

ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 25 SEPTEMBER 2019

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Summary

1. The Panel has requested an overview of the Council's support for carers in Worcestershire, which was recently added to the Panel's work programme.
2. In Worcestershire, support for carers is provided by Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC), therefore representatives from WAC have been invited to the meeting, as well as Officers from the Council's Directorate of Adult Services who commission support for carers, and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

Background

3. A '**Carer**' is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid (*NHS Definition*).
4. This includes (but is not limited to) Adult Carers, Parent Carer/Child Carers, Sibling Carers, Primary Carers, Secondary Carers, Lone Carers, Sandwich Carers and Hidden Carers.
5. Unpaid carers perform a unique role in our society and increasingly, most of us are likely to assume responsibility for helping to care or support someone close to us at some point in our lives. We become carers when our caring responsibilities exceed normal expectations for a relationship due to the illness or chronic condition of someone close to us. Many people enjoy or derive great satisfaction from their carer role and may acquire new skills and friendships, but carers often unknowingly place their own physical, mental and financial wellbeing at risk of harm without appropriate support.
6. Carers are less likely to be in full time employment, more likely to have left work or retired to care and suffered the consequences in terms of reduced income and pension rights. 1 in 10 adults (6.5 million people in the UK), including young adult carers, will have a caring role and many have poorer mental and physical health, because of caring without receiving timely information and help.
7. The national Census (2011) identified that there are currently 63,685 adult carers and 3,490 young carers in Worcestershire. Nationally most carers are aged between 50–64 years and people aged 65 and over make up a higher proportion of carers

(19%) than they do the population as a whole (12%)¹. In Worcestershire the highest number of referrals has been seen in people aged 70-74, with significant increases in carers aged over 80. 50 new referrals were received in 2018/19 for carers aged 85 and over.

8. The Council has a Contract with Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC) to deliver an Integrated Carers Hub. The purpose of the 'Integrated Carers Hub' is to co-ordinate support for Carers across the whole of Worcestershire, providing **one** point of contact for Carers to co-ordinate and improve access to local support. The contract has been in place since July 2016. The Council receives quarterly reports and an annual Health and Wellbeing board report from WAC (Appendix 1). The quarterly report focuss on activity and the agreed key outcomes for Carers which are:

- a) Delaying and reducing the need for care and support
- b) Enhanced quality of life for Carers
- c) Early intervention to meet Carers' needs
- d) Safeguarding adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protecting from avoidable harm.

9. WAC provides support to Carers across Worcestershire and has seen the number of carers being supported increase to 20% (Table 1). The largest number of referrals is from health services and this is expected to increase further with the 'Think Carer' programme.

Table 1: % of carers supported by district

	Carers Identified in 2011 census	% supported by Jan to March 2019
Bromsgrove	11,201	15%
Redditch	8,889	19%
Wyre Forest	11,123	21%
Malvern Hills	9,390	21%
Worcester	9,648	23%
Wychavon	13,434	19%
Total	63,685	20%

10. Carer assessments are undertaken on behalf of the Council by WAC. These are delivered through face to face visits with carers following a referral from a Social Work team. In 2018/19 1,533 Carer Assessments were undertaken. WAC also support the Council by engaging with Carers before a formal assessment is required, supporting the philosophy of the three-conversation model which is now embedded across Adult Social Care teams.

¹ House of parliament postnote – Number 252 (July 2018)

11. The delivery of the Hub requires a wide range of services and responsibilities to be provided both statutory and non-statutory. The two elements go hand in hand, as without one the other is less successful. There is also much strategic work and partnership building which impacts on service delivery and the current and future visibility of carers in strategic discussions and future investment. However, it is worth highlighting the statutory part of the service provision includes:

General advice, information and support for adult Carers, well-being and prevention,

Conversation 1 – to listen and connect with adult Carers as the first point of contact for a Carer to discuss what support is available and what might help.

This includes emergency, contingency and future planning and the promotion of wellbeing.

Conversation 3 – including Carer reviews and emergency, contingency and future planning and the promotion of wellbeing. The assessments involve meeting the support and care needs of Carers with eligible needs.

12. The contract with WAC is due to cease on 31st March 2020 and be re-tendered in line with the Procurement Code and legislation. Prior to the tender, Public Health will be undertaking a carer needs assessment with a view to procuring a new carers service by March 2021. Therefore, the current contract will need to be extended to enable this piece of work to be completed. Additionally, the Worcestershire Carers Strategy expires Mar 2020, so the Carers Strategy needs refreshed.

13. The common problems and challenges faced by Carers will be covered within the meeting as well as what the Overview and Scrutiny Panel can do to help.

Legal, Financial, and HR Implications

14. Support for carers is mainly funded through the Better Care Fund. The amount allocated for carers' support was £1.26m in 2018-19. In addition, Public Health contributes £617,000, making a total of £1.877m for carers in Worcestershire. The impact of caring on Carers is a Public Health issue due to the physical and mental impact caring has.

15. Adult Social Care fund the Carer assessments with £27k.

16. WAC consortium members have brought in external funding exceeding £170,000 over the last year, plus donations in kind. This 'added value' allows organisations to provide services over and above commissioned services.

17. Worcestershire County Council has signed up to 'Working for Carers' to become an accredited employer.

Purpose of the Meeting

18. Panel Members are asked to:

- determine whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this time
- agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member regarding support for carers

19. In doing so, Panel members may wish to consider areas including:

- How can scrutiny help in the Council's support for carers?
- What are the most common problems for carers and support?
- The role of the community and voluntary sector.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Worcestershire Carers Strategy 2015 – 2020, Annual Report May 2018 to April 2019

Appendix 2 - Worcestershire Carers Strategy 2015 - 2020

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 11 July 2019 – available [here](#)