

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	BCP Carers Strategy
Meeting date	25 July 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	A Carers Services Review has been undertaken in collaboration with carers and key stakeholders. The findings will inform the new BCP Carers Strategy. This report provides the committee with an update on current progress.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Committee consider and scrutinise the contents of this report (b) The Committee supports the 5 key priorities for the BCP Carers Strategy (c) The Committee consider attendance at a future informal Carers Strategy Engagement Session before the strategy is taken to Cabinet on 28th September
Reason for recommendations	The 5 key priorities for the BCP Carers Strategy have been developed through engagement with carers and key stakeholders. The informal engagement session will allow committee members to be involved and kept up to date with progress of the strategy before the final version is taken to Cabinet.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Karen Rampton – Portfolio Holder for People and Homes
Corporate Director	Phil Hornsby: Director – Commissioning for People
Report Authors	Emma Senior: Commissioning Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. A carer is anyone who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid, (but definition would include people in receipt of Carers Allowance).
2. For the purpose of this strategy the term 'carer' does not include individuals employed in paid care work, (e.g. commissioned care, via a Direct Payment, or as part of work with a voluntary sector organisation).
3. Research commissioned by Carers UK estimates that 10.58 million adults in the UK are carers, which equates to 1 in 5 people. Since October 2020, there has been a 42% increase in carers providing more than 20 hours of care per week. The value of their care during the pandemic has been estimated at £530 million per day, or £193 billion per year.
4. At least 11% of people in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are unpaid carers. Although it is a challenge to identify the true number of carers, the increasing membership of the BCP Carers Information and Advice Service (CRISP), currently standing at 5,652 carers, suggests that they remain under-represented.
5. In December 2021, a survey was developed in collaboration with carers, members of this committee, practitioners, and CRISP. The aim of the survey was to find out how easy carers found it to access support and what would help them the most in their caring role.
6. 2804 online survey links and 2447 paper copies were sent to carers registered with CRISP. The survey was also distributed through Adult Social Care networks to partners, commissioned services and voluntary agencies that work with carers who support people residing in the BCP Council area.
7. To ensure the survey reached carers not registered with CRISP, organisations and agencies of underrepresented groups were informed of the survey and review. Both online and paper versions were sent to these groups along with a cover letter, for them to distribute to carers.
8. In total, 742 carers responded to the survey, 331 were digital responses, and 411 were paper responses.

9. As part of the survey, carers were asked if they wanted to participate in focus groups to share their feedback further and contribute to the carer's services review; 179 carers volunteered.
10. In total, 31 focus groups were held with carers, 2 focus groups with practitioners and 2 focus groups with external partners. Feedback was also obtained from carer representatives and practitioners in various forums that take place locally, including the Pan Dorset Carers Steering Group, Dorset Carers Partnership Group, BCP Carers Reference Group, Carers Action Group and Carers Operational Group.
11. Focus groups were facilitated via several methods, including group video conferencing, 1-1 video conferencing, 1-1 telephone calls, home visits, face to face workshops and email.

Review Findings

12. A full report on the carer's services review findings is available in appendix 1
13. The review findings have elicited 5 key priorities for the BCP Carers Strategy:

Priority 1: Identification and Recognition

- Identify Carers as early as possible in their caring journey
- Support Carers to self-identify
- Recognise the full diversity of Carers
- Recognise the contribution that Carers make to society
- Involve Carers in planning, commissioning decisions and service design

Priority 2: Information and Advice

- Ensure information and advice is accessible to all Carers
- Involve Carers in the planning and development of information and advice
- Invest in training for Carers and professionals

Priority 3: Supporting Carers Physical, Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

- Enable carers to take a break from their caring role
- Support carers to look after their own physical and mental health

Priority 4: A Life Alongside Caring

- Enable carers to have time for themselves
- Enable carers to have access to education and employment
- Support carers to access activities they enjoy

Priority 5: Collaborative Working Across Dorset

- Working with partners to ensure equity of service across Dorset
 - Engaging with all organisations across Dorset that support carers to promote, value and recognise carers services
14. Consultations are taking place on the 5 priorities with carers who volunteered to be part of focus groups, the Pan Dorset Carers Steering Group, Dorset Carers Partnership Group, BCP Carers Reference Group, Carers Action Group and Carers Operational Group.

Summary of financial implications

15. The Better Care Fund is providing £1.23 million for carers for 2022/23, and the delivery against the priorities identified in the carer's strategy will be within this financial envelope.

Summary of legal implications

16. None identified at this stage

Summary of human resources implications

17. Early findings indicate that additional staff capacity may be needed for the BCP carer support service to carry out the (recommended) operational priorities of the strategy. This would be managed within the funding available for carers from the Better Care Fund.

Summary of sustainability impact

18. A sustainability impact assessment is being undertaken, although it is not anticipated that there will be any significant impacts on the environment as a consequence of this strategy.

Summary of public health implications

19. Proceeding with the key priorities for the Carers Strategy will improve the health and wellbeing of carers as one of the key priorities is to support carers physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. It would also reduce health inequalities locally by seeking to collaborative across Dorset to ensure equity of service.

Summary of equality implications

20. An EIA screening document has been in production since the start of the carers services review and has been regularly updated to ensure that equality implications are taken into account. This will be taken to the EIA panel prior to completion of the BCP Carers Strategy

Summary of risk assessment

21. As the priorities were developed through engagement with carers, if these were not supported then there would be a risk of reputational damage to BCP Council for not taking into account the views of the people the strategy is being written for.

22. If the Better Care Funding for carers was reduced or withdrawn, the priorities of the strategy would need to be reviewed to ensure any available funding was targeted to areas with the greatest impact.

Background papers

23. Published Works:

Make Caring Visible, Valued and Supported – Carers Week 2022 Report, Carers UK (2022)

Unseen and undervalued – the value of unpaid carers support during the pandemic, Carer UK (2020)

Appendices

1. BCP Carers Services Review Report 2022