



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 11th May 2022

To the Mayor and Members of the Cabinet

REPORT TITLE: The All Age Carers' Strategy for Doncaster (2022 – 2025)

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Robinson Councillor Blake	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - Present the All Age Carers' Strategy for Doncaster 2022-25,
 - Share the action plan to implement the strategy,
 - Seek agreement to progress with the launch of the full strategy in April 2022.
2. The new strategy has been developed in partnership with young carers and adult carers, NHS Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital Trust, NHS England, Rotherham Doncaster, and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH), representatives of the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector including, Doncaster Partnership for Carers, Parent Carers Voice, Doncaster Carers Reach Out Service, and staff who work both directly and indirectly with young carers and adult carers.
3. The strategy addresses key priorities as identified by Doncaster Carers of all ages and is informed by national legislation, guidance, policy, and emerging evidence.
4. The key priorities for the strategy have been coproduced with carers and based on engagement with over 200 carers from Doncaster.

5. Stakeholders from partner organisations have endorsed the priorities set by carers and have been asked to identify key actions they can undertake, to support in achieving the priorities.
6. The six key priority areas identified by carers as most important are:
 - Identification
 - Recognition
 - Information and Advice
 - Rights
 - Connection
 - Independence and wellbeing

Three cross-cutting themes will be identified across the plans developed; these include:

- Young carers preparing for adulthood
 - Working Carers
 - Carers with additional disadvantages
7. Carers will continue to work alongside officers in planning and undertaking the actions in support of the strategy. The Carers' Action Group, the voice of carers group, will receive regular updates from carers working on projects, but also from partner leads.
 8. The Carers' Steering Group will be responsible for the delivery of the emerging plans. The Carers' Strategic Oversight group will have oversight, having provided endorsement to the emerging priorities. Both groups have representatives from all partner organisations, to ensure progress will be made.
 9. The impact of COVID-19 has been significant for society as a whole. For many carers, COVID-19 presents an even greater challenge, with increased isolation, reduced or no breaks from their caring role, and further financial pressures. This will be reflected in the new strategy.

EXEMPT REPORT

10. This is not an exempt report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. Approve the All Age Carers' Strategy for Doncaster 2022-25 with accompanying action plan for 2022-23

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

12. Identification: Carers are identified at the earliest opportunity to enable them to connect with support. In engaging earlier, carers will have the chance to access more community-based and sustainable support prior to their needs becoming urgent.

13. Recognition: Carers are heard, respected, and valued. Services recognise carers, treating them as equal partners, valuing their involvement, and respecting their choices.
14. Information and Advice: Carers will have better access to information and advice. Information and advice specific to carers will be readily available, easy to understand, will promote self-determination through encouraging carers to plan ahead and build resilience.
15. Rights: Carers know their rights and have access to advocacy. In knowing their rights, carers are confident communicating their needs and exercising their rights. Where carers have difficulties, advocacy will be readily available to support.
16. Connection: Carers will have a community where they can be supported through others with lived experience. Carers will be supported to join and form local networks and groups where carers have similar interests/experiences. Formal support will be delivered through peers to improve carer experience.
17. Independence and Wellbeing: Carers will have improved wellbeing and the opportunity to have a life of their own. The support available to carers enables them to improve their wellbeing; promoting opportunities for carers to have a life outside of caring.

BACKGROUND

18. The Census 2011 estimated that there were approximately 33,000 carers in Doncaster. Carers UK estimates that as a result of the recent pandemic, this figure has increased significantly leading to around 1 in 4 people supporting a family member, friend or neighbour to manage their everyday life. In Doncaster, this figure equates to around 78,196 carers.
19. There is an estimated 720 young carers in Doncaster, with 307 on the young carers register. Of those known to the Local Authority, 60% are female and 8% identify as non-white British, with 9% unknown. 32% of young carers come from the north area of Doncaster, with a lesser amount of 19% coming from the East
20. Employers for Carers advises that 1 in 7 people within the workforce are carers, this is estimated to be higher in health and social care professions where it is estimated to be around 1 in 4. In Doncaster, this means that 2500 carers at Doncaster Council and 1625 staff at DBTH are balancing their caring responsibilities whilst continuing to work. With 43 member practices, the number of people employed who are connected to Doncaster CCG is difficult to gauge, though this means there is a high number of carers within their influence.

National and local policy, guidance, and emerging evidence

21. The vision, purpose, and outcomes are aligned with the Doncaster Borough Strategy, the Doncaster Place Plan, and the Adult Social Care practice framework.

