

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission Report

Support for Carers & Carer Strategy Update

ASC Scrutiny Commission Date: 10.11.2020
Lead Member: Cllr Sarah Russell
Lead Director: Martin Samuels

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 1

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To provide the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an update on the Joint Social Care and Health Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Carer Strategy - 2018 to 2021.
- 1.2. To provide the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an update on the support that has been provided to carers during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 1.3. To provide the Children's Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an update on the work happening with young carers

2. Summary

- 2.1. The strategy developed in conjunction with the three local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) and the three Local Authorities (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR)) was signed off in October 2018.
- 2.2. The report outlines the progress made by the City Council since March 2020 in relation to support for family carers.
- 2.3. The number of people providing unpaid care to a friend or family member in Leicester City is thought to have increased from approximately 32,000 to 46,000 post COVID-19. The GP carer registers have increased from 9,631 in February 2020, to 9,901 in October 2020. Further information on this is included in paragraph 4.11
- 2.4. Information pertaining to adult family carers can be found at paragraphs 4.9 – 4.15
- 2.5. Information pertaining to young carers can be found at 4.9, 4.16-

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission is recommended to:
 - a) note the report and provide comments / feedback
 - b) note that the report is to be shared with the Children's Social Care Scrutiny Commission

4. Report

Recap of the Carer Strategy Vision and Guiding Principles

- 4.1. The strategy defines a shared vision and guiding principles for recognising, valuing and supporting carers.
- 4.2. The vision is that 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.
- 4.3. The strategy was written with a broad range of stakeholders and carers and runs from 2018 to 2021. Progress on delivering the strategy is reported to the LLR Joint Carers Delivery Group and to the Social Care and Education's Leadership Team.
- 4.4. There are eight guiding principles each with high level actions. Members of the Carers Delivery Group report their progress against those principles. The guiding principles are:
 - Carer Identification
 - Carers are valued and involved
 - Carers are informed
 - Carer Friendly Communities
 - Carers have a life alongside caring
 - Carers and the impact of Technology Products and the living space
 - Carers can access the right support at the right time
 - Supporting Young Carers
- 4.5. The strategy can be found at <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/185857/joint-carers-strategy-2018-2021-recognising-valuing-and-supporting-carers-in-leicester-leicestershire-and-rutland.pdf>

Update on the City of Leicester Delivery Plan

- 4.6 The delivery plan was signed off by SCE Leadership in March 2020 after a significant amount of engagement with both adult and young carers in the City.
- 4.7 Regular updates on the delivery outcomes are fed back through highlight reports to the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Carer Delivery Group which meets bi-monthly.
- 4.8 The task and finish group set up to progress young carer work has continued to meet during the pandemic.

Progress on Delivery of the Strategy

- 4.9 We can report progress in the following areas:

LLR Carers Strategy Guiding Principle:	Actions:
Carers are identified early and recognised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff from the commissioned carer support service have visited frontline ASC teams to promote the service and the importance of early identification - A carer ID badge was launched in June 2020 during Carers Week to support carers to self-identify, for example whilst shopping and as part of the plan to support carers with contingency planning (see Appendix 1) - Awareness raising during Carers Week in June which largely focused on supporting carers to self-identify by utilising an image designed to encourage people to think about the tasks they undertake for the people they look after (see Appendix 2) and informing them of the support that is on offer to them through the Council's existing communication networks, such as the social media channels and Your Leicester. Links to both the City Council Support for carers webpages and the COVID-19 information specifically for carers were promoted not only to external audiences but internally through FACE and the ASC newsletter.
Carers are valued and involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The carers forum, named 'Carers Got Talent' (CGT) by the carers that attend, met for the first time on 16th March just before lockdown - Although the CGT has not met during the pandemic, there has been regular communication with those involved with the group - Carers from Leicester were involved in providing a very thorough response detailing the impact of COVID on them when asked by ADASS. - Carers got involved in the recent Local Safeguarding Adults Board consultation and feedback that they would benefit from training about safeguarding. The commissioned Carer Support Service will be responding to this request by providing safeguarding training during National Safeguarding Week in November 2020.
Carers are informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A specific section for family carers was created on the City Council website Coronavirus pages during the pandemic with frequently asked questions for family carers including a process for obtaining PPE - Carers and the support services working alongside them have been sent daily e-mails in relation to Community COVID-19 testing locations after concerns were raised about the legitimacy of people knocking at the doors of vulnerable people - Improved links have been made with the Leicester City Parent Carer Forum in order to ensure they receive

