

Our Commitment to All Age Carers

Scrutiny Panel 18 October 2022

Carers - The Context

- A Carer is someone who cares, unpaid for family or friend who due to illness, disability, poor mental health or an addiction needs support
- Carers UK estimate that nationally carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer
- 2011 Census, 27,000 people in Wolverhampton identified themselves as carer
- Carers UK estimate that nationally 4.5 million people became carers during the Pandemic
- Currently working with between 5000-7000 carers in the city including carers under 18 years
- The Local Authority has statutory duty to assess and provide support to carers

Our Commitment to All Age Carers

Extensive engagement with carers and professionals led to 5 priorities being identified these align closely to Our City Under pinned by Core values ;

- Co-production
- Continuous improvement
- Connecting with communities
- Equality and Fairness for all
- Safeguarding



The 5 Priorities

- Priority 1 – Employment & Financial Wellbeing
- Priority 2 – Services & Systems That Work for Carers
- Priority 3- Support Young Carers
- Priority 4 - Recognising & Supporting Carers in the Wider Community
- Priority 5 - Using Research & Evidence to Improve Outcomes for Carers

Priority 1 – Employment & Financial Wellbeing

To achieve this the Council with partners will;

- Align support for carers with the Wolverhampton Pound approach, building and retaining local wealth in Wolverhampton to improve outcomes for local people including carers.
- Ensure carers have access to information about benefits, grants and financial management and financial support and advice.
- Identify and raise awareness of pathways into adult education and training for carers.
- Amongst employers, increase the awareness of carers legislation, how to identify carers and actions that can be taken to enable carers to balance their caring and employment responsibilities.

Priority 2 – Services & Systems That Work for Carers

To achieve this the Council with partners will:

- Ensure carers and stakeholders understand carers rights to and benefits of an assessment, known in Wolverhampton as a Carer Conversation, and routinely offer assessments.
- Enable access to clear, concise, accurate and relevant information and communicate changes to it.
- Ensure services are responsive to telephone contact and provide timely call back.
- Require services, including universal and preventative services, to make reasonable adjustments to enable carers to access services that meet their equality needs and at times that fits with their caring role.
- Develop the use of technology.
- Use social networks to empower and enable collaboration within communities.

Priority Three- Support young carers-

To achieve this the Council with partners will;

- Improve the identification of hidden young carers in schools and by services which work with children, young people and their families.
- Increase schools' awareness and understanding of the impact of being a young carer on education and emotional wellbeing.
- Increase schools' awareness of the services available to young carers so they can inform young carers about them.
- Ensure young carers know their rights regarding assessments and are always offered a young carers assessment.
- Enable young carers to obtain information safely and easily and provide information which is tailored to their needs and level of understanding.

Priority 3- Support young carers (continued)

To achieve this the Council with partners will;

- Ensure the voice of young carers included in delivery of the SEND strategy.
- Ensure the voice of young carers can influence information about the local offer.
- Support young carers to use the Youth Council to have a voice.
- Review the commissioned support service with a focus on the transition from young carer to adult carer and how emotional wellbeing is supported.
- Review the opportunities available to young carers to talk to other young carers including young carer clubs.
- Prepare young carers for transition to adulthood.
- Support young carers to access educational and out of school opportunities that help them develop and maintain friendships with their peers.
- Help young carers to have the same opportunities to access education, work, experience and training as any other young person.

Priority 4 - Recognising & Supporting Carers in the Wider Community

To achieve this the Council with partners will:

- Identify hidden carers who are not engaged with services to ensure they know how to engage, what support is available and how to access it.
- Maximise opportunities to raise the profile of caring, to help people to self-identify, such as Carers Week and Carers Rights Day.
- Address the stigma some carers feel their caring role has.
- Work with voluntary and community organisations to reduce social isolation, increase the use of carer peer support and improve mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Encourage carers to inform their Primary Care Surgery about their caring role so that appropriate support, for both physical and mental health and wellbeing, can be offered in a timely way.
- Ensure carers are offered appropriate support to safeguard them.

Progress and next steps

- Focussed workshops are being held with carers and stakeholders to identify what actions are required to achieve the priority aims.
- Two workshops have taken place, further three planned for October and November.
- Council Employee Forum set up for carers.
- Development of multi- agency implementation plans to ensure priorities are delivered

Next Steps

- Membership of Carer Steering Group to be extended
- Further engagement events with carers of all ages including young carers under 18 years
- Full launch of Our Commitment to All Age Carers planned early December
- Events planned for Carers including Christmas meals, coffee mornings, links with Wolverhampton university, WV Active, promote Emergency carers card and concessions, after school events for young carers

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