PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING TASK GROUP – 26 NOVEMBER 2015

The next meeting of the Promoting Independent Living Task Group will be held at 5.30pm on Thursday 26 November 2015 in Committee Room 1 at the Town Hall, Rugby.

Councillor Claire Edwards
Chairman

AGENDA

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2015.

2. Apologies – to receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of:

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors; and

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a pecuniary interest the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.
4. Review report – to consider the draft review report and develop recommendations to Cabinet

5. Next steps – to agree the process for finalising the review report and the reporting schedule

PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION

There is no business involving exempt information.

Membership of the Task Group:

Councillors H Avis, Ms Edwards, Mrs Garcia, Mrs New and Mrs Roodhouse

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Veronika Beckova, Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer (01788 533522 or e-mail veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer. If you wish to attend the meeting and have any special requirements for access please contact the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer named above.
1. Introduction

It was agreed at the first meeting of the task group that the review would focus specifically on older people, defined around their need for support to live independently in their own home, without having to move into residential care. The one page strategy forms part of the attached draft review report.

2. Purpose of the meeting

At the last meeting the task group was advised by the portfolio holders for sustainable inclusive communities and health, community safety and equality that the review of the corporate strategy was imminent and that the group would need to report as soon as possible to be able to feed into this process. A key outcome of the task group’s work to date has been to confirm and make the case for a clearer corporate approach to the promotion of independent living for older people, and it is therefore important that the task group’s findings and conclusions can be considered as part of the review of the corporate strategy.

It was agreed at the last meeting of the task group that the evidence-gathering stage of the review should be brought to a close and that this scheduled meeting would be used to consider a draft review report and to discuss the task group’s recommendations to Cabinet.

3. Draft review report

A draft review report has been prepared and is attached to this paper for consideration by the task group. Some initial conclusions have been suggested in the report, but these are very much a starting point for discussion by the task group.

The task group’s conclusions will inform any review recommendations, which are to be developed in discussion at the meeting.

4. Visit to Albert Square and Control Room

The task group agreed previously to arrange a visit to the Control Room in Rounds Gardens and the sheltered housing scheme at Albert Square. It was agreed at the last meeting that the visit would not impact on the outcomes of the review, but that it would still be of interest to task group members if a convenient time could be arranged.
Officers were looking to arrange the visit for the afternoon of Thursday 26 November but this has not proved to be a suitable date. Officers will explore alternative options and will liaise with task group members separately.

5. Next steps

Once agreed by the task group, the review report will be considered by Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 January 2016 prior to submission to Cabinet on 1 February 2016, subject to any comments and amendments from the committee.

The draft report will be shared with the relevant portfolio holders at the earliest opportunity to inform the review of the corporate strategy. A draft review action plan will also be developed in consultation with relevant officers prior to the Whittle Committee meeting on 28 January.

Debbie Dawson, Scrutiny Officer, November 2015
PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING
TASK GROUP REVIEW

Draft Review Report: November 2015
The Task Group consisted of the following members:

Councillor Claire Edwards (Chairman)
Councillor Howard Avis
Councillor Belinda Garcia
Councillor Noreen New
Councillor Sue Roodhouse

Please contact:

Debbie Dawson    Veronika Beckova
Scrutiny Officer  Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
tel: 01788 533592     tel. 01788 533522
e-mail: debbie.dawson@rugby.gov.uk  e-mail: veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk

The Group would like to thank everyone who contributed to the review and in particular those who took time to present evidence to the task group at their meetings. This includes:

- Georgia Barrett, GLL Community Sport Manager
- Alison Orr, Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action
- Andrew Stokes, Warwickshire County Council Transport Operations Team
- Janet Giles, Sharon Checkley and Jane Wainwright, Rugby Borough Council
  Sheltered Housing Wardens
- Victoria Chapman, Martin Green, Doug Jones, Caroline Johnson and Kate Miley – Rugby Borough Council officers

The Group are also grateful to Steven Shanahan and Liz Dunlop, who supported them throughout the review process, and Emma Holland, who provided research evidence to the task group.
CHAIR’S FOREWORD

Councillor Claire Edwards
Task Group Chair
1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Task Group proposes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 Background

Promoting independent living was proposed as a potential scrutiny review topic for consideration at the work programme workshop in March 2014 by the Leadership and Operations Team.