22. The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 outline the way in which carers of any age can access a carer's assessment if they appear to have need. The Care Act also places a duty on local authorities to promote an individual's 'wellbeing', local authorities have to consider the impact of the caring role on carer wellbeing. The strategy will reflect these rights.
23. Carers UK identifies that four out of five unpaid carers (81%) are currently providing more care than before the Covid pandemic. More than three-quarters (78%) of carers reported that the needs of the person they care for have increased recently. Most carers (64%) have not been able to take any breaks at all in the last six months. More than half (58%) of carers have seen their physical health impacted by caring through the pandemic, 64% of carers said their mental health has worsened.
24. Local engagement (an online survey with feedback from 125 carers, in May 2021) supports this, with almost 50% of Doncaster carers who engaged stating their caring role had increased due to Covid-19 pandemic and 55% stated that their mental health had been adversely affected. The strategy will take into account the additional challenge of the pandemic and reflect actions to further support carers.
25. The Children and Young People's Plan is currently being refreshed but will set out our ambition to be the most child-friendly borough in the country, ensuring the voice of children and young people is included in all we do. The Carers' Strategy will support this.
26. The NHS has two pieces of guidance that support carers; "Supporting Carers in General Practice" and the NHS England Commitment to Carers, both promote identification and support from carers through general practice and in a hospital setting. Activity to support in achieving these elements is incorporated into the All Age Carers' Strategy for Doncaster.
27. Personalisation is a key concept to be realised within the All Age Carers' Strategy delivery. Making It Real (TLAP 2018) describes a framework and a set of statements describing what good, citizen-focussed, personalised care looks like from the point of view of people themselves. This will be reflected in the finalisation and monitoring of the strategy going forward.
28. In November 2021, the Health and Wellbeing Board signed up to the Carers' Charter, which incorporates key principles for delivery by all partners, these align to the priorities identified by carers. A new Strategy should therefore support Health and Wellbeing Board members in meeting its commitment to carers.

Coproducing the strategy

29. In June 2021 the Carers' Strategic Lead in Adults, Health and Wellbeing, and the Young Carers' lead started work with a number of Doncaster carers to look at a new All Age Carers' Strategy with key partners from the Carers' Steering Group.
30. Doncaster's Carers' Action Group (CAG) established a subgroup; the Carers' Strategy Working Group and since its inception five lead carers have been working with the Carers' Strategic Lead, to shape further

engagement activity and communications with carers, which has enabled a greater depth of understanding of the key issues. Through engagement activity over 200 carers have given feedback on their experiences.

Vision and carer outcomes

31. The Carers' Strategy Working Group agreed the vision and carer outcomes based on what they felt was important, feeding in local feedback and some regional work that had recently taken place.

32. Carers agreed the vision for this strategy is;

"We want every person in Doncaster to live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them."

33. Carers also agreed the following "I" statements which will be used to hold local services and organisations to account within the strategy and subsequent work;

- a. I feel that what I do as a Carer is recognised, understood and valued*
- b. I feel the communities around me understand my situation and support me to have a choice which is meaningful and appropriate*
- c. I feel that I am supported to look after my own health and wellbeing*
- d. I have access to good quality information (including training opportunities) and advice which is relevant to me in my caring role*
- e. I am supported to navigate the systems and connected to resource and support which enable me to maintain my caring role*
- f. I get to have a break and some time for myself or with other family and friends which will give me an opportunity for a life outside of caring*
- g. I am able to balance caring with my education, paid work, volunteering, and / or personal interests*
- h. I am listened to and feel part of the team, planning and delivering care for the person I care-for, as an equal*
- i. I know where to get help from when I need it including when things go wrong, challenging decisions, and getting my voice heard as an equal*
- j. I feel supported when I am no longer able or willing to be a Carer or my caring role ends*
- k. I can make plans for the future*

Setting priorities

34. To form some priority areas of work for the strategy, the Carers' Lead held 54 interviews with carers through the following partnerships;

- Young Carers' Groups
- The Ethnic Minority Partnership
- the Learning Disability Partnership
- The Autism Partnership
- Rethink and Mental Health Carers Support
- DonMentia
- People Focused Group (PFG) and
- Doncaster Parent Carers' Voice.

