

MARLBOROUGH AREA BOARD

MARLBOROUGH HEALTH AND WELLBEING GROUP

PROGRESS REPORT AND UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2020

Further to the report which was presented to the Area Board in January 2020 the following report provides an update on the situation following the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown.

1) **January – March 2020.**

The Group continued to plan for the previously agreed priority areas:

- a) the 'marketplace' / 'health fair' to be held in Priory Gardens on 6th June 2020 which aims to promote health and wellbeing for adults.
- b) developing a range of activities particularly to support older and vulnerable adults attending the Jubilee Centre including:
 - art therapy
 - Alzheimers support sessions
 - Exercise classes including a focus on falls prevention

Financial bids were submitted for both priorities for the 2019-20 Health and Wellbeing funds.

2) **April 2020 and the COVID 19 lockdown**

Following the national imposition of the COVID 19 lockdown the activities of the Group were suspended and the 'market place' / 'health fair' was cancelled on the advice of the Community Engagement Manager.

As the lockdown situation progressed and there appeared to be no prospect of arranging an event as originally planned in the immediate future I wrote to the Group on 9th June 2020 to propose that instead of planning a similar event in future, the Group should devote attention and any funding which may be received from the Marlborough Area Board directly to support local charities and organisations with their work on the front line. I was concerned that the intended audience for an event would be unlikely to attend anyway due to the pandemic and the charity sector in general has been significantly disadvantaged by the recent events and required support.

The proposal was supported by Group members.

3) **The national 'Living Longer Better' initiative.**

Despite the limitations of the lockdown I have continued to explore ways in which health and wellbeing for older people in particular could be pursued. As such and in my position as Vice Chair of U3A in Kennet I collaborated with a former NHS colleague Professor Sir Muir Gray CBE (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muir_Gray) to launch the national 'Live Longer Better' initiative in U3A in Kennet on 17th June 2020 . The programme is designed to support older people to remain healthier for longer and compress the period of ill health and dependency: this being particularly pertinent in the Covid pandemic lockdown context which has impacted detrimentally on health and activity.

Following the launch (<https://www.u3ainkennet.org.uk/kennet-u3a-talk-presentation-17-june-2020/>) Sir Muir is working with the public health team in Wiltshire Council and Councillor Simon Jacobs (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection) and Wiltshire is the lead county in the programme.

The U3A In Kennet launch was attended by around 100 members and further action will be pursued as appropriate as part of the Wiltshire initiative.

On a related matter U3A In Kennet has also established a link with the KAMP as part of the social prescribing initiative.

Jill Turner,

Chair, Marlborough Health and Wellbeing Group

September 2020