The rationale for the topic was that the Council has a corporate priority to support independent and healthy living, but no agreed strategy for the achievement of this priority. It was recognised that the Council has an important role to play in support of the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which includes independent living and healthy lifestyles in its objectives. Members agreed that a review on this theme would therefore be of value.

The one page strategy for the review was agreed by Customer and Partnerships Committee in September 2014 and amended by the task group at their first meeting in February 2015 to refine the review focus specifically around older people, defined by their need for support to live independently in their own home.

2.2 The One-Page Strategy

The one-page strategy is the name given to the scoping document for the review. It defines the task and the improvements being aimed for and how these are going to be achieved. The review’s one-page strategy is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the broad topic area?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision for older people who may need support to live independently. This includes physical provision as well as activities and services to promote social wellbeing and quality of life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the specific topic area?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To develop a strategic corporate approach to promoting independent living in Rugby Borough, in support of the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The review will do the following:

1. Establish what the council does already and plans to do to support the objective of promoting independent living, and develop an understanding of the council’s contribution within the wider context.
2. Identify any gaps that the council could reasonably fill, either on its own or by working with partners.
3. Develop a strategic corporate approach to promoting independent living, with clarity about the outcomes the council aims to achieve and the relative priority to be given to this aim at the borough level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the ambition of the review?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That the review will establish members’ community leadership role in relation to health, act as a catalyst to stronger partnership working to support independent living and encourage inventive and innovative solutions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.3 Alignment with the Corporate Strategy

The review relates to the following corporate priority:

Promote leisure facilities and support independent and healthy living.
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The task group met six times between February and October 2015. Their evidence-gathering included:

- Introductory presentation setting out the local and national policy context for the review
- Consideration of demographic information, tenant profiles and quality of life data
- Discussions with relevant officers across the council about what their service does, and has the potential to do, to support the objective of promoting independent living. This included:
  - housing and corporate property
  - leisure services
  - planning
  - community development
- Oral evidence from three of the council’s sheltered housing wardens about their role in promoting independent living and their direct experience of some of the barriers that exist to helping people to live independently
- Information from senior officers about the council’s contribution to promoting independent living within a wider context, for example in its leading role on the Warwickshire Home Improvement Agency
- Meeting with WCAVA regarding the GP social prescribing pilot project in Rugby and its contribution (and potential contribution) to promoting independent living for older people in the borough.
- Oral evidence from Warwickshire County Council Transport Department regarding rural transport provision in the borough
- Meeting with the council’s Head of Business Transformation and Portfolio Holders for Sustainable Inclusive Communities and Health, Community Safety and Equality regarding the refresh of the Corporate Strategy.

3.2 Access to evidence

The task group review papers are available online at www.rugby.gov.uk in the section ‘agendas, reports and minutes’, and can be found by selecting Promoting Independent Living Task Group Review.
4. FINDINGS

4.1 Policy context

Nationally, policy in relation to health and social care is shifting towards service integration and a focus on prevention, and there are clear opportunities for lower tier authorities to contribute to this agenda. Some of the key elements of the new health and social care infrastructure are detailed below.

4.1.1 Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board is tasked with the improvement of the health and wellbeing of the population and is required by Government to produce a formal strategy outlining how it will achieve these improvements.

The Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-18 builds a strong case, drawing on a robust evidence base, for making ‘promoting independence for all’ one of its three key priorities. One of the specific areas of focus within the Strategy, in relation to promoting independence, is “enabling older people to be able to remain in their own home and to live healthy active lives for as long as possible”.

