

Cross-Party Group on Older People, Age & Ageing

Thursday 8th December 2022 1pm-2.30pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Jeremy Balfour - Convenor
Alexander Stewart

Invited guests

Sandhra Samkuttysamuel – Presenter

Non-MSP Group Members

Tilly Robinson-Miles – Food Train/Eat Well Age Well
Jill Keegan – Outside the Box
Claire Donaghy – Independent Age
Donna Scott – Social Work Student
Diana Findley
David Paterson – SOPA
Sheena Fontana – SOPA
Hetty Malcolm- Smith - SOPA
Jo Savege – SASW
Elizabeth Lumsden – ROSPA
Cathy Barlow – Fire Scotland
Elaine Thornton-Nicol – Scottish Borders Older People’s Champion
Eileen Cawley - Scottish Pensioners Forum
Kim Stringer – Vegetarians for Life
Dave Budd – Partners in Advocacy
Alan Gow – Heriot Watt University
Ben Hall – Shared Lives Plus
Daniel Crabtree – University Highlands & Islands
Sarah Murray – Royal Voluntary Service
Catriona Melville – Age Scotland
Ruairidh Smith – Generations Working Together
Colin Scott – We are Hourglass
Jenny White – Befriending Networks
Graham Galloway – Kirrie Connections
Trishna Singh - Sikh Sanjog

In attendance

Julia Shilitto – Senior Caseworker Jeremy Balfour MSP
Christine Ryder – Outside the Box (Secretariat)
AI Media Captioner (supporting K Stringer)

Apologies

Katy Clark - MSP
Pat Scrutton – Intergenerational National Network
Arvind Salwan – Care Inspectorate
Barb Fraser - Luminare
Anne Gallacher - Luminare
Allison Clyde- Generations Working Together
Moir Bayne – Housing Options Scotland
Sophie Bridger – Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland
Jennifer Forsyth - Obesity Action Scotland
Rose Jackson - Scottish Pensioners Forum
Rohini Sharma- Joshi - RJS Equality Consultancy
Shaun Paskin – We are Hourglass

Agenda item 1

Welcome and Apologies

Jeremy Balfour MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing and thanked Alexander Stewart MSP for joining the meeting.

Agenda item 2

Note CPG on Older People, Age & Ageing 16th June 2022

The meeting on the 16th June was not quorate, we therefore have no official minutes of the meeting however a note of the meeting was sent around the members.

Agenda item 3

Matters Arising

No matters arising were raised or recorded.

Agenda item 4

2023 meeting dates & format

The dates for 2023 are:

Thursday 23rd March

Thursday 8th June

Thursday 7th September

Thursday 7th December

All meetings will be hybrid and will take place from 1-2.30pm.

Agenda item 5

New Members

It was agreed that the following could all become members of the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age & Ageing:

- Shaun Paskin – We are Hourglass
- Beth Friel – Carers Trust Scotland
- Daniel Crabtree – Research fellow University Highlands & Islands
- Leanne McGurk - Dementia researcher University of Dundee

Agenda item 6

Presentations

Development of new Dementia Strategy – Sandhra Samkuttysamuel, Mental Health Directorate, Scottish Government

Sandy thanked the group for the opportunity to present to the members. The new Dementia Strategy was launched back in the summer of 2022 with the consultation opening on the 30th September.

The purpose of the strategy is to set our priorities and a new story for Scotland. To engage with people living with dementia, family members, unpaid carers and those with an interest in dementia. We know that dementia is very personal, the approach we took was to ask 6 broad questions, we have created a lived experience panel and an advisory group to ensure we heard from a wide range of voices and perspectives. The lived experience panel and the advisory group will also provide part of the governance for the strategy.

The approach to the engagement was to reach as many people as possible in person where people felt comfortable and safe. We have been all around the

country from Orkney to the Borders. We worked in partnership with organisations to hold the engagement events, with a member of the policy unit attending the events. Events were held both online and in person with a mix of storytelling and semi structured conversations taking place to gather the stories and information to inform the strategy. We have learnt that we need to do more work to embed minority ethnic engagement going forward.

The next stage is to analyse our findings so far and go back to those we have had conversations with to recheck that the priorities are correct.

On citizens space 139 responses were received and we are expecting some more. 110 conversations/engagement events were held across Scotland. We will be commissioning an evidence review to look at current literature and current practice. Round tables of both academics and practitioners have also been formed to keep us right and to work alongside the lived experience panel and the advisory group.