35. In addition to this, an online and paper survey was promoted through partners and services accessed by carers. 148 survey responses were worked into the results, to give an overview across three key areas of their experience: what worked well, what didn't work so well, and what support would help in the future.
36. The feedback received was recorded and collated to give an overview of carer experiences.

What worked well

37. Those who already accessed support from carers' organisations or partnerships appreciated this and said that being around other carers helped them;

"Coming to these groups is a lifeline" A young carer.

The support available was readily praised by all those who accessed it, though this was particularly highlighted by young carers. Around 45% of all carers stated that support worked well when they accessed it.

38. Where carers had support/networks around them, they were content within their caring role:

"Whilst I give most of the care to mum, my sister helps me out at weekends and holidays"... "Everything is working well".

What didn't go so well

39. When asked what didn't go so well carers identified some key areas for improvement including; recognising themselves as a carer and being recognised as a carer; even at a carers' event one ethnic minority carer stated

"I am not a carer, just his wife".

40. Services recognising carers is an issue that was raised by many of the carers interviewed; When trying to get support a carer of three young people with learning disabilities stated that

"Everything is a battle".

41. Carers felt they are not valued, with one older carer stating that "most other benefits are higher than carers' allowance and yet we save so much money in giving care".

42. Isolation and loneliness are key challenges for carers;

"We don't get the chance to see family and friends like we used to."

A carer of someone with dementia.

43. Managing the balance between work and caring was discussed with many carers, whilst some had good experiences, some continued to have poor experiences:

“My manager asked if I can give them more of an idea of when mum will be ill.”

A working carer of an elderly parent. 40% of carers identified this as a challenge.

44. Over 55% of carers identified that the support did not always work well for them, with many citing they need more support/ time. 56% stated they have no time to themselves.

“I can’t get a break sorted, I would just like the chance to have a bath.”

A parent carer of three people with a learning disability.

What would improve support in the future

45. When asked what would improve support in the future carers stated:

“We need to be involved in planning support for the person we care for.”

With 52% stating they want their caring role recognised by professionals.

46. 40% of carers felt a little more time to themselves would improve their overall wellbeing, with one parent carer of a person with a learning disability stating:

“I would just like to have a meal out with friends, where I can relax”. Parent Carer of a person with a Learning Disability.

Another stated:

“It would be great to do more gardening again”.

Carer of someone with Dementia.

47. Carers want to have the opportunity to engage with other carers of similar experience;

“I want to talk to someone who really understands what I am going through”

A carer of someone with a life-limiting illness.

Another carer felt the support of other carers would help as:

“I have no one to ask things of, someone who has experience of the things I am going through”

48. Carers agreed on six work streams, reflecting the key priorities from the feedback received (as set out in paragraphs 13-18 above), these are:

- a. Identification
- b. Recognition
- c. Information and advice

- d. Rights
 - e. Connection
 - f. Independence and Wellbeing
49. Three cross-cutting themes were suggested, and to be considered within all workstreams;
- a. Young carers preparing for adulthood
 - b. Working carers
 - c. Carers with additional disadvantages
50. Carers have agreed priority workstreams as reflected in the accompanying Action Plan.
51. Work has progressed even while the Action Plan has been formulated. Over the past six months highlights include:
- a. A young adult carers' project to improve the young adult carer pathway
 - b. The procurement of the Carers' Wellbeing Service which will improve support for carers
 - c. The start of the work in developing a GP practice resource pack for carers coordinated by NHS England
 - d. A hospital led review of the discharge pathway, to support improved carer identification

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 52.
- a) Do nothing

Not producing a new strategy and action plan would miss an opportunity to improve support for Doncaster carers at a time when, following the Covid pandemic, the pressures on them are greater than ever.

- 53.
- b) Coproduce and formally launch a new strategy

A new strategy and action plan provides the opportunity to work alongside Doncaster's carers to make progress on issues and areas for improvement that are most important to them. In addition there is opportunity to:

- Launch the strategy across the Borough, which will support in raising the carer profile and identification of more carers
- Celebrate progress that has been made in the delivery so far.
- Ensure emerging issues and best practices are embedded in all developments.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

54. The All Age Carers' Strategy has been co-produced with carers; this means the vision, purpose, outcomes, and priorities reflect those of all carers in Doncaster.

