

Summary report of Public Consultation – Have your say on the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Joint Carers Strategy Refresh 2022-2025

1. Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and sincere thanks to everyone who has taken the time to speak to us and provide their views and feedback as part of the consultation process on the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland (LLR) Carers Strategy Refresh 2022-2025.

2. Purpose of the report

This document provides a summary of the findings from the public consultation exercise that ran from 8th June 2022 – 31st July 2022 on the LLR Carers Strategy Refresh 2022-2025, including the discussions that took place with carers themselves at a public consultation event that was held at the King Power Stadium on 13th July 2022.

The Strategy sets out a shared vision and priorities for recognising, valuing and supporting carers by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Rutland County Council, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland and other health partners.

3. Approach

The purpose of this consultation exercise was to make sure the Strategy represents the carer voice, and that it is reflective of the things that carers told us throughout our engagement earlier in the year. The carer voice should continue to be at the heart of any decisions that the system makes concerning the planning and delivery of carers' services and it is therefore critical that the refreshed strategy is co-produced and reflective of the things that are important to carers. As public bodies, Local Authorities and the ICB have a duty and commitment to listen and engage to ensure that we understand the views of people drawing upon the support of health and social care services. For work that relates to carers, this is becoming increasingly more challenging.

As well as hosting an online survey for people to contribute their views, an in-person public consultation event was held on the 13th July at the King Power Stadium. Officers from all three local authorities including representatives working with young carers, the commissioned carer support services, and partners from health organisations were all in attendance. The survey was also available as a downloadable hard copy, available in hard copy from the carer support services and an easy read version was also available.

As well as this, there was promotion on local authority and ICB websites, attendance at a number of carer group sessions by local authority officers,

social media promotion, and promotion with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire. Council officers also offered visits to other local community groups to talk about the carer strategy, and utilised a new online platform called Mobilise to promote the consultation exercise which specifically targets carers through online geo-targeted advertising.

Unfortunately, despite all of these attempt's responses to the online survey were incredibly low. This report however provides an overview of the findings from the online survey.

Participants of the online survey were asked the following questions:

Does the draft carers strategy accurately reflect carers' issues?

There were 30 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	6	20%
Agree	8	26.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	23.33%
Disagree	3	10.00%
Strongly disagree	1	3.33%
Don't know	4	13.33%
Not answered	1	3.33%

Despite the low number of responses, the qualitative answers to this question provided useful insight. The comments suggested that a strategy of this nature was long overdue. They also highlighted that the actions in the action plan lacked the detail about what difference this will make to the practical help that carers including parent carers living in the City wanted. Feedback of this nature is not unusual when strategies span across multiple geographical areas as organisations pick up the detail in their own organisation's delivery plans, but nonetheless, it highlights the importance of continuing these conversations when the City Council works on its delivery plan at the start of 2023.

Do you think the priorities within the strategy are the right priorities?

There were 30 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	8	26.67%
Agree	12	40%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	13.33%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Don't know	2	6.67%

Not answered	3	10.0%
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Almost 67% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the priorities within the strategy were the right ones, which is reassuring, although statistically insignificant given the low response rate. The people that took the time to provide additional information about their responses, reiterated the importance of recognising parent carers, and a plea that more resources be allocated to speaking to more carers acknowledging that it becomes increasingly more difficult to target this group of people.

Do you agree with the actions to deliver the proposed priorities?

There were 30 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	6	20%
Agree	10	33.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	23.3%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Don't know	5	16.67%
Not answered	2	6.67%

Again, the narrative behind these responses, suggested that the actions lacked detail, something which council officers can develop more fully in the City Council's carer strategy delivery plan. A report has already been produced which shows the Council's progress on the previous strategy, and actions which will remain in the delivery plan moving forward. This document will be where discussions start with carers in the new year.

Emerging themes from the King Power Consultation Event

Over 100 people attended the carer consultation event at the King Power Stadium. People were either working to support family carers or were family carers themselves, and travelled from across the city, county and Rutland. We also had a number of young carers that joined us at the event.

The feedback from these people was ad-hoc and not in the format of a formal interview / questionnaire but the notes made can be pulled into key themes, listed below:

- The strategy appeared to lack clarity in relation to how delivery would be implemented and monitored
- The importance of continuing to work alongside carers to review progress against the strategy in a co-productive way
- More emphasis on working and parent carers

- Larger emphasis on young carers across the 7 priorities which are not specifically focusing on young carers
- Carers are in need of the right support at the right time but particularly at the point of hospital discharge, and end of life
- The importance of the health and social care system working in a more joined up ways so that things become easier to navigate for carers
- Carers are in need of more practical help and support as well as access to flexible respite services and breaks from caring

Equalities data summary

The online survey gave us the opportunity to monitor equality data. This was not collected for the people that attended the consultation event, unless they filled in hard copy of the survey at the event, which would then have been captured online. As the responses were so low to this survey, we know that this is not a representative sample of the communities of Leicester.

What is your ethnic background?

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Asian or Asian British: Indian	3	10.0%
Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background	1	3.33%
White: British	21	70%
White: Any other white background	1	3.33%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	1	3.33%
Prefer not to say	2	6.67%
Not answered	1	3.33%

What is your age?

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Under 18	6	20%
18-25 years	1	3.33%
26-35 years	2	6.67%
36-45 years	1	3.33%
46-55 years	6	20%
56-65 years	9	30%
66+ years	4	13.33%
Prefer not to say	0	0
Not answered	1	3.33%

Sexual orientation. Do you consider yourself to be...

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Bisexual	2	6.67%
Gay/lesbian	0	0
Heterosexual / straight	19	63.33%
Prefer not to say	6	20%
Other	2	6.67%
Not answered	1	3.33%

Disability.

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	9	30%
No	14	46.67%
Prefer not to say	3	10%
Not answered	4	13.33%

How would you define your religion or belief?

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Atheist	2	6.67%
Buddhist	1	3.33%
Christian	7	23.33%
Hindu	1	3.33%
Muslim	2	6.67%
No religion	10	33.33%
Prefer not to say	2	6.67%
Other	3	10%
Not answered	2	6.67%

What is your sex?

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Female	19	63.33%
Male	9	30%
Prefer not to say	1	3.33%
Not answered	1	3.33%

Is your gender the same as birth?

There were 30 responses to this question

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	24	80%
No	0	0
Prefer not to say	1	3.33%
Not answered	5	16.67%

4. Summary

It is fair to say that the low response to the public consultation in relation to the carer strategy is very disappointing, albeit unsurprising. Responses from carers to a range of consultation exercises across the Health and Social Care system in recent times, have been dwindling in numbers and carers have been saying for a long time, that they are asked a lot of questions about a lot of topics, yet they feel very little changes for them as a result. This has been labelled as engagement or consultation fatigue. This has been highlighted as a key risk for the LLR Carers Delivery Group and attempts are already being made to try and streamline the ask of carers across the system.

It is also believed that the position for carers is becoming increasingly more challenging since the pandemic. Not only are carers caring for more hours each week, carers are now caring for people that are even more poorly. Certainly, the commissioned carer support services are reporting that the families they are supporting are in far more complex scenarios than they have seen before.

Carers are increasingly becoming more focused on survival and as the cost-of-living crisis starts to set in and the impact felt, personal priorities shift from filling in surveys for the council to considering how they are going to manage in the coming weeks particularly as the winter months move nearer.

Nonetheless, if the strategy is agreed, the Council will seek to hold an in-person event in the new year focusing on what Adult Social Care's priorities for 2022-2023 should be. This will be in the format of a round table event, that is co-produced with carers and will respond directly to the key themes highlighted by City carers.