The main themes that are coming through so far are:

- Stigma and the stigma surrounding dementia
- That dementia is a brain disease although it sits within mental health and that their needs to be more understanding around this
- Inconsistent access to support which has been exacerbated by the pandemic
- Currently there is not a clear pathway from diagnosis through the journey
- Issues with education and training of the workforce
- Lack of carers support
- There has been more negative experiences than positive experiences of dementia
- A positive that the pandemic helped was the growth of community networks & peer support which all became lifelines during the pandemic.

The next steps are to:

- Complete the engagement
- Carry out the analysis
- Identify the priorities
- Update the Minister
- Check out an early version of the strategy with the lived experience panel in early 2023 to pin point the priorities and check out what we have been hearing back
- Take an active role in expanding our networks with minority groups

Discussion

Sandy's presentation was followed by a discussion. The key themes of the discussion were:

Around dementia being seen as a brain disease and not a mental health issue, but this has to be closely monitored especially in care home settings. It would be good to see how it is shaped when many of the supports sit within mental health and are inconsistent.

The response to the consultation and what was being done to engage more people in the conversations. Sandy explained that they are still engaging with people and that they are still accepting responses and would welcome further responses.

The learning around why people from minority groups are not engaging included:

- consultation fatigue
- a need to build relationships
- it currently feels very transactional
- hopeful that the evidence review will shed more light and give us some further ideas

The importance of this piece of work for people living with dementia, as it is one of the biggest health issues we are facing as a country yet we are in a position where their currently is no Cross Party Group on Dementia. This really needs to be looked at and reconvened.

Work around people who have other disabilities as well as dementia and the need to be inclusive has been an active part of the engagement with events been held by the British Deaf Society and other groups/organisations such as Stand By Me.

The publication date for the strategy is April 2023.

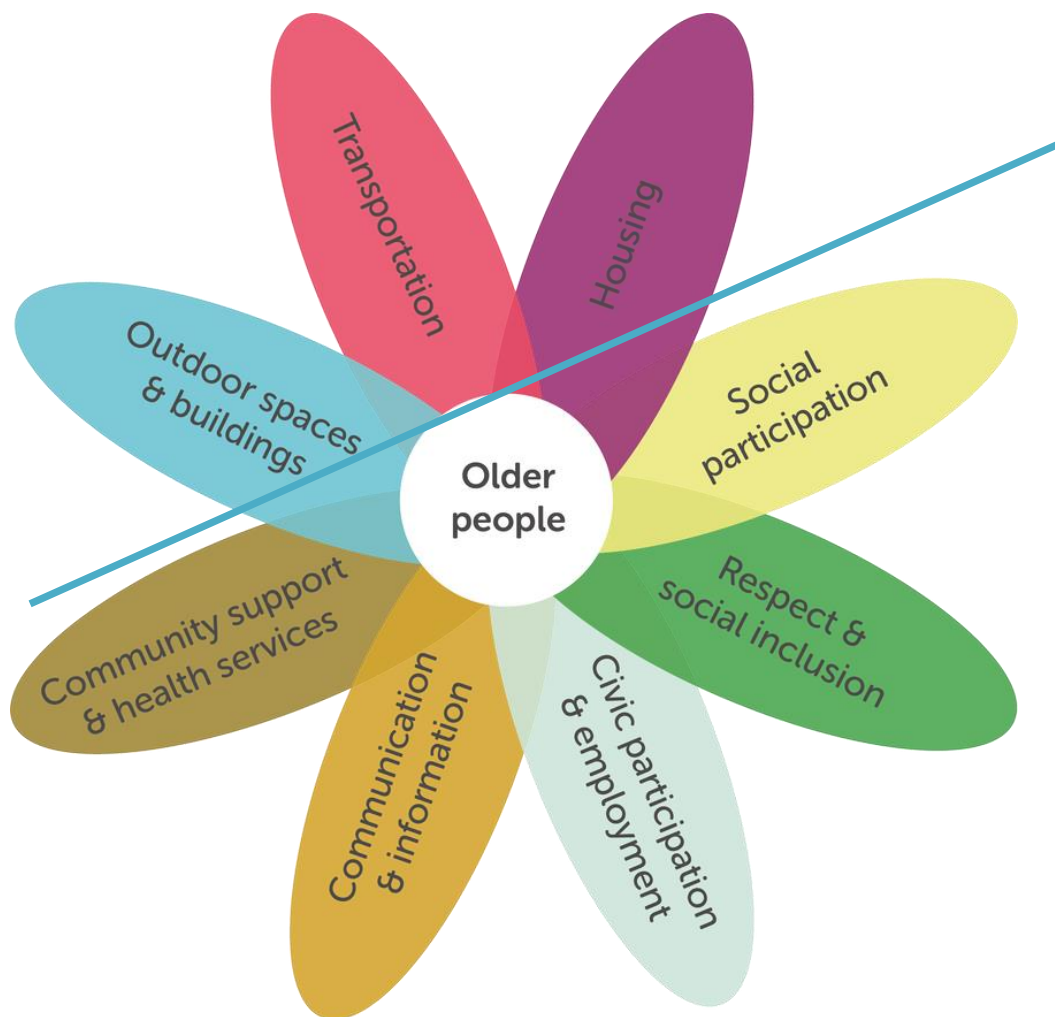
Action – to invite Sandy and the team back in the summer term to hear further about how the strategy is being taken forward.