The strategy articulates a number of aims within this area of focus. These relate to:
- preventative interventions for older people (to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions for people with long-term conditions)
- reablement of older people
- the ‘right range’ of housing for older people with the right support
- supporting people to live at home longer through provision of advice, adaptations and extra-care housing
- integrated services for frail older people
- addressing loneliness and isolation
- support for carers

The Strategy has a further priority around integration and working together, and this also includes a focus on supporting people to “remain healthy and independent, in their homes for longer”.

4.1.2 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

The purpose of the JSNA is to analyse the current and future health and wellbeing needs of the local population, to inform the commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services. It aims to establish a shared, evidence-based consensus on the key local priorities across health and social care and is used to develop the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as well as commissioning plans for the clinical commissioning groups. Old age is one of the JSNA themes and dementia and carers are specific topics within the JSNA.
4.1.3 Warwickshire Cares: Better Together

The Better Care Fund is a national Government programme that has identified £3.8 billion of existing NHS and local authority funding to be pooled to promote joint working and transform services for older people. This is driving service integration to provide “the right services at the right time and in the right place” to enable people to remain healthy and independent.

From April 2015, the Better Care Fund is reallocating funding (£36.1 million in Warwickshire in 2015/16) from acute health services into a joint fund for integrated services with adult social care. The focus is on preventing the need to access urgent care.

Whilst housing authorities do not have any statutory responsibility in relation to the Better Care Fund, there is local recognition of the contribution housing is able to make and the council’s Head of Housing and Property is a member of the Warwickshire Cares: Better Together Board (which is overseeing the administration of the Better Care Fund in the county).

Warwickshire Cares: Better Together aims to improve people’s experiences of health and social care services and create new ways for services (local authorities, CCGs, public health and housing) to work together to deliver services that wrap around individuals. A key theme is to help people stay well and be supported in their own homes and communities for longer.

The graphic below illustrates the aims and key themes around which Warwickshire Cares Better Together is structured:

**Warwickshire Cares - Better Together: Plan on a Page**

- Vision for Residents: “I can plan my care with people who work together to understand me and my carers, allow me control, and bring together services to achieve the outcomes important to me.”

- Vision for Services:
  - People are helped to remain healthy and independent
  - People are empowered to take an active role in managing their own care and the care they receive
  - People get the right service at the right time and in the right place

- Key themes:
  - Care at Home
    - Transforming the delivery of care at home
    - Home adaptation and rehabilitation services
  - Long Term Care
    - Supporting people to manage long term conditions
    - Community-friendly services
  - Accommodation with Care
    - Reshaping the accommodation with care market
    - Supporting people to live independently
  - Integrated Care
    - Integrated health and social care teams working closely with GPs
    - Urgent Care services as an alternative to hospital admission

**Who is involved:** Warwickshire Cares - Better Together is an overarching initiative between commissioners and providers of health and care services and importantly the people of Warwickshire.
The five themes form the basis of specific work streams that partners are engaged in. A number of these relate very specifically to promoting independent living for older people, including D2A (work around hospital discharge), home improvement agency, assistive technology and reablement.

The Disabled Facilities Grant (for which lower tier authorities have statutory responsibility) is now received as part of the Better Care Fund at the county level, though it has been passported to the five districts for two years.

4.2 Demographics

The task group found that demographic data provides a strong case for prioritising activities to promote independent living amongst older people, with clear projections of an ageing population who are likely to experience multiple ill health issues.

4.2.1 Ageing population

Population projections demonstrate that Rugby is set to have an increasing number of residents aged 65 and over and a particularly significant rise in the population aged 90 years and over.

