

CABINET

14 JUNE 2011

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND ADULT SERVICES

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| Title: Carers Strategy 2011-15 | For Decision |
| <p>Summary:</p> <p>The 2001 Census revealed that almost one in ten residents identified themselves as carers, providing unpaid care to residents, friends or neighbours. Our partner voluntary sector organisations have 2,600 local carers registered for support and advice. Carers represent a significant proportion of our population. The number of carers is likely to rise as the borough's population expands over the next twenty years as people live longer with more complex needs. Therefore, it is vital that we address the specific needs of carers, particularly as we move towards more personalised social care.</p> <p>This is the first overarching Carers Strategy produced by the borough. It brings together the key services for carers and emphasises the borough's continuing commitment to supporting carers. This strategy, brought to Cabinet during national Carers Week, also recognises that carers are individuals in their own right, and that it is important to influence areas such as maintaining social networks and employment activities.</p> <p>The report also asks for permission to re-tender the current Carers support service. The options and implications are included in sections 3 to 5 of the report.</p> <p>Wards Affected: The development of the strategy and the Carers support service does not affect any wards specifically, but by its nature affect all wards.</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Consider and agree the strategy and action plan.ii) To give permission to review and re-tender the current Carers serviceiii) To delegate its power to extend contracts under Rules 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, to the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services following successful conclusion of the negotiations. | |
| <p>Reason</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The development and subsequent implementation of a Carers Strategy will be an important element of delivery of the corporate vision for the borough - 'Better Together, Better Home, Better Health and Wellbeing, Better Future'. For the most vulnerable, and those less able, the Council believes in giving independence and choice, and in this strategy will help the borough continue to deliver quality social care to those who need it as well as supporting the carers of the vulnerable.b) The current contract for support services for carers ends on 31 March 2012. The current service will be reviewed and specification revised to link in with the aims and | |

outcomes in the Carers Strategy.

Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

The action plan and re-tendering proposals outlined in Section 3 of this report will be met from within existing Carers budgets.

Comments of the Legal Partner

See section 4 below

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1. Background

Over the past few months, the Council's Adult Commissioning Division and partners have been finalising our local Carers Strategy, following the publication of the revised national Carers Strategy in November 2010. Our local strategy shares the national priorities for action.

We have listened to Barking and Dagenham's carers who have told us that they want good information and advice and respite opportunities in particular. For this reason we have merged work on a Respite Strategy with the Carers Strategy to present one synchronised strategy.

In May, a draft of the strategy linked to the Barking and Dagenham Partnership website home page and people were invited to comment.

2. Report content

The aim of the strategy is:

To enable carers to lead as normal a life as possible and to be able to feel supported in their caring role

The national strategy for carers called 'Recognised, valued and supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy', published in November 2010, highlights the key issues for carers in supporting them to carry out their caring role. We have developed our priorities to reflect the vision set out in the national strategy, and the needs of people living in the borough. Through the work of key stakeholders from the statutory and voluntary sector in reviewing our local needs analysis, the action plan at the end of the strategy shows how we will turn the vision set out in this

strategy into reality. The strategy also reflects the move towards personalisation in social care, as individuals shape their own care.

As people are living longer the number of carers is expected to rise slightly over the next twenty years and this strategy investigates how we can provide services to known and unknown carers. Carers in the borough have consistently highlighted that they can derive considerable benefit from breaks. Therefore, sections of this strategy specifically address respite and short breaks to help sustain carers enjoy a quality of life and sustain them in their caring role.

The key priorities for improvement in this strategy, shared with the national strategy, are:

- Identification and recognition
- Realising and releasing potential
- A life outside caring
- Supporting carers to stay healthy

Summarised below are the key areas for development in the four priority areas. The action plan at the end of the strategy will be revised annually to make sure that the work to help carers across the borough is up to date and relevant.

2.1 Identification and recognition

Each year the Council and partners work together to celebrate Carers Week. This week a range of events across the borough are being organised for the week of 13 to 19 June. We are keen to promote in particular crisis support options at the event such as 'Message in a bottle' and ICE (In Case of Emergency). Message in a bottle is a small container that contains a form for recording key information such as your doctor's name, medication and medical conditions and family contact details. This gives emergency services easy access to key information if there's an accident or you're taken ill. The idea behind ICE is that police, ambulance and hospital staff can access the next of kin details or details of alternative caring arrangements from a mobile phone under the name ICE. This would aim to give carers peace of mind by providing a back-up service which will put in place replacement care if care cannot be provided because of an emergency.

The Carers Strategy action plan addresses the issue that carers get the support they need in hospital and at GP practices, in terms of identification and appointment times.

A Memorandum of Understanding between Adult and Children's Services will be signed to ensure a coordinated approach for the borough's young carers.

2.2 Realising and releasing potential

Consultations with carers have revealed that combining the caring role with work can be a real challenge. Therefore the action plan increases employment opportunities for carers, encourages flexible working opportunities and expand training provision. It is vital that carers are given the best possible financial support and this is also addressed. We have and will be focusing on our information and advice and helping organisations to signpost carers to the right specialist services.

We also want to develop our information and advice around adult education opportunities for carers.

