



**ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**2 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**CARERS' SUPPORT UPDATE**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES,**  
**DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES AND**  
**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on the progress made in the delivery of the Joint Carers' Strategy 2018-21, Implementation Plan and priorities over the next 12 months.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The relevant policy framework includes:
  - The Care Act 2014;
  - The Children and Families Act 2014;
  - Joint Carers Strategy 2018-2021 Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR);
  - Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022;
  - Leicestershire Communities Strategy 2017-21;
  - Leicestershire Adult Social Care Strategy 2016-2020.
3. The Care Act 2014 replaced most previous legislation regarding adult carers. It places the responsibility on local authorities to:
  - Prioritise health, wellbeing and outcomes for carers;
  - Assess a carer's need for social care support;
  - Consider the impact that caring has on the person's overall health and wellbeing.
4. The Children and Families Act 2014 gives young carers more rights to ask for support. Any needs assessment must include consideration as to whether it is appropriate for the person to or continue to provide care or to continue to do so.
5. In June 2018 the National Carers' Action Plan was published. This plan identified actions to be taken over the subsequent two years to improve support for carers across England. An update was issued in July 2019 setting out which actions had been delivered and those still in progress. The concluding report is expected in 2020.
6. On the 11 September 2018, the Committee received a report on the draft Joint Carers' Strategy and Implementation Plan 2018-21 before its consideration by Cabinet, including public feedback from a full consultation exercise.

7. On the 16 October 2018, the Cabinet approved the Joint Carers' Strategy and Implementation Plan.

### **Background**

8. The County Council provides support to adults and young carers through:
- Regular and 'one off' Direct Payments;
  - Support for Carers Service funded by Public Health;
  - Dedicated Carers Workers in Customer Service Centres;
  - Flexible Respite Framework – however this provision will not be available from 31 October 2019 (see paragraph 12 below);
  - Support for young carers through Barnardo's (contract due to end in March 2020, options being considered by Children and Family Services as to future arrangements).

### **Progress made in the past 12 months**

9. The County Council has made significant progress and driven improvements in several areas of the Strategy and Implementation Plan, in the process delivering better outcomes for carers. A full account of progress can be found in Appendix A.
10. The use of the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) to fund the Customer Service Centre Carers' Team has led to an improved customer experience. This includes a review of the assessment process and the form being made available digitally as part of the customer portal. Specific feedback from carers includes:

*'A much quicker process than previous years – it is great to have the recognition and support as a carer'*

*'Service is so much better than previous years – I am extremely happy with the continuity of the same worker communicating with me'*

*'This year's service has been marvellous. So much better than previous years when there was a lot of waiting for call backs and payment. I feel so much more supported and appreciated in my role – thank you'.*

11. Through system changes, better intelligence is available to the Department as to the types of support carers need, especially for those in receipt of a Direct Payment. This intelligence is being used to plan how carers' support is being delivered in the future.
12. A review of the Flexible Respite Framework has found that it is poorly utilised. As a result, the framework is ending as of 31 October 2019, though those in receipt of services will continue to receive them until a suitable alternative is identified.
13. There have been 74 registrations for the Carers Digital Resource, funded via the IBCF. This provides access to Carers UK guidance and publications; carers resilience e-learning; and free access to Jointly, a care co-ordination application. A leaflet is available upon request for Committee members.
14. A new GP leaflet has been co-produced and is well received by carers. Alongside the introduction of new CQC quality markers regarding carers, this has invigorated GPs

interest in Carers. A leaflet is available upon request for Committee members.

15. A new e-learning package regarding carers has been developed and rolled out across the County Council. To date 364 staff have completed the package, with work ongoing to increase uptake.
16. Furthermore, a more in-depth carers' training package has been delivered to 381 Adults and Communities staff members by a Lead Practitioner and the Carers' Lead. The training focuses upon the County Council's Care Act responsibilities regarding carers, including eligibility and appropriate services.
17. Thirteen organisations across Leicestershire have signed up to the Employers for Carers' Scheme, including four district councils (Charnwood, Blaby, Melton and North West Leicestershire) and the County Council. The scheme provides access to a range of online practical resources including; model policies, good practice examples, case studies and information on key workplace issues.