	<p>information that is useful to their circumstances, and that their needs are considered in strategic planning and decision making particularly when their children are transitioning from children's services through to adult services</p>
Carer friendly communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carers of people living with dementia are involved in the procurement of the Dementia Support Service jointly commissioned with Leicestershire and the CCGs - The commissioned Carer Support Service, provided by Age UK, is linking in with PCN social prescriber 'link workers'
Carers have a life alongside caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council's internal carer passport and support group for family carers were promoted during Carers Week - The models for the Flexible Short Break (respite) Framework and the Community Opportunities (day services) framework now make reference to the benefits these can have for carers with aims for the service not only being to improve and maintain the person's physical and mental health and wellbeing but to also achieve those aims for their carer by providing a flexible short break from their caring role. This will also improve the carers overall health and wellbeing and reduce carer stress and strain potentially preventing carer breakdown requiring emergency replacement care. - Work to progress 'Carefree' has paused temporarily whilst the impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality industry is considered. Carefree is a scheme that works to create a nationwide system of hotel and holiday home providers who are willing to donate any excess capacity to family carers so that they can have a short break (see Appendix 3). Carers are asked to pay an annual fee of £25 and there is no cost for local authorities that wish to implement this in their areas. - Commissioned service has delivered virtual groups for carers when physical meetings have been unable to take place. We are considering how the cost of the annual fee can be met as part of a direct payment for eligible carers.
Carers and the impact of Technology products and the living space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carers continue to be a priority cohort within the Assistive Technology strategy that has now been signed off by SCE leadership.
Carers can access the right support at the right time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The commissioned Carer Support Service team, delivered by Age UK, have had training from the strengths-based practice implementation lead in order to improve the pathway and communication between the service and ASC. This will provide Adult Social Care staff with background information about the type of support the carer has already received which should help to inform the carer assessment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SCE staff newsletter has featured an article on strengths-based practice as it applies to carers - A mapping exercise of the carer journey will be undertaken to inform a programme of awareness raising across the health and social care landscape to ensure that teams can become carer aware - The commissioned Carer Support Service continues to support carers post caring where there have been bereavements, particularly pertinent during COVID -19 with restrictions on funerals etc.
Supporting Young Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A divisional communication plan has been devised linking in the young carer agenda with work already being undertaken around the Troubled Families agenda but during Carers Week social media channels were utilised extensively to raise awareness of young carers and the support available to them including a video on social media using sign language. - Separate LLR working group has been meeting to look at the support available to young adult carers (16+) in response to a gap identified in current provision - The current Barnardo's contract is due to end, and a review is taking place to inform the future model as the support to young carers is recognised as a priority - Links are being established with schools to raise awareness of young carers - Training for staff in relation to identifying young carers is being planned. - Continued participation of young carers in all aspects of this work is being scoped

4.10 Officers are also working hard to ensure that the Carers Got Talent group has robust links with the Learning Disability and Mental Health Partnership Boards to ensure that the carer voice and perspective feed effectively into those areas in a more streamlined manner, but also that issues discussed at those boards are factored into the work of the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Carer Delivery Group.

Support that has been provided to family carers during the COVID-19 pandemic

4.11 The increase in family carers from an estimated 32,000 to 46,000 is thought to be due to a combination of factors. Firstly, there were those people who, prior to the pandemic were largely independent but fell into the shielding category. These people became reliant on family members for things like shopping and collecting medication. For some families, caring responsibilities increased when some of their usual care services were temporarily forced to

close such as community opportunity provision. Family carers would then look to other family members who were perhaps not involved in caring before to help. There were also examples of families cancelling care packages due to the fear that care workers may bring COVID-19 into the home – again seeking support from wider family. Early on into the pandemic, the Council also used its social media channels to encourage carers to self-identify and access appropriate support. It is possible that some carers identified with this.