In 2012, people aged 65 to 90+ made up 18.1% of the total population of the borough, compared with 16.9% at a national level. By 2037 this is predicted to rise to 26.5% of the borough population, compared with 24% nationally. This equates to 31,800 people in the borough, compared with 18,200 people in 2012 – an increase which also reflects the projected population growth in the borough overall. This is demonstrated in the charts below:

**2037 population projection**
The table below uses data from Warwickshire Observatory to show the current population profile of localities in the borough, based on the 2011 Census data:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Working age</th>
<th>Older people</th>
<th>Proportion of older people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dunchurch Division</td>
<td>7,900</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earl Craven</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosse</td>
<td>9,900</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby Town East</td>
<td>14,900</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby Town North</td>
<td>22,700</td>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>15,600</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby Town West</td>
<td>32,200</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2.3 Health needs of older residents

The number of people with dementia is predicted to rise by 24.3% (1,610 people) in Rugby by 2020, as illustrated in the table below. The number of residents with limited activity due to a long-term limiting illness is also set to increase, with the most significant increase amongst older people. Over 8,000 residents aged over 65 are projected to fall into this category by 2037 in the borough, compared with 3,609 in the 2011 census. (This includes 3,570 aged 85 and over by 2037, compared with 1,000 in 2011).

#### People aged 65 and over predicted to have dementia, projected to 2020, by District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Warwickshire</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuneaton &amp; Bedworth</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>1,735</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>1,295</td>
<td>1,326</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>1,466</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford-on-Avon</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>2,216</td>
<td>2,402</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>1,776</td>
<td>1,848</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>2,065</td>
<td>2,196</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>7,195</td>
<td>7,615</td>
<td>8,072</td>
<td>8,826</td>
<td>9,186</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Projecting Older People Population Information System (POPI)
Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.*

#### 4.2.4 Carers and Caring

Local survey data from the annual Personal Social Services Users Survey of Carers for Warwickshire 2013 suggests that, across the county:

- 63% of carers live with the person for whom they care.
- Three quarters of those cared for are over the age of 65 and almost 40% are over 85 years old.

The charts below help provide a profile of those caring and cared for in the county and the borough. A higher proportion of those aged 50 and over are carers.
4.3 What is the Council doing already or planning to do to promote independent living?

4.3.1 Housing

There are almost 600 tenants aged over 60 living in the council’s general needs accommodation, as well as around 1609 tenants living in sheltered accommodation. The sheltered housing service is described in more detail below (section 4.3.2).
Rugby has played a leading role in the development of the Warwickshire Home Improvement Agency. This initiative anticipated the national drive towards greater service integration and demonstrates the potential for all of the councils in Warwickshire to integrate their services for the benefit of local people. The HIA has resulted in significant reductions in the time taken to complete adaptations, with the number of customers dropping out of the process falling from 35% to just 5%. The council’s housing team also undertakes a significant number of adaptations in its own properties.

The Control Centre provides a year-round Lifeline service to 1763 council customers and 548 private customers, raising income for the council’s general fund of over £70,000 in the last financial year. Lifelines and other assistive technology are monitored 24 hours a day. The task group learned that Warwickshire County Council had withdrawn its contract with RBC to provide wider assistive technology to 119 customers eligible for care, as the contract was retendered as part of a wider package including rehabilitation services.

It was reported to the task group that the council was working with Coventry and Rugby CCG to pilot the use of ‘Toughbooks’ – mobile, durable computers that are used to enable residents to be assessed by a qualified medical professional based in a remote centre. It was anticipated that the use of such technology would reduce unnecessary hospital visits and ambulance calls in the longer-term.

Warwickshire County Council is now starting to develop extra care housing in the borough. This involves residents having their ‘own front door’, but with care provided on site. In response to this, Rugby Borough Council needs to ensure its own sheltered housing stock remains attractive compared with extra care housing. Officers have begun to consider possible responses, including the possibility of remodelling sheltered housing schemes as older persons’ villages.

WCC is also remodelling its Housing-Related Support Services (formerly ‘Supporting People’). It has also been suggested that this provides an opportunity for this council to develop a remodelled warden service that could be marketed to private tenants and owners. This would require additional resource and capacity, and it would be important to develop an attractive service that people would be prepared to pay for.

