

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Board/Cabinet

Date: 13 and 19 March 2024

Wards affected: All wards

Report Title: Torbay Interagency Carers' Strategy 2024-27

When does the decision need to be implemented? 1 April 2024

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1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 This report proposes the adoption of Torbay Interagency Carer's Strategy 2024-27. Carers are people who support family, friends and neighbours who cannot manage alone due to their health and care needs. (More detail in Appendix 1)
- 1.2 Carers can be any age, so the Strategy (set out at Appendix 3) has relevance for both Adults and Children's Services. The strategy will run for three years and be monitored quarterly by Strategy Steering Groups which involve Carers and various statutory and voluntary sector partners.
- 1.3 This proposed Strategy brings together the work that Health and Care organisations in Torbay plan to undertake with Carers during 2024-2027. This ensures that organisations meet their legal obligations to Carers, work towards best practice / quality standards and that their work is joined up. It ensures that Carers are at the heart of their work, that Carers are aware of services and that these services meet Carers' needs.
- 1.4 The proposed Strategy at Appendix 3 includes partner organisations' service standards. Over the coming months, a detailed action plan will be developed with Carers and partners. The Strategy with action plan will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Cabinet for approval in June 2024.
- 1.5 The Strategy articulates how Torbay Council will deliver the Devon Wide Commitment to Carers, which is:

- embedding the principles set out here in all our ways of working and inviting all our partners to join us in doing so;
- adopting good employment principles and practices for those Carers who work or want to work for us, as promoted by Employers for Carers and invite all employers to do the same;
- using all the ways we have available to us to encourage awareness and support for Carers in communities and businesses.
- developing detailed action plans for our Devon Sustainability and Transformation Partnership and for our member organisations to ensure these commitments become a reality.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 Carers provide huge benefit to the person that they care for but also to health and care services. Carers UK estimates that the value of the unpaid care that Carers provide is £162 billion - greater than the budget for NHS health service spending¹.

2.2 Although it is generally accepted that the 2021 Census under-identified Carers, Torbay clearly has a much higher than average number of Carers providing over 20 hours of care. We are 6th highest in England for Carers undertaking 50+ hours of care.

Provision of unpaid care, Torbay 2021	Number	%	England 2021
Provides no unpaid care	118,359	88.8%	91.2%
Provides 19 hours or less unpaid care a week	6,514	4.9%	4.3%
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	3,207	2.4%	1.8%
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	5,185	3.9%	2.6%
Total: All usual residents aged 5 and over	133,265		

2.2 This comes at a cost to the Carer. The National Carers' Survey shows that Carers' quality of life is deteriorating year on year, and this is mirrored in Torbay².

2.3 Caring is a social determinant of health³ with impact on Carers' health and wellbeing.

2.4 Carers UK State of Caring Report 2023⁴ highlighted Carers' concerns which make stark reading. A summary is at Appendix 2, but with a few highlighted here.

¹ Unpaid carers are providing care worth a staggering £162 billion a year- the budget for NHS health service spending in England in the 2020/21 financial year was £156 billion. Carers UK. Valuing Carers 2021.

² [Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England - NHS Digital](#)

³ [Caring as a social determinant of health \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ [State of Caring survey | Carers UK](#)

- More than three quarters of all Carers (79%) feel stressed or anxious, half (49%) feel depressed, and half (50%) feel lonely.
- 72% of those on Carers' Allowance worry about the impact of caring responsibilities (e.g. petrol for hospital visits, heating, specific dietary requirements) on their finances and 46% are cutting back on essentials, including food and heating.
- 27% of unpaid Carers have bad or very bad mental health, Despite feeling they are at breaking point, nearly three quarters (73%) of Carers with bad or very bad mental health are continuing to provide care.
- 40% had given up work due to caring responsibilities.

2.5 This Carers' Strategy promotes the importance of early identification and support of Carers in order to mitigate the negative impacts of caring and help them to thrive. The Strategy Steering Group agrees targets with organisations and holds them to account.

2.6 With young Carers especially, early identification and support is essential. Otherwise the impact of caring can affect school attendance, attainment and future prospects.

2.7 It is essential that support for Carers is easy to access, and preventative in nature. Supporting Carers not only benefits the Carer, but also the person / people for whom they care, thus improving both parties' health and wellbeing whilst reducing inequalities.

2.8 Given the evident impact of caring on health, wellbeing, finances and employment, support in this Strategy will be developed / directed at improving this wherever possible.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That the Torbay's Interagency Carers' Strategy 2023-27 (as set out at Appendix 3) be approved.

Appendices

1. Who is a Carer?
2. Appendix 2: Summary of Carers UK State of Caring Survey
3. Draft Torbay Carers' Strategy 2024 – 2027

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 2024-27 Strategy builds on evidence and learning from Torbay's 2021-24 Carers' Strategy and national good practice. Services work very closely with partners across Devon Integrated Care System.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 There are no other options under consideration. This Strategy is a means of coordinating and prioritising partnership working to the benefit of Carers.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 There is no additional financial implication within this Strategy. The actions to achieve the priorities within this Strategy will be within current budgets.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 This Strategy meets the legal obligations of Health and Social Care organisations under:
- Care Act 2014
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Health and Care Act 2022

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 There has been extensive consultation with the Carers of Torbay. This has been managed by Engaging Communities South West in order to maintain independence.
- 5.2 Carers have also been involved in shaping the strategy and producing 'I statements' about their priorities. We continue to work with them in the design, delivery and evaluation of Carers' Services.
- 5.3 Carers' Representatives sit on the Strategy Steering Group and all working parties.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 Any services procured or provided by the public sector organisations under this Strategy will meet Social Value Act (2012) requirements.
- 6.2 The Carers' Enabling, Assessment and Advocacy contract and Carers of Adults with a Learning Disability contract have both been procured under this framework.

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 This Strategy does not alter ways of working that will impact on Climate Change. However on-line meetings, courses and support, with the associated benefit for Climate Change will continue to be developed.
- 7.2 There are Carers' Centres in each town which will reduce unnecessary travel. These are all accessible by nearby public transport.

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 If the Strategy were not approved, this would have significant negative impact on Torbay's Carers, their health, wellbeing and feeling of value. This would impact on the health and wellbeing of people they care for, and by increasing the risk of Carer breakdown, increase admissions to hospital / residential care and strain on Torbay's Health and Social Care.

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups'

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	Young Carers and older mutual Carers		
People with caring Responsibilities	Yes		
People with a disability	Yes - indirectly		
Women or men	(Targeting male Carers as underrepresented)		No differential
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)	Yes – explicitly targeting these groups to have positive impact		
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No differential
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	(promoting support to LGBTQ+ Carers)		No differential
People who are transgendered	(as above)		No differential
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No differential

Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			No differential
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Addressing support with Carers' finances and in areas of deprivation		
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Positive impact on Carers' Health and Wellbeing and those who they care for.		

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 None