

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee- Adult Social Care and Health	Date of Meeting:	20 February 2024
Subject:	Carers Strategy		
Report of:	Assistant Director for Whole Life Integrated Commissioning.	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Adult Social Care and Health		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

The report sets out the development of the Sefton Carers Strategy 2024-2027. This report is being presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ask for steer in relation to the Consultation approach to date and to present the approach to the Council's commitment to carers in the Borough. The report seeks to present the draft strategy for comment and it details the ongoing public consultation to ensure the voice of carers is clear within the final strategy document.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) The process of consultation and engagement is noted and recommendations from Committee to improve consultation with Carers in the Borough in relation to the Carers Strategy will be actioned.
- (2) The Carers Strategy and the action plan will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny when the consultation has concluded.
- (3) Members of the Board to note the establishment of a Carers Partnership Board.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

There are specific legal duties in relation to carers contained within the Care Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no additional revenue costs incurred as a result of the contents of this report. Any costs related to future delivery will form the contents of future reports.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no additional capital costs incurred as a result of the contents of this report.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
Legal Implications: The Care Act 2014 The Children and Families Act 2014	
Equality Implications: The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated. An equality impact assessment is appended.	
Impact on Children and Young People: Yes The Strategy is designed to be all age and therefore seeks to support Children and Young People with caring responsibilities.	
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
The contents of the report represent a neutral impact on the climate emergency.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: The report details approach to meeting the needs of unpaid carers
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The report details approach to meeting the needs of unpaid carers
Commission, broker and provide core services: The resultant strategy will include how

we ensure the right services are provided
Place – leadership and influencer: The report details approach to meeting the needs of unpaid carers
Drivers of change and reform: The strategy will set the vision until 2027
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The strategy includes the maximisation of employment opportunities for unpaid carers
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD7538/24), and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5638/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

The Strategy has been developed in partnership and is currently the subject of a public consultation exercise.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the board meeting.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

The Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

The following background papers, which are not available elsewhere on the Internet can be accessed on the Council website:

[Sefton All Age Carers' Strategy](#)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 sets out national eligibility criteria for both carers and the person being cared for. Sefton Carers Strategy 2024-2027 sets out our commitment to carers and shows how partners in the Borough will work together to support carers of all ages in Sefton. The draft Strategy has been developed by a partnership of organisations in Sefton, together with carers and residents. The Carers Strategy steering group has developed the draft Strategy with a consultation and engagement process to ensure that services will be co-designed. The report sets out how the draft has been developed, details of the consultation, and the next steps.
- 1.2 Our vision is that family and informal carers meeting the national eligibility criteria set out in the Care Act 2014 in Sefton will have support for their physical health, mental health and wellbeing needs whilst they are meeting the needs of the person they care for. We wish to ensure that carers have choice and control to live their lives and are supported to continue in their caring role. This Strategy is an all age Carers Strategy .The current draft Strategy itself can be viewed here: [Sefton All Age Carers' Strategy](#)
- 1.3 The current Strategy expired in 2019 and was due to be reviewed via several engagement events throughout early 2020. Due to the Covid pandemic, this limited the amount of engagement that could be conducted.
- 1.4 Anyone can be an unpaid carer and Carers UK predict that 3 in 5 people will be unpaid carers at some point in their lives. Unpaid carers differ in age, the number of hours that they spend caring and the number of people that they care for.
- 1.5 In Sefton, about 13% of our residents are thought to be in an unpaid caring role, which is just under 35,000 people. In November 2021 around 10,000 unpaid carers were registered with Sefton Carers' Centre. This is about 30% of unpaid carers in Sefton.

2. Developing the Strategy and Consultation.

- 2.1 The Carers Strategy Steering Group has met monthly over the last year to give oversight to the development of a robust proposed strategy document. The group is following national and regional best practice, shared learning and alignment across the health and care system in Sefton. The Strategy is evidence based using detailed intelligence from engagement, consultation and statistics from the national carers survey and health inequality data.
- 2.2 To ensure that the Strategy will improve the lives of informal and family Carers in Sefton, a Sefton Carers Partnership Board will be established in April 2024. The Board will be made up of key partner organisations, including Cabinet Member representation. The board will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan and report any key risks back into the Council. Regular updates will be provided to Scrutiny Committee.

