at re launching

later this year, when the 200th issue is due. For anyone who has received the Spring issue, this is last in existing format. Age UK Horsham District was now consulting with older people on what they like/least like and what they want to see in future. **JL** commented that she would like to include this group in consultation.

JL will email **CE** a copy of magazine for circulation for anyone who may not have seen the publication. A copy of the consultation questions will also be circulated.

14. Any Other Business

- **JL** gave update on Village Agent Project. **CE** had previously circulated a sample job description relevant to other area of the UK, which runs similar scheme. **JL** added that she was currently working to develop a pilot in Billingshurst area with **KR**, who is involved as Pride of Place Champion. Looking to involve local community in developing this new post, which **JL** hopes will identify lonely and isolated people in the area by getting to know them. It has been seen to work very well in Cornwall and the South Lakes area in Cumbria. **JL** is consulting with local stakeholders at moment and the local Lions have pledged some funding. Age UK Horsham District is trying to raise remaining funding.

The Village Agent role is to find these people and help make connections for them. Not all want things through the post and may not have access to the internet, they need human contact. **ML** asked why Billingshurst was chosen as first area for this project and **JL** said it was a combination of factors:

- ❖ Local statistics show this area is likely to have a high proportion of people who might be 'excluded'
- ❖ There was need for the area to be outside of Horsham
- ❖ Area needed to be where we have links with stakeholder and the proposal resonated with local stakeholders

BM commented that some older people go for long periods of time without having had conversation with anyone, although some of this is self imposed.

- **CE** said she and **JL** and were involved in Social Inclusion Working Group's review into Poverty Amongst Older People. Approximately 6 District Cllrs including **KL** were involved. **CE** has completed some initial scoping work with Chair of Working Group and agreed the review would look at all aspects of poverty (not just the financial perspective). First Working Group meeting was due this week but postponed due to weather.
- **JL** was involved with WSCC Public Health survey in Horsham District around loneliness and isolation. Some may have been involved in the SPC's earlier focus groups, with Pam Mitchell. On the back of this original work, Age UK Horsham District now have small amount of money to continue this research in partnership with West Sussex Public Health.
- **MJ** referred to a meeting about the reorganisation of public/health services on 30th April at The Pavilions from 10.00am -12.00pm. Open meeting.
- **FB** congratulated **CE** as, with the recent closure of many youth clubs it was nice to see article in the West Sussex County Times showing youth haven't been forgotten. **CE** briefly explained the Community Youth Work project, and said thanks needed to go to Parish Council for funding and Horsham Matters, who will supply the new youth workers.
- **MH** asked for follow up to 'neighbour problem' presented at last meeting. **KJ** provided a brief update.

15. Date of Future Meetings:

Thursday 20th June: Council Chambers 1 & 2, Billingshurst Conference Centre

Wednesday 11th September: Committee Room, The Steyning Centre

Tuesday 10th December: Large Hall, Ashington Community Centre