

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

7. Meeting:	Cabinet
8. Date:	5 February 2014
9. Title:	Scrutiny Review of Support for Carers
10. Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report sets out the main findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review of support for carers in Rotherham. The draft review report is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration by Cabinet.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That Cabinet receives the report and recommendations.**
- 6.2 That Cabinet submit their response to the review to OSMB within two months of the report submission.**

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 Following a Member seminar on dementia and ensuing discussion about the important role and contribution of carers in Rotherham, at the request of the Leader, the Health Select Commission and the Improving Lives Select Commission agreed in September 2013 to undertake a joint scrutiny review of support for carers.
- 7.2 The key focus of Elected Members' attention was to ensure carers have access to the right information to enable them to access the support and services they require to assist them in the caring role and to maintain their own quality of life and health and wellbeing. As such it was very important to consider this from the perspective of carers, especially adult carers of adults with long term conditions.
- 7.3 The following definition of a carer was used for the review:
- “A carer is an adult or young person who provides unpaid care for a partner, relative, friend, an older person or someone who has a disability or long term illness, including people with alcohol/substance misuse and mental illness.”
- 7.4 There were six main aims of the review, which were to establish:
- if carers generally identify themselves as carers in line with the definition above
 - the degree to which carers access support or consider they need support to assist them in their caring role
 - who carers go to for initial support when they first become a carer
 - where carers usually go for ongoing support
 - key factors necessary for ensuring carers receive good and timely information
 - any areas for improvement in current information provision
- 7.5 Members also wished to complement and add value to the review carried out by Neighbourhoods and Adult Services of current support services for carers, which focused on how support is currently provided to carers and how this may be improved.
- 7.6 A spotlight review was carried out, chaired by Cllr Brian Steele, and evidence gathering commenced in October 2013, concluding in December 2013. This comprised an on-line survey for carers supplemented by direct engagement with carers at two events, followed by two small discussion groups. Further evidence was provided by Council officers and witnesses from partner agencies in health and the voluntary and community sector.
- 7.7 Members recognised the large number of “hidden” carers in Rotherham, who are key to the effective provision of social care. There is a very strong case, both morally and financially, to ensure that carers are provided with the most effective support possible as it is estimated that nationally, carers save the country an estimated £119billion in care costs. The review group consider that any resources invested within the carers community in Rotherham, therefore supports the prevention and early intervention agenda, particularly with the demographic pressures created by an ageing population.
- 7.8 There are eleven recommendations, set out in full in section 6 in the review report, and in summary these focus on:
- increasing the number of people recognising themselves as carers and willing to

seek support for this vital role they carry out;

- ensuring that support for carers adequately includes emotional support and counselling;
- providing a multi agency “carers pathway” that recognises the journey that carers are on and provides them with the correct support and information at the right time and in the right place on that journey;
- increasing the number of carers receiving a fit for purpose carers assessment, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

8. Finance

The recommendations from the Select Commissions will require further exploration by Cabinet, the Strategic Leadership Team and partner agencies on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation, taking into account the invest to save potential over the longer term.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Rotherham has a significant number of carers, many of whom are older people who may themselves have underlying health conditions, and with an ageing population it is vital that support is in place to ensure that carers maintain their own health and wellbeing and are supported in their caring role.

The last census showed that carers were more likely to report their general health as ‘Not Good’, compared with people providing no unpaid care and that the general health of carers deteriorated incrementally as the number of hours of care provided increased, up to the age of 65.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Children and Young People’s Plan 2010-2013
Corporate Plan

Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most.

- Carers get the help and support they need
- People in need get help earlier before reaching crisis
- People in need of support and care have more choice and control to help them live at home

The Care Bill 2013-2014, which will reform the law relating to care and support for adults and the law relating to support for carers, is currently progressing through parliament and will impose new duties once enacted.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

See Section 8 of the review report and Appendices 1 and 2.

12. Contacts

Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager (x 22769)
deborah.fellowes@rotherham.gov.uk

Janet Spurling, Scrutiny Officer (x 54421)
janet.spurling@rotherham.gov.uk

Sharon Crook, Scrutiny Support Officer (x 22776)
sharon.crook@rotherham.gov.uk