



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 JUNE 2023

**UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEICESTER,
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND CARERS' STRATEGY**

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

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with an overview of progress in implementing the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Carers' Strategy 2022-2025 and the associated action plan in Leicestershire, attached as Appendix A to this report.
2. The report sets out details of the Carers' Week programme (5-11 June 2023), attached as Appendix B, and outlines key areas being developed to support carers in Leicestershire with the Council's partners.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The relevant policy frameworks include:
 - a) National legislation and guidance:
 - The Care Act 2014
 - The Children and Families Act 2014
 - The White Paper - People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform - December 2021.
 - b) County Council policies/strategies:
 - Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024
 - Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032
 - SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2023
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
 - Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
4. The Joint Carers' Strategy Refresh 2022-2025 'Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland' was developed jointly by Leicestershire County, Leicester City and Rutland Councils and the ICB (Integrated Care Board) across the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (LLR) area, and from June 2022 was the subject of a formal eight-week consultation. The refreshed Strategy builds on the previous Strategy which was in place from 2018-2021.

5. Following the conclusion of the public consultation, this Committee considered a report on the Strategy at its meeting on 5 September 2022, and it was subsequently approved at Cabinet on 25 November 2022. The Leicestershire Carers' Strategy Action Plan, which set out the County Council's commitment to carers in a plan, was agreed at the same time.

Background

6. Carers play an important role in communities and make a difference to the lives of those they care for by maintaining their independence. Carers can feel isolated, emotionally drained and can have financial difficulties, which can impact on their own lives, health, and wellbeing. Support to carers allows them to continue with their caring duties.
7. Leicestershire is a place where carers are recognised, valued, and supported both in their caring role and as an individual. The Census 2021 identified that there were 61,306 unpaid carers in Leicestershire providing essential support to a family member or friend. Many more people may not consider themselves as having a caring role and will go unidentified and unsupported.
8. Monday 5 June 2023 marks the start of the National Carers' Week, an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlighting the challenges unpaid carers face and recognising the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who do not think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.
9. Carers' Week is an opportune time to present to the Committee the progress that the County Council has made towards the implementation of the refreshed LLR Strategy since its approval in November 2022.
10. Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers in LLR is a joint Strategy developed by the three LLR council authorities and the ICB across the LLR area that commits all three councils to a shared vision and priorities for recognising, valuing, and supporting carers across LLR. The aim is to help carers to continue in their caring role and maintain their own health and wellbeing.
11. This joint Strategy is a sign of how it is intended to work together and reflects ongoing commitment to carers. It is recognised that to achieve this vision and the best possible outcomes for carers, NHS and local authority partners need to work collaboratively to ensure that carers are not only recognised but are valued and supported to live healthy and fulfilled lives.
12. Areas to be progressed within the strategy are those which:
 - Facilitate carer identification.
 - Enable staff across the health and social care system to receive training on carers' needs.
 - Promote access to information for carers.
 - Support carers to be able to access a broad range of services within their local communities, including voluntary or community led organisations, helping to support their wellbeing and alleviate social isolation.

- Improve the move between children's and adult services with young carers and parent carers, so that they can consider and plan for their future aspirations.
- Considers carers' needs in the commissioning of mainstream services, for example, mental health.

Proposals

13. As part of the Strategy refresh, commitments have been made across the health and social care system in LLR to:
- Consider carer needs on admission to, and discharge from, hospital.
 - Encourage people via community groups and partner organisations to self-identify as carers so that they can get access to the right support.
 - Value carers and young carers' experience, and ensure they are involved in what happens to the person that they care for.
 - Make sure carers can access the information they need in the formats they require.
 - Encourage communities to support carers through community groups, and help carers access local groups so that they can socialise and take a break from their caring responsibilities.
 - Recognise that carers have their own lives to lead alongside their caring role, and lead by example as carer-friendly employers, encouraging more local businesses to do the same.
 - Ensure that carers know about new technology that could support them in their caring roles and supporting them to be confident using new technology or gadgets.
 - Work with partners to raise the profile of schemes like the carers' passport, which helps organisations to easily recognise and acknowledge carers.
 - Develop a range of support for young carers, including improved awareness in schools and colleges of young carers, roll out a young carers passport scheme, and improve support for young carers in navigating the health system locally.
14. Progress towards actions in the Strategy is monitored via the LLR Carers' Delivery Group which meets bi-monthly and has representatives from all of the stakeholder organisations including carers' representatives.

Delivering the Carers' Agenda in Leicestershire

15. The Leicestershire Carers' Strategy Action Plan which was approved in November 2022 has been further developed, and is attached as Appendix A.

Leicestershire Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy Group

16. To ensure cross partner commitment and delivery of the Leicestershire Carers' Action Plan, a county group has been developed with a lead Assistant Director from the County Council as Carers' sponsor and group chair. The group includes key County Council representatives, and partners from across the ICB and voluntary sector.

Carers Forum or Reference Group

17. Building on the Department's Engagement Panel and engagement framework, a focussed carers' forum will be set up to ensure that Leicestershire's carers' views are heard and are able to inform future delivery.