2.3 A life outside caring

Again, information and advice is very important so carers are aware of the variety of options available to them. We place great emphasis on ensuring our new Social Care web pages are up-to-date and linked to the services of providers. A website of just council services is not what carers want to see so we will further develop links with providers. We also want to encourage people to make the most out of assistive technology options. The strategy also specifically addresses the development of a menu of formal and informal respite options.

A Peer Brokerage service will be set up, initially by Carers of Barking and Dagenham. The Peer Broker will have experience of going through the planning process and be trained to deliver support to others, navigating the support services and community opportunities available.

2.4 Supporting carers to stay healthy

To support carers to remain healthy we will regularly review the training on offer for carers to ensure that a good variety of training provision is always in place. The action plan will guarantee networks of support groups are in place to help carers.

It is important carers spend time doing things other than work or the caring role. The Council places a great emphasis on ensuring all residents have access to a range of leisure and community activities and this will also be addressed in the action plan.

3 Financial Issues

The Carers strategy action plan 2011/12 does have financial implications however all actions are designed to be affordable, and will be found within existing carers budget allocations.

The re-tendering of the carers support service also has financial implications. The current contract for the carers support service with Carers of Barking and Dagenham is £167,000. It is broken down into the following projects:

- Core costs - £47,074
- Black and Ethnic Minority Project – £39,594: Provides advocacy and information for black and ethnic minority communities.
- Take a Break - £9,419: Emergency respite service
- Face to Face - £29,583: Support for parents who have a child who that has been diagnosed disabled. Jointly funded by NHS Barking and Dagenham.
- Young Carers - £41,502: Offers info, advocacy, support and leisure to around 400 young carers, who care for a parent or sibling.

NHS Barking and Dagenham have funded a carer's projects totalling approximately £35,000 a year out of an allocated carers baseline budget of £300,000.

After a full review of the service, a guide price will be included in the advertisement for the tender. Savings are expected when tendering the new service.

Any new contract will have break clauses within it to allow for early termination and/or variation should funds not be available to the same extent in future.

4. Legal Issues

There are no specific implications currently; however, legal clearance may be required for future actions in subsequent annual action plans.

The re-tender of Carer Support Services will go through all the necessary legal clearance.

5. Other Implications

5.1 Risk Management

There are no specific implications currently in the strategy. When the action plan is delivered it will be monitored by a Carers Board/Reference Group and an annual review of progress will be reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The proposals for re-tender will be formally risk and impact assessed.

5.2 Customer Impact

This strategy should have a positive impact on carers. The strategy and action plan is designed to support carers to continue in their caring role and to have opportunities outside of their caring role.

The re-tender of carer support services will be carer focused. Carers will be involved in all stages of the commissioning process.

If carer support services were not re-tendered than 2,500 carers would not benefit from an important support service.

5.3 Safeguarding Adults and Children

This strategy should help carers be properly supported. This should have a positive impact on the people who are cared for. Safety and wellbeing is central to the actions developed in the strategy's action plan.

The re-tender of carer support services will have the necessary safeguarding obligations included in the contract.

5.4 Staff Issues

A significant proportion of the staff of the Council have caring responsibilities. A survey of HR staff carried out in 2008 indicated that 43% had such responsibilities.

The Council is committed to supporting these employees and its policies on flexible working, home working and special leave are intended to assist them.

This strategy will have a positive impact on our staff, many of whom are residents of the borough. We are currently reviewing our employment policies and procedures and have identified the need to make specific reference in a number of areas to the needs of carers and how we as an employer will address them.

The re-tender of carer support services will have no staff implications for internal Council staff.

5.5 Health Issues

Again, the strategy should have a positive impact on the health of carers as this is a priority for action.

The re-tender of carers support services should mean carers continue to be supported to leave as healthy lives as possible. The carers support service provides emotional support as well as information and advice to carers.

5.6 Contractual Implications

The first contract with Carers of Barking and Dagenham for a carers support service commenced in 2004 and they have been funded by the Council to provide a support service seven years since. The current contract commenced in 2007 with Cabinet agreeing a two year extension in December 2009. This contract ends in March 2012. However, the contract could be extended again. There is no specified date when the contract must be re-tendered.

The Carers Strategy has no contractual implications but any support service provider will be expected to assist in the delivery of the Carers Strategy action plan.

6. Options Appraisal

Carers Strategy - The Council can choose to accept the Carers Strategy and/or ask for amendments to be made. Without a Carers Strategy, the specific needs of carers may not always be addressed and the borough could be seen as devaluing the role carers and their families have. With a high number of carers in the borough, it is vital we have a local strategy in place that coordinates and expands on what is available to help carers in Barking and Dagenham.

Carers Support Services –

- Cabinet can ask to see a report on the Carers Support Service re-tender in November 2011 before agreeing permission to re-tender.
- Cabinet can ask for a contract extension on the current service provided by Carers of Barking and Dagenham.
- Cabinet can also ask to not re-tender or extend the carers support service contract but this will have a detrimental impact of the 2,500 carers currently supported and this is not advised.

7. Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report

Listed on pages 5 to 11 of the strategy found in Appendix 1 of this report. A further list can be found in Appendix 3.

8. List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Carers Strategy 2011-15

Appendix 2 – List of tables and graphs

Appendix 3 – Summary of national strategies and key legislation

Appendix 4 – National Carers Survey 2009-10

Appendix 5 – Barking and Dagenham Self Assessment

Appendix 6 – Summary of current provision for Carers

Appendix 7 – Memorandum of Understanding