### 4.3.2 Sheltered Housing

The council owns and manages 1374 sheltered housing units and provides a traditional warden service in its sheltered schemes. The wardens support tenants in living independently and maintain regular face-to-face contact with tenants through weekly or twice-weekly visits, and through a comprehensive programme of social activities provided at the community rooms in the urban sheltered schemes. Sheltered Housing wardens reported to the task group specifically on their work.

The warden service operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, with emergency ‘on call’ provision outside of these hours. Locality wardens are linked to community facilities, while community wardens provide support for sheltered housing tenants in the rural area.
In the community facilities like Albert Square, there is a daily programme of social activities (such as lunch clubs, coffee mornings and bingo) taking place in the community rooms, with other events, trips and holidays also organised. These activities are open to residents of other sheltered housing schemes in the area and some private housing residents also attend. A wide range of services are also brought into the sheltered schemes in the urban area, including mobile library, chiropody, dental care and hairdressing.

Rural tenants receive one or two visits per week. There is no prescribed time for a visit and the time spent will depend on the needs of the resident on the particular day. The community wardens provide advice and offer signposting to other agencies where necessary. They also interact with other agencies, for example to secure care support and to encourage and promote participation in leisure and community activities. They also report health and safety issues and carry out regular checks of alarm equipment.

4.3.3 Community development

The Council has Service Level Agreements (SLA) with a number of voluntary and community sector organisations, all of which will have some links with older people. These include:

- Age UK Warwickshire
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Rugby Credit Union
- Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA)
- Rugby Food Union

The council provides grant funding to Age UK Warwickshire, to the value of £17.5k in 2015/16. This grant arrangement is due to be reviewed for 2016-2018. The service specification against which the grant has been made includes:

- Providing information and advice on a broad range of issues for older people aged 50 and over, their carers, friends and family, with particular emphasis on:
  - affordable warmth
  - healthy eating
  - financial awareness
  - income maximisation
  - maintaining independent living
- Implementing a scheme of ‘Befriending’ to help socially isolated and lonely individuals to access activities, groups or one to one befriending to improve wellbeing
- Providing frail elderly day care opportunities at the Claremont Centre to help prevent social isolation
- Delivering the Help at Home (Lifestyle) service to help people maintain independence within their own homes.
Around 3,000 people per year access information and advice services offered by Age UK Warwickshire in Rugby, 42% of these receiving information and advice on issues relating to maintaining independent living. Around 50 people a year are supported through the befriending service.

WCAVA compiles a quarterly funding newsletter that identifies grants available for the Rugby area, including national and local grants. This includes details of grants aimed at projects with older people. WCAVA also provides support to voluntary organisations who deliver services for older people.

The Council’s SLAs with community associations in the priority neighbourhoods are structured around the borough Regeneration Strategy, with project programmes developed to address financial inclusion (including affordable warmth), health improvements and tackling worklessness. The community associations also undertake annual community audits which help to identify local community issues and gaps in provision.

There are a number of specific services delivered by community associations relating to older people, including luncheon clubs, a dementia club and digital inclusion activities for older people.

The council also makes grants to voluntary and community sector organisations, including sports grants, youth and play, arts and rural development, as well as administering health and wellbeing grants for the Rugby area on behalf of Public Health Warwickshire. A number of these grants have been awarded to fund projects for older people. In 2015 the grants programme funded:

- Men in Sheds project – managed by AGE UK Warwickshire and aimed at older men who are living on their own and/or caring for someone, and who are experiencing social isolation and loneliness
- Two bus stops in rural communities (Frankton and Leamington Hastings), specifically to support older people to access local public transport
- Rainbow Over 50s Club – weekly art classes held at the Benn Partnership Centre
- Caldecott Park Bowling Club – purchase of two sets of folding green access steps with handrails to enable and encourage more disabled and elderly participants to engage with bowls
- Wolston Leisure Centre – to set up an OAP Luncheon and Activities Club, which provides a two course meal, transport and entertainment to the elderly in Wolston and nearby villages
- The Hoskyn Fund for the Disabled – providing home-cooked meals for their members three times a week
- West Indian Association (Day Care Group) – for Black History Celebrations to enable older people to share their experiences with the wider community.