Refresh of the internal Carers Champions initiative

18. There is currently a group of operational staff who have volunteered to be departmental Carers' Champions. However, this group and its membership will be refreshed and relaunched to ensure that it is both relevant and adds value to the Carers agenda.

Building on relationships with the voluntary sector

19. The Department has a key strategic partner for carers, namely Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL), who have recently been awarded a carers support contract. There are a range of other voluntary sector organisations in the County who support carers either directly or indirectly and further work/engagement with the sector will form part of the Multi-agency Carers' Strategy Group.

Raising the profile of carers

20. Work has started, in conjunction with Communication colleagues, to disseminate information across the Council on carers work/initiatives that may benefit both employees of the Council and the wider community. An ongoing programme of information sharing and profile raising is in place.

Linkages to other Council initiatives and strategies

21. Carers support is intrinsic to a number of departmental and Council programmes. In particular the LLR Dementia Strategy, the Multiply Project (Adult Education) and support for parent carers and young carers through Children and Family Services. The approach in Leicestershire will be to ensure that carers support and outcomes are considered across other areas/programmes where possible.

Carers' Week programme of events

22. On Monday 5 June 2023, 10am to 1pm, the County Council will be hosting an event in celebration of Carers' Week, 'Recognising and Supporting Carers in the Community'. Carers and Council staff have been invited to the session which will provide an overview of what support is available to carers, enable carers to connect with each other, promote carer wellbeing, and provide information and advice. Items will focus on carer identification, carers' passport, young carers, health check screening, fire service advice, access to local services, assisted technology, numeracy, Adult Learning Services, recruitment and retention, and cost of living help.
23. A number of events across the week have been planned across the County with VASL and other partner organisations supporting Carers' Week for Leicestershire.
24. A summary of the week's programme is attached at Appendix B and members of this Committee are encouraged to attend any events across the County.

Hospital Discharge Grant for Carers

25. The Hospital Discharge Grant for Carers was one of a number of projects funded through £2 million of central Government funding allocated to the Council in November 2022 from the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund. The grant ran from 25 January to 31 March 2023.
26. The aim of the project was to provide support for carers to facilitate the discharge from hospital back home. It was recognised that during the first few days of discharge, carers would benefit from additional support to help the cared-for, so they are supported and kept safe. As a result of this, the short-term scheme was initiated.
27. Carers who had supported someone living in Leicestershire who had recently been discharged from hospital could be eligible for the funding, if the cared for person:
 - lived in Leicestershire.
 - was discharged from hospital no more than four weeks before the grant application was made.
 - needed the carer for help and support to keep them safe.
 - incurred additional costs for the carer since the hospital discharge - including a loss of income due to taking time off work.
 - submitted an application during the period 25 January to 31 March 2023
28. The scheme was administered and led by VASL - Support for Carers on behalf of the Council. It resulted in 138 applications processed and a total of £39,793.80 was given out in under 10 weeks during January to March 2023, equating to an average carer receiving £288.36:
 - 95% (38 out of 40 carers) stated they strongly agreed or agreed the scheme helped to cover costs incurred following the cared for being discharged.
 - 95% (38 out of 40 carers) stated they strongly agreed or agreed the scheme had a positive impact on the carer's wellbeing whilst caring for the cared-for after their discharge.
 - 90% (36 out of 40 carers) stated the scheme helped them to support the cared-for at home following hospital discharge.
29. A total of 94 (68%) new carers were identified as a result of the scheme, supporting the Council towards a key priority set in the Strategy, identifying early and recognising carers, and enabling the carers to access information, advice, and additional support.

Resource Implications

30. Existing Council officer resources from several departments is delivering the action plan for Leicestershire.
31. Approximately £3.1m is spent on supporting Carers within the Department through Cash Payments (£2.9m) and the Carers Support Service (£171k).

32. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Recommendation

33. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report, particularly the specific areas relating to Leicestershire to ensure the Carers Agenda is progressed locally.

Background papers

Joint Carers Strategy Refresh 2022-2025 Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers in Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/Leicestershire-County-Leicester-City-and-Rutland-Carers-Strategy.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet: 16 October 2018 – LLR Carers Strategy 2018 -2021

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5184&Ver=4>

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018-22 <https://bit.ly/3Pe6nh5>

Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire – Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020-24 <https://bit.ly/3swoTal>

People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper <https://bit.ly/3w7FfsE>

Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032 <https://bit.ly/3L8nbTe>

SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2023 <https://bit.ly/3N8CJli>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

34. A copy of this report will be circulated to all members of the County Council.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

35. A comprehensive Equalities and Human Rights Impact screening assessment was conducted and approved by the Adults and Communities Departmental Equalities Group during the refresh of the Strategy. It was noted to have a positive impact on carers and all of the protected characteristics.

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

36. There are no other relevant impact assessments.

Appendices

Appendix A LLR Carers' Strategy: Leicestershire action plan progress

Appendix B Summary of Carers Week 2023 programme of events

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