



ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

MONDAY 25 JULY 2022

REPORT TITLE	AN UPDATE ON CARERS SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADULT CARERS STRATEGY
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF CARE AND HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update members on Carers Services, and an update on the development of a new Wirral Adults Carers Strategy. It provides an update on changes nationally and locally that will have a direct influence on the strategic review.

This supports the work of the Wirral Plan 2026 in the categories:

- Safe and Pleasant Communities - Working for safe and pleasant communities where our residents feel safe and are proud to live and raise their families.
- Active and Healthy Lives - Working to provide happy, active and healthy lives for all, with the right care, at the right time, to enable residents to live longer and healthier lives.

This is a not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee is recommended to endorse the progress to date in developing the Carers Services and the Wirral Adults Carers Strategy, and request that the Director of Adult Care and Health brings a further report to the Committee in September 2022.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Wirral, like the majority of Local Authorities, are reviewing their Carers Strategies post pandemic and following the publication of the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper, December 2021.
- 1.2 NHS England Northwest are developing a Cheshire and Merseyside Carers Strategy to align with the strategies of the Local Authorities.
- 1.3 The 2021 Census information will be available by Autumn 2022. Local Authorities will have updated information on the number of Carers in the area and other demographic data. The new Census information will be included in the Carers Strategy, once available.
- 1.4 The results of the Adult Social Care Carers Survey 2021 will be available in summer 2022 and will be used to inform the Carers Strategy.
- 1.5 The new contract for the Early Intervention and Prevention & Carers services (EIAP & Carers) went live on 1 March 2022, following a tendering exercise. A new set of performance monitoring has been produced to monitor quality and demand for early intervention and prevention support.
- 1.6 The term 'Carer' is defined in legislation, Care Act 2014 as an adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult (an "adult needing care") but does not include care provided
 - i) under or by virtue of a contract, or
 - ii) as voluntary work (Sec 10(9)), unless the Local Authority considers that the relationship between the adult needing care and the adult providing or intending to provide care is such that it would be appropriate for the latter to be regarded as a carer, that adult is to be regarded as such (Sec 10(10)).

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Carers were expected to be an integral part of the white paper, taking this into account it was decided to wait for the publication of the Adult Social Care Reform. Development of a new Wirral Carers Strategy during 2021 prior to the publication of the Adult Social Care Reform was considered.
- 2.2 Not to produce a new Carers Strategy, this option would not be considered good practice.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Economic Value of Carers

Based on research by Carers UK 2015, the estimated economical value of Carers is £132 billion in the UK, and the contribution made by Wirral Carers is £851 million per year. Recent research by Carers UK report that the value in 2020 is estimated at £193 billion per year across the UK.

3.2 Carers in Wirral

- 3.2.1 According to the Census 2011 there were 40,340 adult Carers in Wirral, the equivalent of 1 in 8 of the population (12%). The Census 2021 data is due for publication by Autumn, and it is expected that there will be a considerable increase in numbers locally and across the UK.
- 3.2.2 Carers UK research, June 2022, revealed that one in five of the UK's adults (approximately 10.58 million people) are now supporting a relative, close friend or neighbour because of chronic illness, including mental ill health, dementia, disability or older age.
- 3.2.3 More care is being provided by Carers than before the pandemic. It is believed that the number of people providing substantial care (over 20 hours per week) has risen by 42% across the UK since October 2020, while the number providing more than 50 hours has increased by 30%.

3.3 Young Carers

- 3.3.1 The 2011 Census reported that there were 748 self-reported 0 – 15-year-olds and 2,840 16 – 24-year-olds with caring responsibilities in Wirral. It is particularly difficult to predict the actual number of Young Carers because many young people who are providing care to an adult or having a significant input in to the care of a sibling, remain 'hidden' to professionals and in their communities. Research by Nottingham University, September 2018 reported that more than one in five children in England are providing care to a sick or disabled family member.
- 3.3.2 Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Wirral (part of the EIAP & Carers Services) are commissioned to provide Young Carers support services. Barnardo's have a delegated role to carry out the statutory Young Carers Assessment on behalf of the Local Authority and take a whole family approach to support Young Carers and their families.