The grants criteria were due to be reviewed, to align with the review of the Regeneration Strategy (see below).
4.3.4 Sports and recreation

The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Centre had 1047 gym members aged over 60 at March 2015, and they made approximately 5000 visits (10% increase since March 2014). There were 120 members signed up to the Healthwise GP Referrals Scheme (46% of whom were aged over 60).

The Centre runs and has trialled various activities aimed specifically at older people – for example a dementia class, a chair-based exercise class and bowls. There is a dedicated community sport manager employed by GLL whose role is to identify gaps in leisure provision and promote the importance of exercise.

The council’s sports and recreation team’s focus is mainly on leisure provision for young people. There is a lack of external funding currently available to support leisure activity for older people.

4.3.5 Planning

The group learned that a reference to ‘independent living’ had recently been added to the national Planning Practice Guidance and there was now a specific requirement for local planning authorities to identify, break down and consider the housing needs of older people and the type of accommodation required. Plan makers would now need to consider the size, location and quality of dwellings needed in the future for older people in order to allow them to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible. Planning officers reported to the task group that the council would be considering how to reflect this in the revised Local Plan, which is scheduled for adoption in December 2016.

In local planning policy, financial viability evidence must always be balanced against evidence of housing needs. The National Planning Policy Framework specifically states that the local planning authority must boost the supply of housing and therefore that local policies should not over-burden developments so as to prevent them from coming forward.

There is no local planning policy in place in Rugby relating to the provision of bungalows, though there was a suggestion that national policy may be shifting, with ministerial statements having been made promoting the value of bungalows in meeting the needs of older people.

Building regulations require that doorways in new homes must be wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users.

4.4 What gaps have we identified in support for older people to live independently?

4.4.1 Rural transport

In the rural area, the task group learned that access to transport is a significant issue. Bus services can be very irregular or at inconvenient times, and bus stops are
sometimes too far to walk. There are also difficulties in travelling to hospital appointments at UHCW and accessing ambulance transport.

The task group decided to explore this in more detail and invited the Passenger Transport Manager from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) to talk to them about the county council's role in relation to bus services and community transport.

The transport operations group secures and manages passenger transport services where these cannot be delivered commercially and co-ordinate the passenger transport network across the county. They also co-ordinate community and voluntary transport. However, the council has no power in relation to provision of particular bus services other than through influencing commercial operators. The team uses service level criteria based on population and car ownership which indicate what minimum frequency of service should be provided for communities.

The budget for public transport services has reduced considerably in recent years. Flexibus services are used to gain maximum coverage of the county. The county council also funds voluntary community car schemes for health related journeys in each of the five Warwickshire Districts. Rugby Borough has a scheme provided by WCAVA. However, these schemes can be quite expensive for users as the charge is based on mileage. In some areas there are other schemes, such as a ‘Dial a Ride’ service operating during school hours in Stratford District, funded by Stratford District Council.

It was reported to the task group that WCC had been successful in securing funding from the Total Transport Fund, for a health-based project to explore the potential to coordinate the services provided by bus companies, private sector, community car schemes, and non-emergency ambulances, where there is a currently a lot of duplication. The aim was to establish a central call centre which can log the person’s requirements and make sure that these are covered either by a community car scheme or the non-emergency ambulance. WCC was also in negotiation with Stagecoach and Travel West Midlands (TWM) to provide a ticket that could be bought on any bus and cover the entire journey to UHCW, to be introduced from the end of July 2015.

