

Appendix One – Developing an All-Age Carers’ Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper is to inform HWB of the development of the All-Age Carers’ Strategy and the current consultation and to give members the opportunity to discuss and feed into this process.
- 1.2 We will introduce the commitments that have been developed as a result of data analysis and extensive engagement with providers and carers.
- 1.3 As well as an update and introducing our commitments, we will be highlighting the requirement for further investment for carers to support our improvement plans.

2 Background and Proposal

- 2.1 Carers are a priority for Essex County Council. We are committed to improving the support we provide to them so they can continue to care whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing.
- 2.2 As well as being a priority for Everyone’s Essex, carers are also an area of focus in the Adult Social Care Business Plan 2021-25. We commit that by 2025 Essex will have a high-quality all-age offer to carers, resulting in them feeling well supported and knowing where to go to be able to access information and support, at the right time in the right place.
- 2.3 To deliver these priorities, we are drafting an All-Age Carers Strategy. To shape this Strategy, we have structured a work programme with key areas of focus:
 - Cross-organisational steering & working groups
 - Leaders, Members and stakeholder engagement
 - Reviewing progress against previous strategy
 - Analysing previous insight and data available
 - Learning best practice from 15 LA’s
 - Mapping current spend and early help offer
 - CQC alignment to prepare for inspection from April 2023
 - Engagement and co-production with carers
- 2.4 We have been working directly with both adult and young carers in the last 4 months to better understand how we can improve things for them. We have facilitated 15 focus groups both virtually and in-person, speaking to 105 people of different ages, from different places in Essex.
- 2.5 We have also sent out two surveys, one for adult carers and one for young carers, again these are to gain insight from carers. We had a positive response rate with over 400 responses.
- 2.6 The data and insight gathered has helped us to shape the following commitments to carers. These are subject to a public consultation which is

currently live and due to close on 13th March 2022. We are asking the public to review the commitments and to tell us if they are the right things to focus on and if there are any gaps.

2.7 The proposed 6 commitments are:

1. Carers can easily access the information, advice, guidance and support when they need it and early into their caring role. *We will ensure carers know how to access the right information, advice, guidance, and support at the right time, in the right place for their specific circumstances and needs.*
2. Develop professional practice and processes to improve identification and support to carers. *We will work with partners, commissioned services and community organisations to ensure people who are caring for others have access to support and/or assessment and are subsequently supported effectively by those who are there to help them in their caring role.*
3. Improve transitions for carers as they move through specific phases or events in their caring role. *We will improve support for carers at specific transition points in their caring journey, whether that be for young carers who become adult carers, as significant life events occur, or at the end of someone's caring role.*
4. Carers will have increased opportunity to access good quality support, including short breaks to maintain their own wellbeing and those they care for. *We will work with our partners and communities to create opportunities that enable carers to have short breaks and respite from their caring responsibilities.*
5. Carers' needs and rights will be understood and recognised across Essex communities. *We will raise the profile of carers and their needs across Essex communities, including educational establishments, employers, professionals, and the public.*
6. Carers will be the experts who influence, shape and are involved in the decisions that are intended to improve their support and wellbeing. *We will put carers at the heart of developments, design and decision-making on the matters that are intended to support them in their role.*

2.8 To deliver the overall strategy in which the commitments are embedded, we will build a work programme and action plan to ensure delivery over the next four years to improve the lives of carers in Essex.

2.9 We will work to the following set of principles:

- Capitalise on our organisational expertise
- Maximise the use of technology where appropriate
- Work with partners for alignment and integration
- Use communication effectively
- Evaluate for learning and evidence of impact

- Co-design and make decisions with carers
- Adopt good design methodologies
- Be clear about our theory of change
- Commission for outcomes
- Seek out opportunities for external investment

2.10 Next steps are to attend Health & Wellbeing Board, Adult, Children's and Education Leadership Team and Children's and Young People's Partnerships to provide an update.

2.11 We will review output from the consultation and finalise the draft All-Age Carers Strategy and launch this in April 2022.

2.12 We will formalise governance and extend the current contract with Carers First and commence the work programme.

2.13 We will deliver the commitments to improve outcomes for carers in Essex, with measurable and demonstrable change by 2025.

3 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

3.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision

- Enjoy life into old age
- Provide an equal foundation for every child
- Strengthen communities through participation
- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world
- Share prosperity with everyone

3.2 This report links to the following strategic priorities in the emerging Organisational Strategy 'Everyone's Essex':

- Health wellbeing and independence for all ages

4 Issues for Consideration

4.1 We know that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will be carrying out inspections in Adult Social Care from April 2023. We have limited detailed information available at this time and, to prepare, we are sense checking for compliance, but have confidence our plans and progress by that time will satisfy CQC that we are making positive changes

4.2 We have an ambitious programme of change to deliver improvements for carers in Essex and we will be seeking more investment to enable us to achieve this. We are looking to secure additional investment (indicative =£600k recurring and +£500k non-recurring)