3. The Consultation Process

- 3.1 From Thursday 23rd November 2023 to 24th March 2024, the Council is holding a consultation on the draft Strategy. This is seeking the views of people who look after a family member, friend or loved one to help adopt the strategy. The service offer to Carers will be co-produced.
- 3.2 A review of feedback to date has reflected that the majority of responses support the vision and feel the focus on delivery needs to be around greater flexibility for carers being offered through GP and Mental Health services, a need to ensure Carers feature as a key part of the Discharge Hub developments, consider greater offers for bereavement support, the issuing of Carer ID cards to support equality of access for Carers, and consideration of broader respite areas.
- 3.3 Following its launch on Carers rights day, the consultation has been published at a range of events in the Borough including: The Local Offer Live events, Libraries, One Stop Shop, The Life Rooms, all Sefton CVS services and Carers Centre services, Family Wellbeing Centres, High Schools in the Borough; Physical events have been held with Health Watch, Sefton Parent Carers Forum, The Carers Centre and the Carers Voice Group, and Sefton Young Carers. The online promotion has included being displayed on GP screens in waiting rooms, across all council social media and on key resources such as the local offer and ask SARA.
- 3.4 The short survey is available online at Your Sefton Your Say. Physical copies of the Strategy and survey are available at the Sefton Carers Centre and in any library in the Borough.
- 3.5 The Consultation is taking several different approaches, and these will be tailored to meet the specific needs of the age group, accessibility and needs of Carers. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on the consultation approach and the strategy.
- 3.6 Existing events and meetings will be utilised during the consultation period to engage with carers on a face-to-face basis to get their views on the draft Strategy and to find out their views on the Vision, Aims and Objectives. It is also proposed to use a Case Study based approach to find out carers' views on how problems and issues have been dealt with previously, whether they think things could be done differently and what they think would improve help to carers in these situations.
- 3.7 The consultation will be specifically tailored for children and young people using the Young Carers Group at Sefton Carers Centre.
- 3.8 Promotional materials will be available letting people know about the consultation and how they can get involved at a wide range of venues and events across all partners to the Strategy. Promotional materials will be available in accessible and age-appropriate styles.
- 3.9 An interim Equality Impact Assessment is attached to this report at Annex A.

3.10 A consultation report will be prepared giving details of the results of the consultation and how carers' views have been used to develop the Strategy and Action Plan. This will be shared by all partners and with carers themselves via the Carers Centre. A feedback report will be submitted to the Panel at a later date.

4. The Aims of the Strategy

This section details the proposed aims for unpaid carers in Sefton:

1. Health and Wellbeing - Recognising how caring affects physical or mental health. We will work with partners across Health, Education and Care services to look after the physical and mental health of unpaid carers.

2. Life Course of carers – Supporting unpaid carers at all stages of caring and the impact that it has on the unpaid carer.

3. Effective planning to avoid crises by providing early assistance and preparation - Giving unpaid carers the right information and working with carers to plan more effectively. These plans will include an assessment of needs, requirements, and risks to identify the potential of a crisis before it happens. We will review the change from children's to adult's services to improve the young adult, family and unpaid carer experiences, opportunities, and need.

4. Carer Involvement - All unpaid carers will have a voice and be treated as experts by experience.

5. Loneliness and social isolation – Unpaid Carers are valued and supported to explore opportunities to build and maintain relationships.

6. Carers assessments and service provision - Unpaid carers will have access to information and support. There will be a holistic, person-centred approach to care and assistance that considers how caring for others affects relationships, children, and young adults.

7. Leisure and Culture – Unpaid carers will have access to opportunities in the local community.

8. Carer Respite opportunities – Ensure that unpaid carers can access regular breaks for themselves and the person they care for.

9. Maximising financial support– Supporting unpaid carers to make a choice about their financial options in the unpaid caring role.

10. Improve access to education, training, and employment for unpaid carers by promoting better work practices, benefit awareness and creating carer-friendly workplaces. We will help unpaid carers of all ages to understand how to access education and training.

11. Recognise and assist young carers and young adult carers and ensure that every school in Sefton identifies and supports Young Carers. - We will work with unpaid Carers including Young Carers Service, CVFS (Community Voluntary and Faith Sector), Young Advisors and the schools and colleges across Sefton. We will share good

practice, provide relevant tools and training, and celebrate the great outcomes many young carers achieve. We want our young carers to be able to focus on their lessons, take part in school activities and feel fully part of their school community.

5. Conclusion

The Committee are asked to provide a steer and oversight to officers regarding the consultation approaches adopted. The Committee are asked to consider the content of this report in order to confirm the following recommendations:

- (1) The consultation and engagement process is noted and comments to be received to aid further feedback which will help shape the final document.
- (2) The most current draft of the strategy is received by the board and any comments or revisions are noted.
- (3) Members of the Board to note the establishment of a Carers Partnership Board.