4.4.2 Social involvement

The task group received a verbal presentation from WCAVA’s Rugby Locality Manager about the GP social prescribing project that was being piloted in the borough. The project seeks to address a gap, by “unlocking and aligning the many resources and community assets that exist within the Rugby borough’s communities" to help people to address “underlying societal causes or… compounding factors of ill-health”. The project initially encouraged GPs in two local surgeries to prescribe social involvement to their patients, who were then referred to the Social Prescribing Project team who engage with the patients to facilitate their involvement in local groups and activities.
The project is staffed by volunteer ‘navigators’, who manage and maintain access points, and volunteer ‘health buddies’, who support and assist individuals on a one-to-one basis over a six week period. A paid Wellness Coordinator oversees the health buddies.

The project started in August 2014 and the first referral was taken in November 2014. The scope had been widened as the number of referrals from the original two GP practices was low. Community nurses were now able to prescribe, and it was expected that increasing numbers of older people would access the project. The project has mapped nearly 800 activities happening within Rugby that people can be referred to.

4.4.3 Physical activity

The council’s sports and recreation team’s current focus is leisure provision for young people. Councillors could take a decision to shift the focus of the team more towards older people. There are clear opportunities for connections to be made between the work of the sports and recreation and housing teams. For example, tenants in sheltered housing could benefit from walks and chair-based exercise classes.

There is a lack of external funding currently available to support leisure activity for older people and a need for a stronger evidence-base to understand and demonstrate the needs of harder to reach communities – including older people – to engage more regularly in physical activity. It was suggested that the council could argue for a research stream in the next Warwickshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to address this gap in evidence of need.

4.4.4 Planning for future housing needs

The Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (published November 2013) identified that over the next 20 years there would be a significant increase in the elderly population in the borough and also identified the projected needs for specialist housing as a result of growing health needs. This will be reflected in the new Local Plan.

A housing supplementary planning document supports the Core Strategy. Officers suggested that a similar supplementary policy could be developed for independent living, or detail about independent living could be added to the existing housing SPD. This could set out aspirations for the types or levels of provision required, whilst recognising that this should be subject to viability.

4.4.5 Access to care

The task group learnt from those working directly with older residents that the process of obtaining professional carer support can often be complex and lengthy and it can be difficult to provide evidence of need to meet tight criteria. The group heard about situations that wardens had encountered where residents needed assistance to reach bathroom facilities in their home, but wardens were unable to assist. Sometimes there was a considerable delay in accessing
necessary support from carers. Wardens also highlighted a lack of flexibility in
the system to enable residents to access end of life care in their own home for an
indeterminate period of time.

It was suggested that the introduction of personal care budgets may assist in
addressing the issue of timely access to care support. Routine use of
multidisciplinary meetings to ensure all agencies are working together effectively to
support those recovering from a hospital stay would also be beneficial.

4.4.6 Early prevention

Those providing evidence to the task group highlighted an identified gap in
provision for 50-70 year olds, an age at which early intervention would clearly be
beneficial to prevent the need for more complex support. For example, it was
suggested that the befriending service at AGE UK does not start young enough
for some of the patients who might benefit from the service.

4.5 Developing a strategic corporate approach to promoting
independent living

The council also has a community leadership role in relation to health and a general
wellbeing power in relation to the borough. However, it will benefit less financially
from investment in this preventative work than other statutory partners.

The council recognised this role in its corporate strategy for 2012-16, which
articulates “improved health and wellbeing for all age groups and communities” as
one of its 16 priority outcomes. One of the stated corporate priorities in pursuit of this
outcome is “to provide leisure facilities and support independent and healthy living”.

The corporate strategy is implemented through the annual Corporate Change and
Improvement Plan. The task group found the actions in the plan relating to this
corporate priority to be fairly disparate, ranging from affordable warmth, increasing
participation in sports and recreation activities to improving access to the arts. None
had a specific focus on older people. It was evident to the group that there is no clear
corporate agreement about the council’s role in promoting independent living.

A new Cabinet portfolio was created in May 2015 covering health, community safety
and equality, potentially significantly strengthening the council’s strategic leadership
around health. The new Health, Community Safety and Equality Portfolio Holder
advised the task group that he had identified two specific aspects which would form
the initial focus of the health part of his portfolio, these being obesity in young
children and dementia.

