

Report to the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board on:

**Cambridgeshire County Council's Draft Older People's Strategy  
and questionnaire**

**Date of meeting**

5 September 2008

**From**

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**Why is the report coming to CRHB?**

The County Council has produced a draft older peoples' strategy which is out for consultation. CRHB may wish to contribute or comment on the strategy, its purpose and content, involvement by stakeholders in it to date, and plans for its future.

**Decision(s) required from CRHB**

- Does CRHB wish to make comments on the strategy?
- Does CRHB want to complete the questionnaire as a group as part of the consultation process?
- On the basis of the current strategy, is CRHB comfortable with any plans being made? If not, need to include this in our response and what we would suggest to overcome the problem?

**Purpose of the strategy**

Tackling the challenges associated with an ever-increasing population is a key priority for local authorities, the National Health Service (NHS), Police, Fire & Rescue services, and the voluntary and community sector.

Across Cambridgeshire, the numbers of people aged 50+ is rising and more people are living longer. At the same time, the County Council is working to ensure that people receive good quality, accessible and more personalised services, and that residents are more involved in how those services are delivered to them.

The Cambridgeshire Together (LAA) Board has responsibility for promoting the well being of local people, the environment and the economy.

The Board has recognised that the organisations working to deliver Local Area Agreements need to join up services, in particular for older people. Their aim is to ensure that older people are supported and enabled to live independent, healthy and active lives; work or be involved in volunteering; and to stay in their own home as long as possible. The Board also recognises that older people have a wealth of experience and knowledge, which are of lasting benefit to our communities.

Cambridgeshire Together decided to develop a strategy for older people so there would be a joined-up approach to service delivery. We now need to know if the strategy – still in draft stage – is on the right lines, and we would like to hear from people who live in Cambridgeshire.

## **Initial thoughts on the strategy as it stands**

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- Sections 3 and 4 set out a useful summary of national context and local context, and section 5 describes how older people feature in Cambridgeshire's LAA.
- Section 6 sets out consultation undertaken, however this could be more extensive as we believe further consultation was undertaken but may not be fully accounted for here.
- A detailed action plan has yet to be developed.
- The structure follows national research into the "seven dimensions of independence" which provides a sound and comprehensive structure.
- However it is unclear how the vision for each of the seven dimensions has been reached.
- In the current and planned service provision sections, agencies are identified in brackets – it is not clear what the "LAA" label is referring to – is there an LAA target associated with these ones?
- **Diminsion A: Housing and the home**
  - Surprising that "need" only covers the BV review of sheltered and the G&T needs assessment.
  - Suggest more on the ageing population might go in here, the overall need for housing and the older persons' chapter in the SHMA.
  - No mention of the link between housing and support, or of SP in any way shape or from throughout. This is a major omission.
  - No mention of the growth agenda and the need to accommodate older people on significant new developments (and other developments too).
  - Repeated reference to Fenlands rather than Fenland
  - Planned service provision partial, not sure how much this is an account of individual schemes or a strategic, county-wide plan. Suspect the former! As SP is a county-based function and part of CCC, surprised there is not a more strategic approach to future provision as presented clearly and consistently by the SP team.
  - No mention of RSLs or other providers, or their involvement in the strategy
- **Dimension B: Neighbourhood**
  - Focuses almost wholly on crime and crime prevention – but unclear who or how lined to police, community safety colleagues and agendas.
  - Several agencies and forums mentioned, again not sure if they are part fo the consultation group.
  - No planned service provision detailed – suspect further partnership work is needed to build this up, ensuring the right agencies and contacts are included.

- **Dimension C: social activities, social networks and keeping busy**
  - Current provision – no mention of sheltered housing or extra care services.
  - Planned service provision weak, sure partners could add to this list if it helps.
- **Dimension D: getting out and about**
  - Interested in the planned service provision for transport, links to existing transport initiatives and resource implications for all the suggestions included.
  - It is not clear to me how this strategy affects either affects, or describes, the resource implications for the planned service provision listed.
- **Dimension E: Income**
  - On noting that the City has “large numbers of pensioners living alone with out central heating (over 600 in number)”, there is a suggestion that “to overcome deprivation it is thus important that older people have opportunities to continue working should they so wish”.
  - This is not a widely-accepted approach to tackling income, isolation and fuel poverty – suggest warm homes scheme targets older people on low incomes and (in partnership) should provide a better source of funding for heating measures than personal income from our older workforce. Not to discourage older people working, but not to expect this income to meet the cost of installing central heating.
  - Again, I suspect more could be added on current service provision, especially around advice and benefits, plus warm homes and winter fuel payments for older people.
  - Would be good to make clear that the SEEDA research is being used as an example, and that we would look to EEDA for information on our region.
  - Would a mention of the current economic climate and increasing food and fuel costs be appropriate in this section?
- **Dimension F: Information**
  - Suggest the benefits advice points in the income section are transferred into section F, to keep them together.
  - Suggest future provision could be built up, again given the right partners/ input.
- **Dimension G: Health and healthy living**
  - Generally, a much stronger section than the others.
- **Section 8 – action plan**
  - This is due to be worked upon, however suggest that it is too general as it stands. How will the “planned service provision” sections in the 7 dimensions be incorporated?
  - Alternatively, if the main focus of the strategy is to achieve LAA targets, perhaps it’s better to be more direct about this and to categorise the current and planned action against a specific LAA target to show how each will be affected or achieved.

- Suggest there may also be links to NI154, number of homes delivered, NI155 % affordable, and NI144 vulnerable people getting support.
- Under references, there is a list of 7 people interviewed – think the strategy needs to be clear, once it's completed, about the process of consultation and who has been involved as this is surely not broad enough to produce a meaningful county-wide, cross-cutting strategy...?
- On the CCC website it states “There are a number of ways that older people can get involved to ensure their needs and views are at the head of all planning and developments across the County Council and partner agencies, including Cambridgeshire older people reference group and Cambridgeshire Older People's Partnership Board. I am sure they have been involved, but this gives us 2 examples of groups who should be listed, and their part in the strategy explained.

## Publications and links

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[Draft Older People's Strategy \(Paper Copy PDF\)](#)

[Questionnaire - draft Older People's Strategy \(Paper Copy PDF\)](#)

[Link to Questionnaire- draft Older People's Strategy](#)

## Contacts

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## Any resource implications

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- Minimal resources required to make a response
- Suggest the strategy at this stage does not have significant resource implications, however as many “future provision” sections are still to be added, CRHB may want to comment on the resource implications of adding these in, before the strategy can be completed.
- It is not clear whether the planned services listed are ideas, bidding pitches or already funded projects, so as it stands resource implications are unknown.

## Outcome (if possible, complete at CRHB for inclusion in minutes)

Decision/ action	Who takes action	When by
Does CRHB wish to make comments on the strategy?		
Does CRHB want to complete the questionnaire as a group as part of the consultation process?		
On the basis of the current strategy, is CRHB comfortable with the plans being made? If not, we need to include this in our response and what we would suggest to overcome the problem?		