

Executive**On 4th July 2006**

Report Title: Review of the Carers Strategy 2005-2008

Report of: Director of Social Services

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Information

1. Purpose

1.1 This report updates the Executive on progress to date in implementing the Haringey Carers Strategy and anticipates the next stage of its development.

2. Introduction by Executive Member

2.1 Steady progress has been made in implementing the strategy that sets out our commitment to unpaid carers. Carers play an important role supporting some of our most vulnerable residents. We will therefore continue to focus effort to further improve the services.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the report be noted.

Report Authorised by: Director of Social Services

Contact Officer: Jan Bryant, Carers Development Manager 020 8489 3420

4. Executive Summary

4.1 The Haringey Carers Strategy 2005-2008 represents the culmination of the championing of the carers' agenda over the past several years. It sets out the vision for how services need to be developed to support carers to care and to live as full a life as possible.

4.2 Progress has been made in implementing the strategy and with a redesign of business processes improvement will accelerate.

5. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

5.1 The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 places new duties on local authorities to support carers in their caring role and promote their social inclusion.

5.2 The Strategy fully reflects the key elements of the Act that carers should be supported to care *and* to live as full a life as possible.

5.3 The Strategy recognises the importance of information in enabling carers to make choices about how to balance caring with a life of their own.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

6.1 Background papers

- Haringey Carers Strategy 2005-2008

7. Background

7.1 There is now a solid legislative framework for supporting carers. In particular, the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act, 2004 places a duty on local authorities to inform carers of their right to a carer's assessment and make every effort to ensure carers can access the same work, education, training and leisure opportunities available to those without caring responsibilities.

7.2 Co-operation between authorities in planning and providing services is required at a strategic and an individual level to support carers to care and promote their well-being.

7.3 Haringey's multi-agency Carers Strategy 2005-2008 was formally adopted on behalf of the Council in January, 2006. It represents a commitment by health and social care partners to work together to improve support for carers over the next three years. Actions within and between Council departments and across all sectors and settings will deliver the Haringey vision that carers are empowered to care and live a better life.

8. Description

8.1 The Strategy is ambitious but deliverable over its intended implementation period. It identifies 8 key areas of work: information, assessment of carers' needs, carers' health and short breaks, carers' employment and financial security, children and young people as carers, the voice of carers in service planning, commissioning plans and staff and carers' training.

- 8.2 Performance management is the responsibility of the Carers Partnership Board and its members face a challenge in sharing the vision and working collaboratively. However there has been progress in meeting the key outcomes which carers identify as important to them.
- 8.3 Carers reiterate their need for accurate and timely information. Now more information is available where carers are e.g. in GP surgeries and accessible on the web-site, including in translation.
- 8.4 Haringey performance for 2005/06 is considered to be at an acceptable level nationally for providing services to carer following a carer assessment (C62). Take A Break as a carer's service is available to all carers of adults who provide regular and substantial care, without the on cost of a voucher scheme.
- 8.5 Two pilot projects are underway to test the role of the voluntary sector in carer assessments and the early evidence is that this is assisting 'hidden' carers to gain access to carers' services.
- 8.6 A GP protocol for identifying and referring carers for carer assessments is in place and health checks for carers will be a feature of Carers Week in Haringey.
- 8.7 Employment support for service users in Mental Health is being extended to carers and flexible working has been promoted to Council employees who are carers.
- 8.8 Young carers are being engaged as contributors and facilitators at a strategy development event to take place in Carers Week 2006.
- 8.9 Resolution of contractual issues and agreement with Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust about joint funding have removed barriers to the development of Haringey Carers Centre as a provider of universal services to carers and a carers' 'voice'.
- 8.9 Carer awareness briefings for staff and skills training for carers are underway.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 The local knowledge of carers and their views have significantly shaped the content of the Haringey Carers Strategy. This gives it undoubted strength. Developing the strategy is a dynamic process and an anticipated next step is reviewing progress with carers' feedback.

10. Summary and Conclusions

- 10.1 The multi-agency Haringey Carers Strategy serves as a direction of travel for all the partners and the Partnership Board is facing the challenge of moving the strategy on. Lack of capacity is an issue that has slowed down progress as is the delay in the development of the Carers Centre.

- 10.2 Historically the Council has filled the gap in carers' services by operating a Carers Support Team. With funding agreed the Carers Centre is now in the position to take on the business of supporting carers and the Council's role and relationships can be realigned. In particular carers' requests for carer assessments need to be routed to care management teams.
- 10.3 With support for carers securely mainstreamed, the Lead Officer for carers will have capacity freed to boost the Partnership Board as the key driver of the carers' agenda in Haringey. The Carers Partnership Board should oversee the delivery of the Carers Strategy.
- 10.4 In order to discharge its responsibilities, it is proposed that the Board be strengthened with new membership, team-building and leadership and revised terms of reference. The contribution of carers to the partnership should be properly recognised.
- 10.5 The Partnership Board should manage the review and update of the Carers Strategy to establish ownership. The outcome of consultations with carers and the revised Strategy will be reported at a carers' conference.
- 10.6 A whole systems approach as outlined will achieve a service system that is fit for purpose and renew strategic direction.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1 That Members note the report.

12. Comments of the Director of Finance

- 12.1 The Council's main source of funding for this strategy is the Carer's Grant, although expenditure is also incurred through the mainstream Children's and Social Care budgets. The grant allocation to the Council is £1.094m in total in 2006/07.
- 12.2 Under the conditions of the grant, 20% is intended for children's services to support families of disabled children and young carers, 5% for administration and 75% for adults and older people's services.
- 12.3 There are no direct financial implications identified in this report. The financial details associated with the strategy need to be developed and the implications identified for the Council and its partners.

13. Comments of the Head of Legal Services

- 13.1 The relevant legal framework is outlined accurately in the main body of this report.

14. Equalities Implications

- 14.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the process of developing the Carers Strategy and action points identified to better meet the needs of carers from some black and minority ethnic groups and men who were underrepresented as service users.
- 14.2 A programme of information and outreach to African, African Caribbean, Greek and Turkish Cypriot and Kurdish carers about services was identified. This would include information about carers' services available in community languages.
- 14.3 Child care and transport to attend carers' forums and support groups was also identified.
- 14.4 The Carers Service was going to consult further on the needs of male carers.
- 14.5 A review of equalities performance since the introduction of the Strategy took place in November 2005. It identified more equalities issues such as an under representation of Asian and Other European people receiving a carer assessment and a worsening in the number of carer assessments that did not include equalities monitoring. However, the number of men accessing the service had improved.
- 14.6 The Carers Service then identified strategies to take corrective action. The service has produced leaflets in 10 community languages. It is essential that this work continues and that future equalities monitoring is carried out to identify outcomes and recommend actions to address any imbalances.
- 14.7 The latest equalities monitoring information shows the ethnicity of people receiving a carer's assessment as: 6% Asian, 16% African or African Caribbean, 3% Other European, 52% White, 23% unknown.

15. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

- 15.1 None.