The task group discussed with the Head of Business Transformation, and the
Sustainable Inclusive Communities and Health, Community Safety and Equality
Portfolio Holders, the forthcoming review of the council’s corporate strategy. The
group were keen to explore how it might be possible to raise the profile of ‘promoting
independent living’ within the review of the corporate strategy, so as to maximise the
council’s ability to positively impact on this agenda. It was suggested that the refresh
of the corporate strategy had the potential to provide an opportunity to include health and wellbeing or independent living, more specifically, as a more prominent corporate priority. They group were advised that the new corporate priorities would be subject to wide consultation, with a view to a revised corporate strategy being considered by Council in March 2016.

The task group also learnt that the borough Regeneration Strategy, developed by Rugby Local Strategic Partnership, was undergoing its fourth refresh, drawing on a new set of underpinning data. The revised Regeneration Strategy would be structured around the underpinning themes of lifestyle management, employment and financial inclusion. The group were informed that initial research had identified issues around younger people having nothing to do and isolation amongst older people. This was likely to be addressed through a theme on intergenerational working in the revised strategy.
5. CONCLUSIONS

NOTE: This section offers a starting point for discussion by the task group and is an officer interpretation of the potential conclusions arising from the task group findings. This should not therefore be considered to be a statement of the conclusions of the task group itself.

Although there is a good deal of work being carried out at the county level and by other statutory partners to support this agenda, this task group has, for the first time, explored ways in which older people can be supported to live independently in their own homes for longer from a borough council perspective.

The task group has drawn the following conclusions from the evidence it received:

- Promoting independent living is not a statutory priority for the council. However, as the strategic planning authority and strategic housing authority for the borough, the council has a key contribution to make towards promoting independent living for the growing population of older people.

- The task group welcomes and applauds the council’s proactive engagement in the Warwickshire Cares Better Together work streams and the development of the Warwickshire Home Improvement Agency.

- There are a number of current imperatives which make this a good time to re-evaluate the potential for the council to promote independent living more strategically and intentionally. The demographic imperative for work in this area is clear and the shift in national and local policy towards prevention, integrated services and community resilience makes the council’s role in promoting independent living increasingly relevant.

- Rugby Borough Council already has a corporate priority within the corporate strategy to “support independent and healthy living”. However, the actions in place to support this corporate priority are fairly disparate, with none focusing specifically on older people. There is no clear corporate agreement about the council’s role in promoting independent living and no consistency in approaches to supporting this agenda across different service areas.

- The task group considers that, by adopting a more intentional corporate approach, drawing together all of the different opportunities within council services to positively influence this agenda, the council has the potential to make a tangible difference to the lives of older residents who need support to live independently in their own homes. The group believes that promoting independent living should be more consciously pursued as a corporate priority and should be a key consideration in decisions made and policies adopted by the council.

- A clear and consistent corporate commitment and drive towards the promotion of independent living for older people could act as a catalyst to potentially significant
innovations around development of older people’s villages and remodelling of the warden service to reflect changing needs.

- The council should reflect carefully on the new requirement in national Planning Practice Guidance for local planning authorities to identify, break down and consider the housing needs of older people and the type of accommodation. Measures to promote independent living within local planning policy should be considered at an early stage in the development of the new Local Plan.

- As part of the review of the council’s grants criteria, consideration should be given to including promoting independent living for older people as a theme, to enable better targeting of funding towards activities that support this aim. This could also help to address the gap in provision for 50-70 year olds.

- There are clear opportunities for connections to be made between the work of the sports and recreation and housing teams and officers should be encouraged to optimise these synergies.

- The council should make the case for a research stream in the next Warwickshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment focusing on the needs of hard to reach groups, including older people, in accessing physical activity, with a view to providing an evidence base to drive increased funding to support these needs.

- Rural transport?

- Social prescribing?

- Access to care, multi-agency working?