#### Priorities for the next 12 months

18. Alongside consolidating the achievements delivered, the County Council will continue to expand upon its Carers' Work Programme. This includes some of the areas in the Strategy and Implementation Plan that have either taken longer to set up or have not been achievable with the available resources. These are detailed below.
19. In response to the decommissioning of the Flexible Respite Framework, a full Options Appraisal is being considered in October. Utilising better intelligence regarding carers' services will drive forward the department's future approach.
20. The County Council is working with partners across LLR bidding for the Department of Health and Social Care support through the Carers' Innovation Fund. The proposal is being led by the County Council and will focus on developing a range of flexible support for carers through carer inclusive and friendly communities. It will be an asset-based approach based upon support through volunteers, friends, business ventures and community groups.
21. Some progress has been made in ensuring that housing services make appropriate considerations and/or adjustment for carers. Carers have fed back that they struggle with housing staff not:
  - Being aware of the pressures caring brings;
  - Recognising the amount of space aids and adaptations can occupy in a home;
  - Issues relating to the housing benefit under occupancy charge where the carer is unable to share space.
22. In response the County Council will be making the Carers' e-learning available to all housing staff, as well as reviewing what information, advice and guidance is provided on areas from access to housing, to aids and adaptations.
23. Visits or admissions to hospital, whether planned or unplanned; for the carer or cared for person can have a significant impact on carers' health and wellbeing. Discussions have begun with representatives from University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust to develop a support pack for carers both whilst in hospital and upon discharge.

### **Resource implications**

24. The total County Council expenditure on carers' services in 2018/19 was £1,542,068. However, support for carers is also delivered, whether directly or indirectly, through a support plan for the cared for person. Currently, it is not possible to quantify this financial commitment.
25. In April 2017, funding to support carers' services was allocated from the IBCF. Breakdown as to how this was used can be found below:
- £30,000 (June 2017 to March 2018): Six Shire Grants for growth of carer groups in the county; video filming of carers for staff training package; and the design and print of GP Carers Information Leaflet;
  - £95k (April 2018 to March 2020): 2.5 FTE Customer Service Centre (CSC) dedicated Carers Community Support Worker posts and associated management costs; and Employers for Carers and Digital Resource membership from Carers UK.
26. Children and Family Services commission Barnardo's, a voluntary sector provider, to undertake carers' assessments and provide support to young carers across Leicestershire.
27. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Future Strategic Approach**

28. The current Strategy and Implementation Plan runs until 2021. Over the next 12 months work will begin to consider a new strategy. The current intention is to continue to work in collaboration with partners across LLR.
29. Consideration will be given as to how any new Strategy and Implementation Plan aligns with the Adults and Communities Strategy 2020-24 and Whole Life Disability Strategy.

### **Background Papers**

Joint Carers Strategy 2018-2021 <https://bit.ly/2KAQQso>

June 2018 National Carers Action Plan - <https://bit.ly/2JuoeRO>

Report to the Cabinet: 16 October 2018 – Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Carers' Strategy 2018-21 – <https://bit.ly/2P0iLWZ>

Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 11 September 2018 – Draft Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Carers' Strategy 2018-21 – <https://bit.ly/2H7WBvo>

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

30. None.

## **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

31. An initial screening assessment for the Equalities and Human Rights Impact was undertaken in 2017 and reviewed by the Adults and Communities Departmental Equality Group. The screening assessment indicated that once implemented the Carers' Strategy may have a positive impact on people with a number of protected characteristics. There were no further Equalities and Human Rights Impacts identified through consultation responses.
32. The current Strategy and Implementation Plan is due to end in 2021. A new Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment will be undertaken during the next Strategy's development. This will look what has been achieved by the current strategy and what can be improved for the next.

## **Partnership Working and Associated Issues**

33. The LLR Carers' Delivery Group is responsible for overseeing delivery of the Joint Carers Strategy 2018-21. The group and associated activities sit as part of the Prevention (Home First) work stream of the local Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.
34. Partners in the delivery of the Joint Carers Strategy and, as such, members of the Delivery Group include:
  - Leicestershire County Council (including the Delivery Group Chair);
  - Leicester City Council;
  - Rutland Council;
  - Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group;
  - East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group;
  - West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group;
  - Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust;
  - Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (including speaking on behalf of carers);
  - Healthwatch Leicestershire.
35. The local vision for Carers is shared:

*'Family members and unpaid carers, including young people across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland will be identified early, feel valued and respected. They will receive appropriate support wherever possible to enable them to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing'.*

From this vision each organisation listed in paragraph 34 has developed its own Implementation Plan. It is the responsibility of the Delivery Group to ensure that there is a consistent approach to improving outcomes for carers across the local health and social care footprint.

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - Leicestershire Carers' Strategy Implementation Plan Progress Update

**Officers to Contact**

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