

**Integration Joint Board**

**Date of Meeting: 27 March 2024**

**Title of Report: Carers Strategy**

**Presented by: Kirsty Mackenzie, Carers Act Implementation Officer; Mags Todd, Young Carer officer; Linda Currie, Associate Director Allied Health Professionals.**

**The Integration Joint Board is asked to:**

- Endorse the 2024-2027 HSCP Carers Strategy

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 requires that Local Authorities and relevant Health Boards have a local Carer Strategy.

Section 33(3) and (4) requires each local authority and relevant health board to ensure they jointly review their statutory local carer strategy at least every three years.

Attached to this paper is a draft copy of the revised Carer Strategy for A&B HSCP.

If this is endorsed, we will present this revised Strategy to the IJB in March with a planned public launch date in early spring 2024.

The strategy sets out our plan to identifying carers, provide support and services to adult and young carers, and provide information about local support available.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

Our Carer Strategy has been created through working closely and collaboratively with over 300 Carers, Our Carers Partnership, and our HSCP colleagues.

Consultation was very positive and we are requesting formal approval before the Strategy is finalised, printed, and shared.

**3. DETAIL OF REPORT**

The Strategy has been drafted following the guidance within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 statutory guidance.

There have been 9 draft versions of the strategy with consultation and feedback from Carers, Carer Partners, Education, and HSCP.

Our commitments cover 4 identified outcomes, with 31 areas for action.

1. All Carers are identified at the earliest opportunity and offered support to assist them in their caring role.
2. Young Carers are supported with their caring roles and enabled to be children and young people first.
3. Carers will have access to, advice, information and support services to improve their overall health and wellbeing and enjoy a life alongside their caring roles
4. Carers have access to information and advice about their rights and entitlements to ensure they are free from disadvantage or discrimination in relation to their caring role

We aim to create 4 Care Focus groups for; Parent Carers, Young Carers, Carers supporting with Alcohol or Addiction and Carers supporting a loved one with a Dementia diagnosis.

To ensure Carers can access information quickly, we will update our website and increase our communications.

As we are aware some Carers do not wish to initially access Carer Centres, we aim to ensure we promote and increase awareness of digital resources available to Carers.

Feedback on the draft strategy has been very positive with constructive comments asking which action points we will priorities over years 1,2 and 3 and how these would be measured, along with the size of the Strategy document.

This feedback has resulted in an Action Plan being created which shows annual priorities and how we will measure these and a one page plan which will highlight the 4 identified outcomes of the strategy. We did not feel we could reduce the size due to covering so many carer groups.

Our aim was to ensure we created an easy to read document and we received positive feedback that we succeeded in doing this.

Short breaks and our Short Break Statement is an area where we do need to finalise our processes. Our aim is to ensure we have a robust process before the next financial year starts. We will therefore request that we bring the Carers Act Guidance Policy and Short Breaks Statement to SLT in March 2024

#### **4. RELEVANT DATA AND INDICATORS**

See Action plan

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Robust support to carers is a fundamental aspect of our strategic vision and priorities. We also know that without unpaid carers we would be unable to meet the demand with statutory services. Supporting carers is also therefore critical in reducing demand on care at home services and achieving financial sustainability.

## **6. GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial Impact**

The partnership currently funds approximately £1,138,914 to the 4 Carers Centres and 1 youth development service across Argyll and Bute. We have renewed and updated contracts in place with specification aligning to our statutory duties with the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 along with robust and managed Procurement and Commissioning processes.

### **6.2 Staff Governance**

The majority of Carers services are supported by our existing Carers centres and third sector with a focus on prevention and innovative. Within these organisations there are over 80 support workers providing both Adult and Young Carer support. The staff providing these services are third sector and those contracts are managed by our procurement and commissioning team with close collaborative working across the partnership.

### **6.3 Clinical Governance**

Through HSCP governance structures as appropriate.

## **7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

An impact assessment will be carried out around any changes to current services or future planning of services. During planning the intention is to increase engagement with remote and rural carers and work towards identifying unknown carers. Some of this work is already underway by outreach workers within the centres.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

There are risks associated with lack of engagement for 'unknown carers' and we hope to mitigate that with enhanced work identified in the implementation plan.

Other associated risks around funding and process of supporting carers will be overseen within our Carers Act Social Work group which is in early stages of being established.

## **9. PUBLIC & USER INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT**

Drafts of the Carers Strategy have been produced in conjunction with the multi-agency Carers Partnership and Carers across A&B. The strategy has been out

to consultation with a forms questionnaire, written questionnaires, and focus groups during the period of consultation and has been widely circulated across all sectors.

Feedback was excellent with 198 consultation questionnaires returned. Thanks also to our Carers Centres who supported the focused groups where 135 Carers met across the 4 locality areas to share their thoughts and lived experiences.

## **10. CONCLUSIONS**

The group is asked to endorse the strategy and associated action plan and support the launch in early 2024.