3.4 Wirral Carers Strategy

- 3.4.1 The review of the Wirral Carers Strategy has begun with engagement events held with service providers who work closely with Carers and the people they care for, and Carers themselves. The purpose of the events was to engage and gather Carers views on what is important to them and their aspirations for future support. The emerging themes from the focus groups are:

- Carers health and wellbeing, physical and emotional support
- Identification of Carers, particularly in primary care and hospital settings
- Isolation and loneliness
- Access to information and advice / CADT referrals for assessments
- Carers Groups
- Dementia
- Parent Carers support
- Emergency planning
- Information sharing across agencies
- Adult and Young Carer pathways

These themes will be incorporated into the strategy and will include the national directives and good practice guides for improved Carers support linking to:

- NICE Quality Standards 2021
- Adult Social Care Reform December 2021
- NHS Long-term plan 2019
- NHS commitment to Carers 2015

3.5 Carers Services

3.5.1 Wirral Council acted as the lead commissioner to re-commission the jointly funded Early Intervention and Prevention & Carers contract (EIAP & Carers). The new contract was awarded to the incumbent provider, Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC, and went live 1 March 2022. This is a 3-year contract, with an option to extend for an additional two 12 months.

3.5.2 The revised specification included an emphasis on the third sector to assist the social care and health sector organisations through improved identification and experience of Carers, and the people they care for, for instance, to access support available in the community, people being discharged from hospital, across primary care, and supporting Carers to access and understand the value of a Carers Assessment.

3.5.3 The Carers Grant, prior to March 2022, formed part of the EIAP & Carers contract. The budget for this has been brought back into the Council and is being administered under the delegated social work contracts, to focus on improving the offer to Carers following a Carers Assessment, a Carers Direct Payment can be offered to eligible Carers, in line with Care Act duties.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Local Authority is bound by duty to meet the requirements of the Care Act 2014. The Children and Families Act 2014 is an amendment of the Children's Act 1989 (Sec 17ZA) that adds the relevant provisions relating to the duty to assess.

5.2 The Council has a statutory duty to carry out 'a carer's assessment of need for support' for Adults (over 18 years) by virtue of section 10 of the Care Act 2014 in circumstances where it appears that:

- i) a carer has a current need for support or is likely to do so in the future; and
- ii) what those needs are both now and in the future.

Similarly, the Council has a duty to carry out a 'young carer's needs assessment' if:

- i) it appears to the authority that the young carer may have needs for support,

or

- ii) the authority receive a request from the young carer or parent of the young carer to assess the young carer’s needs for support. (Section 17ZA Children Act 1989).

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 A significant increase of the number of Carers undertaking the caring role, alongside an increase in the numbers of hours that are being provided by unpaid Carers will potentially impact on demand for support and services. Demand for access to the commissioned Carers Support service will be monitored.

Identifying Carers early helps to mitigate against Carer breakdown or crisis. The right to a Carers Assessment will be positively promoted. The Carer Assessment provides the Carer an opportunity to discuss whether they are willing and able to continue to provide care, their caring responsibilities, identify needs, as well as look at contingency planning to address their needs and put in place access to information and support to prevent Carer breakdown or crisis occurring. Carers can access a Carers Assessment online or by contacting Central Advice and Duty Team. The number of people accessing a Carers Assessment will be monitored.

- 7.2 The Council will not meet its Care Act duty if Carers’ needs are not taken into account.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Initial engagement has taken place with focus groups of Carers and provider services to assist to inform the content for the Carers Strategy. Wider public consultation will take place during July and August once the draft Carers Strategy has been developed.

- 8.2 Focus Groups held:

Providers	Carers	Carers
12 April 2022	12 April 2022	13 April 2022

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Carers come from all areas of Wirral regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion, or belief. Carers are entitled to be recognised for assisting to maintain the health and wellbeing of the people they care for and their contribution to the health and social care system.
- 9.2 Equality Impact Assessments will be completed at relevant stages of commissioning, and strategy developments.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Commissioners will aim to minimise environmental impact through its commissioning process.
- 10.2 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have insignificant impact on emissions of Carbon Dioxide.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Improving support for Carers in Wirral, with the care they provide or outside of their caring role, will enhance the quality of life for those individuals, assist to reduce health inequalities and enable Carers to access, or remain in, education, employment, and take part in community and leisure opportunities.

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APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral's Strategy for Carers 2014 – 17 [Caring for our Carers 2014 -17](#)
Adult Social Care Reform White Paper – People at the Heart of Care, December 2021
NHS Long-Term Plan
Unseen and Undervalued – Carers UK November 2020
Making Carers Visible, Valued and Supported – Carers UK 2022
Valuing Carers – Carers UK 2015

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee	29 July 2021