- 4.12 The Leicester Carer Support Service has been undertaking wellbeing calls to carers that they support, which at times have been daily if required for some families. The provider has also been running a COVID-19 helpline which has helped to identify more family carers and signpost into appropriate support. Usual group provision has operated online, and the Carer Hub is open albeit working on an appointment only basis at this time. There has been a focus on supporting individual carers to develop contingency plans as well as providing carers with ID cards if they have needed to be out to undertake their caring role during lockdown or needed to take advantage of priority shopping slots.
- 4.13 The Council's own social care teams have also been supporting carers through wellbeing calls and increased support through, for example, domiciliary care. Family carers have reported that this contact has been invaluable. A family carer, who is involved in the Carers Got Talent group cares for his partner who has mental health difficulties as well as his elderly mother, feedback that the City Council had been incredibly supportive during the COVID-19 pandemic. His partner's anxiety levels had heightened as a result of being in the shielding category and following a fall at the supermarket where he hurt his knee, he discussed with the social care team his worry that he wasn't coping. Social care staff were able to increase the care package in place to include an emphasis on social inclusion, which would have a positive impact on his partner's mental health and also provide him with a break from his caring role.
- 4.14 Other organisations have also been continuing to support carers during the pandemic in various ways. The Carers Centre have had a variety of support options available, as has the Dementia Support Service, Lamp, Richmond Fellowship, Turning Point, Dear Albert etc.
- 4.15 Despite the shortages experienced across the rest of the Country in relation to PPE, the City Council has been able to provide PPE to family carers that have requested it.
- 4.16 Community door to door COVID-19 testing was highlighted by carers as something that could potentially put the safety of vulnerable adults at risk, particularly if they were not able to access information digitally. We were very quickly able to provide our networks with direct information about the day to

day geographical area that community door to door testers would be visiting which included information about the identification that the volunteers would show.

Support that has been provided to young carers during the COVID-19 pandemic

- 4.17 The Barnardo's Carefree Young Carers' Service commissioned by the City Council has continued to support families during the COVID-19 pandemic, although referrals into the service at the start of the pandemic were slightly lower, these have now picked up.
- 4.18 Staff within the Carefree service were able to refer into the See Hear Respond service which provided rapid support for children and young people affected by COVID-19 and this provided targeted support particularly in terms of getting young carers back into school. Often parents were not aware that this was an option for their children.
- 4.19 One of the main challenges for families accessing the service, were the anxiety levels experienced when an adult family member was in the shielding category and children were able to return to school. Barnardo's staff were able to advocate on behalf of those families with schools to reassure them about the measure's schools had in place for managing COVID-19.
- 4.20 In some circumstances, Barnardo's were able to support families to access grant funding to purchase bikes for children to get to school, therefore avoiding the need for children to use public transport and reducing exposure to the risk of transmission. For those families that couldn't facilitate virtual learning, grant funding was obtained to purchase, tablets, laptops and dongles ensuring contact was maintained with schools.
- 4.21 Whilst group provision delivered by both the City Council youth services and Barnardo's had to stop, contact was still maintained with the young people that attended and a virtual alternative made.
- 4.22 Barnardo's groups would ordinarily stop during the school summer holidays, but the Barnardo's team ensured they maintained contact with those young people on a fortnightly basis during the summer holidays.
- 4.23 All families that were being supported by Barnardo's were RAG rated. Where families were identified as having less contact with the service, the team tried to establish more contact with them and in some instances, knocking on doors to ensure everyone was ok, and to establish support needs.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Rohit Rughani, Principal Accountant, Ext. 37 4003

5.2 Legal implications

No Legal implications.

Dominic Taylor
Solicitor ex 3560

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are limited climate change implications associated with this report. However, the use of remote digital support and engagement has the potential to reduce carbon emissions from travel for service delivery and could be considered for future use in instances where it is judged to be practical and appropriate for the service.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

When making decisions, the Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010) by paying due regard, when carrying out their functions, to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

In doing so, the council must consider the possible impact on those who are likely to be affected by the recommendation and their protected characteristics.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Whilst there are no direct equality implications arising from this report as it is for noting. Any ongoing work on the Joint Carers Strategy and the support being provided to carers during the COVID-19 pandemic needs to ensure equality considerations are embedded and any impacts and mitigating actions are identified and actioned as appropriate.

Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer, 454 4175

6. Background information and other papers: None

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Carer ID badge

Appendix 2 – Definition of a Carer image

Appendix 1 – Carer ID Card

I AM A CARER SOMEONE RELIES ON ME

My name

I care for

Please turn over for my keyholders and emergency contacts

Key holders and/or emergency contacts

1.....

2.....

3.....

If you're unable to contact any of the above please call Adult Social Care on 0116 454 1004 (including out of hours)

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looking after someone?

Carers look after someone in their family or a friend who cannot cope without support



Carers help in lots of different ways:

- Washing bodies, laundry and dishes
- Helping with letters and forms
- Collecting shopping or medication
- Offering a listening ear
- Dealing with finances
- Dealing with doctors and social workers

Find out more: leicester.gov.uk/supportforcarers

