

Report title	Our Commitment to All Age Carers	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Linda Leach Adults	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Becky Wilkinson, Director of Adult Services	
Originating service	Adult Social Care	
Accountable employee	Sandra Ashton Jones Tel Email	Head of Service 01902 555322 Sandra.ashton- jones@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Joint Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board	12 May 2022 31 May 2022

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve and endorse Our Commitment to All Age Carers.
2. Agree that the Health and Well-being Board consider Our Commitment to All Age Carers and oversee the implementation of the plan.

Recommendation for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to note:

1. That the priorities set out in Our Commitment to All Age Carers have been developed through engagement and conversations with carers and professionals in the city.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of Our Commitment to All Age Carers 2022 at Appendix 1.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 A Carer is defined as someone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Carers play a vital role in society, not only in providing care to a person, but also helping the health and social care system meet a rising demand in care needs. Carers help improve quality of life for the individual requiring care, families and friends.
- 2.2 In Wolverhampton, 27,000 adults and 500 young people identified themselves as a carer in the 2011 census. There are 5,324 people in Wolverhampton who are currently known to the Council to care for an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner. It is estimated that carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer.
- 2.3 Local authorities have mandatory duties under the Care Act 2014, which includes providing an adult carer with an assessment to identify their own needs, and if thresholds are met, to provide access to a range of eligible support and provision. The Care Act also requires that an assessment, of a young carer needs, is undertaken if it considers that they are likely to have needs for support after becoming 18 and that the assessment would be of significant benefit.
- 2.4 The Children and Families Act 2014 extends the right to an assessment of needs to support all young carers under the age of 18 regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it. All local authorities in England must assess whether a young carer within their area has needs for support and, if so, what those needs are.
- 2.5 Strategic direction around carers support has been provided through the City's Joint All Age Carer Strategy 2016-2020. The strategy was due to end 2020 and a Carer Strategy Group had been set up to review progress of the deliverables within Our Commitment to All Age Carers. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was agreed that this work would be temporarily paused and was recommenced in September 2021.

3.0 Progress, options, discussion, etc.

- 3.1 To determine the priorities of Our Commitment to All Age Carers, a comprehensive eight-week consultation programme was carried out involving an online survey, postal questionnaires, and face to face meetings with young carers aged under 18, young adult carers aged between 18 and 24, adult carers aged 25 and over, parent carers and professionals. A further seven-week consultation programme was then carried out to determine the actions that will be taken to implement the priorities.

- 3.2 The Council's Public Health Service completed a Joint Service Needs Assessment (JSNA) to inform the revision of the plan and broke down the data into the following three areas:
- Adults
 - Younger Adults
 - Children
- 3.3 The JSNA describes the profile of carers in Wolverhampton, assesses the uptake of services aiming to support carers and reviews the academic literature about how carers can be better supported to carry out their caring role, whilst also maintaining their health and wellbeing.
- 3.4 Aligned with the Government's vision for reforming adult social care in England, the refreshed Council Plan Our City: Our Plan for 2022 and the redesign of Adult Services, Our Commitment to All Age Carers 2022 builds on the work driven by the previous All Age Carer Strategy, acknowledging that the needs and priorities of carers have been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 3.5 Our Commitment to All Age Carers identifies five priorities for carers and sets out how the Council and partners will seek to achieve the priorities. The five priorities are:
- Employment and financial wellbeing.
 - Services and systems that work for carers.
 - Support for young carers.
 - Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community.
 - Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers.
- 3.6 The following values will underpin all the work undertaken to achieve the priorities:
- Co-production – working with carers, their families, and other partners, using each partner's knowledge and experience to help plan, design and develop services for carers.
 - Continuous improvement – increasing the quality of services for carers through review and change.
 - Connecting with communities – promoting resilient, inclusive communities, helping to reduce isolation, and building connections that enable carers to support each other.
 - Fair and equal – addressing the inequalities experienced by carers.
 - Safeguarding – ensuring that carers and the person they care for are safe.

3.7 Accompanying Our Commitment to All Age Carers will be an implementation plan detailing what action will be taken to implement the priorities for carers. The implementation of the plan will be co-produced and overseen by a steering group made up of various stakeholders including carers. As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic we have ambitious plans to develop our offer to carers in the city, we will therefore keep Our Commitment to All Age Carers under regular review.

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

4.1 Option one would be to make no change to the existing strategy. This would result in the City of Wolverhampton Council remaining with a strategy that is no longer in date.

4.2 Option two would be to not have any Commitment to All Age Carers leaving the Council at risk of failing to meet its statutory requirements.

4.3 Option three would be to update the existing strategy with the proposed plan Our Commitment to All Age Carers in Appendix 1. This evidences the Council's commitment to supporting carers of all age and also the Council's commitment to co-production with carers and partner agencies in the city.

5.0 Reasons for decision(s)

5.1 Option three is the preferred option. The reason for the decision to approve and endorse Our Commitment to All Age Carers is to meet the Council's statutory duties as part of the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 and also align with the priorities of Our City: Our Plan 2022.

5.2 Consultation with carers of all ages and other stakeholders has been undertaken throughout the development of the plan through focus groups, postal questionnaires and online surveys. Our Commitment to All Age Carers is clear, ambitious and has been co-produced with carers in the city.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications attached to the Our Commitment to All Age Carers , as the provision is covered from within existing budgets.

[MK/27052022/R]

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 Our Commitment to All Age Carers demonstrates the Council's response to its statutory duties in accordance with the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

[SZ/26052022/P]

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 Equality implications have been carefully considered, a key purpose of Our Commitment to All Age Carers is to mitigate any equalities that carers face. A full Equality Analysis has been undertaken.
- 8.2 As part of performance reporting, there is ongoing work to ensure that where possible, data is collected and able to be analysed by protected characteristics, to ensure that the Council is meeting its responsibilities and commitments in relation to fairness and equality.

9.0 All other implications

- 9.1 Our Commitment to All Age Carers is aligned to the Council's Digital Wolves and Health and Wellbeing plans and responds to the impact faced by carers from the Covid-19 pandemic.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

- 10.1 Joint All Age Carer Strategy 2016-2020

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Our Commitment to All Age Carers