Developing Age-friendly Communities in Scotland to support healthy and active later life – Sheena Fontane, Age Friendly Communities Development Lead, SOPA

Sheena started by explaining that the work is funded by the Tudor Trust.

An age friendly community is a place where everyone in a community is able to live healthy and active later lives. It focuses on a prevention and enables people to live a healthy and active life. Some of the key elements include making it easier for people to stay living in their own homes, participate in activities that they value and contribute to their communities. It is an asset based approach. An age friendly community adapts its structures and services to be accessible and inclusive of older people with varying needs & capacities. It is a framework which guides communities through a system wide place based approach to achieve its aims with older people not for them.

Age Friendly Communities Framework



It is multifaceted, developed by the WHO with older people at the centre. Above the line are the physical environments, below the line are more the social environments.

The reasons we need age friendly communities is:

- People are living longer, currently 19% of the Scottish population is over 65 years and it is expected to rise to 1 in 4 by 2028.
- It is about focusing in people as assets rather than burdens
- We know that ageing well requires a supportive environment, it is not just about individuals but the environment that we live in to support aging well.
- It is looking at all dimensions, it is intersectoral across both social and environmental environments.
- It is about getting it right for everybody in the community regardless of age.

What SOPA has been doing since Sheena has been in post. The post has been funded for 1 year and the aim is to increase the number of areas in Scotland working towards Age Friendly Community status. So far we have:

- Identified 3 areas in Scotland to support them on their journey to become age friendly communities. They are City of Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire & South Ayrshire. Moray and North Ayrshire have also expressed interest.
- Developed a steering group, chaired by a SOPA trustee. Some of the organisations represented are; Independent Age, Age Scotland, The Health & Social Care Alliance as well as academic partners from Heriot Watt and Dundee University. We have met 6 times with input from other nations such as Ireland. Scotland is currently the only nation that doesn't have an age friendly community, which we are looking to change soon.
- Developed resources
- Spoken at events

To become an age friendly community there are 3 key steps:

- Gain political support for example a letter from the leader of the local authority.
- Set up working groups with stakeholders and older people
- Identify the current age friendliness of your community to gather a baseline.

Sheena finished by saying that there is a UK network of age friendly communities which SOPA is an affiliated member. It is part of a global network with more than 1400 age friendly communities across the world in 51 countries.

Discussion

Sheena's presentation was followed by a discussion on the following areas:

How food is integral to someone's health and wellbeing yet it is not included in the age friendly community model. Sheena explained that food and nutrition is part of the discussions the UK network is having and that it is an area that has gained prominence over the last few years and that they are looking at ways to work around and include it.

Lots of overlap with the work around meetings centres and how it links in with the dementia friendly communities. Age Scotland have launched the development of a dementia friendly network and it how it would be good if both could work collaboratively going forward.

The role that age friendly communities could play in influencing change for example for local activities when funding is being stopped like the Men's Shed Association funding is under threat.

The next steps for the areas as the funding for the post is coming to an end. The applications to the UK network for the 3 areas are underway and they will be submitted in time for the next meeting in March. The future for Sheena's post at this

stage is uncertain but options are being looked at for more sustainable options going forward for age friendly communities.

The work being done to embed intergenerational work into the age friendly communities which has included discussions at the steering group and a presentation from Northern Ireland about how they embed it into their communities.

Agenda item 6

AOCB

Pension poverty – although it is not a devolved matter there is a group of older people still on the old system. We need to be doing more lobbying to get the system looked at again.

Disability Commissioner final proposal has been launched and it has enough MSP's to support to take it forward. The Scottish Government now has 4 weeks to respond as to whether they want to take the bill over and legislate as a Government bill. If that doesn't happen then I intend to bring forward my own private members bill. I will keep the group updated.

Next meeting will be on Thursday 23rd March 2023. The meeting will be hybrid.