

<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Health and Wellbeing Board
	DATE:	21 st July 2021
	LEAD OFFICER:	Anne Marie Lubanski, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health Jo Hinchliffe Adult Care Housing and Public Health - Service Improvement and Governance Manager jo.hinchliffe@rotherham.gov.uk
	TITLE:	Carers Programme – Update July 2021

1. Background

- 1.1** Rotherham's Adult Social Care Pathway puts the person at the centre of everything we do. For us to do our best work, every process, every interaction and every outcome must have the person at the core.
- 1.2** On the 21st October 2019 we introduced new a way of working to ensure a consistent, robust and sustainable Pathway; our work with carers is defined via a “sub-pathway” and in March 2020 plans were shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board explaining how we anticipated we would deliver a carers programme.
- 1.3** The week after the information was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2020 the council mobilised resources appropriate for the management of the Covid 19 Pandemic and this had significant impact on the proposed programme timeline.
- 1.4** The programme outlined in March 2020 had to be reprofiled to take into account the Covid 19 emergency response work of all the partner agencies. In August 2020 these partners via the Unpaid Carers Group supported a refresh of the carers programme.
Appendix 1: shows the refreshed programme timeline
- 1.5** The Unpaid Carers Group came together during the emergency response work to ensure the network of partnerships was as strong as it could be in the most extreme of circumstances. The aim being that carers were fully supported throughout the pandemic.
Appendix 2 shows some of the work progressed by the Unpaid Carer Group.
- 1.6** At the time of the carers programme refresh Covid 19 funding become available to support carers. The council joined forces with Crossroads Care Rotherham to launch a carer grant initiative to help people who have a long-term commitment to supporting loved ones. £50,000 worth of funding was able to be accessed by unpaid carers.
Appendix 3 shows some of the outcomes of this work.
- 1.7** In April 2021 a further £25,000 was made available to run a second round of carer grant funding. This is due to be evaluated in August 2021.

2. Key Issues

2.1 **Update on the key objectives - September 2020 (Quarter 2 of the Carers Programme)**

2.2 Quarter 2 Objectives:

- We will map the carer experience and ensure the carers programme addresses any gaps.
- We will ensure effective communication processes are in place to fully support carers.
- We will refresh our understanding of the profile of carers in Rotherham in the light of Covid 19.
- We will invite reps from the Unpaid Carers Group to become members of the Carer Programme Project Group.
- We will continue to progress the Carers Grant work.

2.3 *Appendix 4* shows what we have done to meet the agreed key objectives; it also outlines considerations for how we expand the work for maximum impact. These considerations are being progressed via the Unpaid Carer Group and feed the shared strategic approach that is to be formed into a Rotherham Carers Strategy.

2.4 It is important to note work started on the key objectives in September 2020 and carried through to March 2021. This was because partner agencies; most of which are voluntary sector organisations had to prioritise operational activity. Resources for partners were often stretched as they had to balance the day-to-day with strategic duties as well as Covid 19 compliant emergency responses.

2.5 **Wider programme outputs: April – June 2021**

2.6 Within the carer programme there was an outcome to explore the Assistive Technology (AT) offer for carers. Work to date on this outcome has expanded in two ways. Firstly, the use of digital tools, Zoom/Teams has also enabled a wider reach with carers and we are capturing the learning within the Adult Social Care AT Strategy Group. Secondly, learning from the carers grant initiative has demonstrated how carers often need support with the acquisition of technological devices. These devices have been a lifeline for many carers and the learning from both these examples will feed into the Rotherham Carers Strategy.

2.7 As referenced at the beginning of the report the Adult Social Care Pathway is a vital element of the carer journey. The Care Act 2014 clarifies that a carer is an individual who “provides or intends to provide care for another adult” and would qualify for an assessment where it “appears that the carer may have any level of needs for support” (Paragraph 6.16). In order to ensure we meet this stipulation a carer sub-pathway was introduced in 2019. Work has been happening over the last quarter to understand the level of carer assessment activity and highlight reports now form part of the overall performance reporting structure.

2.8 Rotherham was the only authority in the region to deliver a face to face event for Carers Week. Each year Carers Week provides an opportunity to recognise the invaluable work unpaid carers do to support their family and friends, and highlights the challenges they face. Members of the Unpaid Carer Group mobilised to ensure we raised the profile of carers and the vital role they play. A corner of the town centre was taken over by carer

	organisations who showcased their services. It was a well-supported event and was also backed-up by a social media campaign facilitated by the council's corporate communication team. It prompted carers to come forward and make link with the council and over 30 carers made direct contact with the Adult Care - Service Improvement and Governance Team.
2.9	A key element of the carer programme was to review the council run Carer's Centre. It is located within the Rain Building (Rotherham Town Centre), is currently a building-based offer which sets out to support carers of adults with social care needs. During the Corona Virus Pandemic in line with national and local restrictions the Carer's Centre closed as the limited space was conducive to social distancing measures. The centre has remained closed to date and this has significantly impacted on the review work. What has been happening is benchmarking with other local authorities and other agencies.
2.10	Crossroads re-opened "The Corner" in All Saints Square it is a carers hub comprising of; charity/coffee shop, training facility and meeting room for carers. This new project enables Crossroads to raise much needed funds to support carers through their expanding services. It is supported by the council as part of the Town Centre Masterplan. Conversations are planned via the Unpaid Carers Group to look at how this offer could be enhanced as part of the forthcoming Rotherham Carers Strategy
2.11	Work with Young Carers is being progressed by Barnardos and their Young Carer Council. Preparation work has been happening through June 2021 to ensure officers attend the Young Carer Council Meetings. Dates are now agreed and in place and the first meeting has been undertaken.

3. Key Actions and Timelines

3.1	The carer programme was intended to close June 2021 with the result being the production of a refresh Rotherham Carers Strategy. Due to the impact of the pandemic this is slightly off track and will now conclude with a draft strategy being reviewed in July 2021 at the next Unpaid Carers Group Meeting.
3.2	The Carers Centre review work will continue over the summer and again will be supported by the Unpaid Carers Group and is also governed via the Adult Social Care Project Assurance Meeting. Options appraisal work is happening now and a formal report is due at the end of July 2021.
3.3	A carers newsletter will be issued with the first edition scheduled for the 31 st August 2021 – this will become a monthly feature and will form part of the information offer that is to be embedded within the Rotherham Carers Strategy development work.
3.4	Sharing the Draft Rotherham Carers Strategy will be the focus for the period July – September 2021. With the lifting of national restrictions, it is hoped that more face-to-face engagement work can happen so we can really capture the carers voice within the strategy development work. To date all focus group work has been virtual and although this has allowed us to reach a draft stage of the Strategy all the agencies involved feel more work is needed directly with the carers they support. This phase will be reviewed early in September 2021 with the Unpaid Carer Group taking a view on the timeframe for a formal launch of the Rotherham Carers Strategy.

4. Recommendations

4.1	Health and Wellbeing Board note the completion of the key objectives (September 2020-March 2021)
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4.2	Health and Wellbeing Board to note the care programme output April-June 2021
4.3	Health and Wellbeing Board to note the progress made on the Rotherham Carers Strategy