55. The plans supporting the strategy will align with the strategic plans; including the Doncaster Place Plan and are supported by the Adult Social Care Framework, as well as all relevant legislation. Regular updates and challenge will take place through the carer governance structures, and an annual report will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing board. Launching the strategy will provide the opportunity for partners to note the progress made so far, celebrate success and continue to deliver the plans to positively impact Doncaster carers.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

56.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>Working carers will be better supported through the delivery of the strategy, thus able to sustain in employment whilst providing care for longer.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>Carers will have the opportunity to follow more personal interest such as physical activity or art through the implementation of the strategy. This will result in improved wellbeing for carers.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares 	<p>Young carers and young adult carers will be supported and encouraged to continue in education and build foundations for their future. Young adult carers will be better supported in preparing for adulthood.</p>

	young people for the world of work	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>All age carers will be better supported through the implementation of a strategy which promotes improved identification and recognition. Carers will be encouraged to access support to improve their wellbeing at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>In supporting carers more people with needs for support will be able to stay in their own homes for longer.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>Through focussing on improved identification and recognition the carers will be supported at an earlier point and have access to carer networks and support. The strategy promotes the development of resilience and connection which will reduce ongoing needs and offers good value for money.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

57. There is an assumption that those who have supported the development of the strategy, will continue to invest time and resources in the delivery of the plans.
58. There is an assumption that whilst the pandemic continues, there will be no other significant challenges such as lockdowns/closures of services as was previously, and services will be able to sufficient priority to the strategy's actions.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials HP Date 9/3/22]

59. Under the Care Act 2014 the Council has a duty to support Carers who are ordinarily resident in its area and carry out an assessment when it appears the carer may have needs for support, whether currently or in the future, considering what must be done to meet the needs of the carer when eligibility criteria are met.

The Carers All Age Strategy should reflect these obligations and shape the Council's approach from 2022 to 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 09/3/22]

60. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report and any further developments arising from embedding the Carers' Strategy should be reported as appropriate as more is known. Any associated financial implications will need to be covered as part of that process.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials CB Date 09/03/22]

61. There are no immediate HR implications arising from this report and any resulting requirements that may impact on the establishment will need to be subject to a separate report.

The council does already have supportive provisions for its workforce and makes temporary or permanent adjustments to assist employees through the Maximising Attendance Procedure.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 08/03/22]

62. There are no anticipated technology implications in relation to this report. However, any requirement for new, enhanced or replacement technology to support the delivery of the All Age Carers' Strategy for Doncaster 2022-2025 must follow the agreed technology governance processes for the Council and partners.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS Date 08/03/22]

63. The health and wellbeing of carers in Doncaster is not only vital to carers themselves and their families, it is vital for the wider economy. Pressures on health and social care services particularly during the pandemic are increasing and consequently, the health and wellbeing of all residents of Doncaster are paramount. Carers of all ages are entitled to respite from caring commitments and to ensure that their own health and care needs are met whether it be physical or mental wellbeing and, in particular, peer support and mechanisms to reduce the impact of social isolation should always be available. The co-design element of the carers strategy and carer wellbeing support service ensures that the carer's voice is heard and health and wellbeing needs are at the centre of what should always be a person-centered approach.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials TB Date 09/03/22]

64. The strategy will recognise carers of various circumstances and will ensure that the work undertaken accurately meets a diverse range of carers' needs to ensure equality of access and experience of support. As a result of the strategy work and findings, support mechanisms in Doncaster will work proactively with more diversely affected groups including young adult carers, parent carers, working carers, carers of those with mental illness, carers of those with a learning disability, carers supporting those with dementia, ethnic minority carers, carers of those with a long term and life-limiting

illness, and carers supporting those at end of life.

65. As part of the strategy overview, the Carers' Strategic Oversight Group and the Carers' Action Group will monitor work streams to ensure equality of access and experience of work delivered through the strategy.

CONSULTATION

66. As mentioned within the report, extensive consultation has taken place to feed into the development of the All Age Carers' Strategy, with carers coproducing the vision, purpose, outcomes and principles. The strategy has been developed based on 148 survey responses and 54 interviews with carers from diverse circumstances - these will be fully reflected with the strategy and plans.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

67.

- Doncaster's All Age Carer's Strategy 2022- 2025
- Doncaster's All Age Carer's Strategy Action Plan

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

68. Not applicable.

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Teresa Bainbridge, Carers Lead
01302 862058, Teresa.bainbridge@doncaster.gov.uk

Denise Beevers, Locality Service Manager
01302 736774, den.beevers@doncaster.gov.uk

Kay Kirk, Carer – Chair Carers Strategy Working Group
Kay830kirk@btinternet.com

Phil Holmes
Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing