

Committee(s): Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee – For Information	Dated: 30/06/2021
Subject: City carers update report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 9
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
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Summary

This report updates Members on the support provided to informal carers in the City of London.

A Carers Strategy 2019–2022 was approved by Members and published in 2019, and an action plan was developed. This provides the framework for the development and delivery of services to support carers. As part of this, the City of London Corporation commissions a City Connections Service which includes specific support activities and initiatives to support carers, including young carers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the context for delivery of services. Whilst the City of London Corporation and its commissioned service to carers was flexible during the restrictions across 2020-21, feedback from carers and the Member COVID-19 Working Party has led to developments in the support offered.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation (the Corporation) recognises and values the contributions that informal carers make within families, communities, workplaces and society. Informal carers are those defined as anyone who spends time looking after or helping a friend, family member or neighbour who, because of their health and care needs, would find it difficult to cope without this help. People can be carers regardless of age or whether they themselves identify as a carer.
2. In 2019, a new Carers Strategy 2019–22 was agreed by Members and published. It provides the framework for the design and development of services, support and activities for those caring for someone within the Square Mile, and for carers working for the Corporation. An accompanying action plan was subsequently developed, and a Carers Strategy Implementation Group was set up.
3. The Care Act 2014 introduced important new rights for carers, giving them similar entitlements to the people for whom they care. Carers now have legal rights to an assessment of their needs by Adult Social Care (ASC), and support where eligible. In 2019/20 the Corporation provided support to 45 carers. These carers will have a support plan with activities and assistance designed to meet agreed outcomes.
4. The Corporation offers a full range of services as part of our universal offer; commissioning specific support activities and initiatives to support carers through the City Connections Service. This service provides a range of support to anyone who cares for someone in the City of London – they may live elsewhere but care for a City of London resident, and carers do not need to be registered or assessed by the Corporation to access this support. The service also provides support to young carers.
5. The new City Connections service (which started in April 2019) took in the existing Carers Forum, which was previously a monthly meeting but had low attendance. The commission for the new service aimed to provide a wider range of activities and initiatives to support carers in relation to a number of outcomes.
6. Given that the City of London has a small population, a wider more encompassing service tends to offer better value for money and economies of scale which in turn leads to a better range of services than multiple small or restricted groups could. The City Connections Service is commissioned to link with and signpost to a range of other services in the local landscape to help meet outcomes.

Delivery through the pandemic

7. The pandemic changed the context in which strategies, action plans and services were delivered.
8. City of London ASC has continued to provide services to carers and those cared for as usual.

9. City Connections has also continued to accept referrals for its services and has developed and adapted some of its services to the changing situation in several ways. This is covered in the presentation from City Connections.
10. Although a Carers Strategy Implementation Group was established and met twice, further meetings were delayed due to the pandemic.

Current Position

11. In September 2020, the Corporation received a report on carer experiences pre and during the pandemic, a report was presented to Community and Children's Services outlining the services provided to carers.
12. The Member COVID-19 Working Party considered the departmental response to the pandemic and also considered the services provided to carers during the pandemic. It recommended that an increased effort be made to discover carers in the City, that a carers' lead member be appointed, and that the Corporation engage more fully in co-production of services for carers.
13. There has been ongoing work in relation to support provided to carers and this includes:
 - Appointment of a lead member for carers – Sue Pearson.
 - A workshop held in February 2021, involving carers in discussions on key priorities for work in the Strategy Action Plan. One of the key overarching areas for action was identified as communication and information sharing. This workshop effectively relaunched the Carers Strategy Implementation Group which now has carers as integral members.
 - The Director of Community and Children's Services met with carers to discuss ideas for improved support.
 - The Department is currently engaging with carers to identify how we could enhance the existing support offer to carers and pilot enhanced support.
 - Part of the City Connections Contract is to expand the reach of support services to carers, and this is ongoing. City Connections have specifically been making a wide range of links in the east of the City to try and reach carers there and have produced leaflets in community languages.
 - Work is underway with the Contact Centre to highlight carers on the system so that information and support can be targeted appropriately and applications for red badges can be streamlined.
 - As part of their offer, secured counselling support is available to carers for free through the City Wellbeing Centre.
14. The Head of Adult Social Care Services attended a Carers Coffee Call at the start of 2021 to talk through questions that carers had in relation to the carer assessment. The discussions resulted in the following:
 - An action to produce Guidance for Adult Carers in the City. Whilst there is currently a guidance leaflet it does not go into depth on Carers Assessments and what to expect.

- A commitment to review inconsistencies in the approach of Adult Social Care services. The service is finalising a new Quality Assurance Framework, this includes reviewing carers assessments. The review is due in September 2021, with a view to then producing a guide for social workers.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

15. Strategic implications

The Department contributes to the following Corporate Plan objectives:

- Number 1: People are safe and feel safe
- Number 2: People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- Number 3: People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential
- Number 9: We are digitally and physically well connected and responsive.

16. Financial implications: None

17. Resource implications: None

18. Legal implications: None

19. Risk implications: None

20. Equalities implications

- This report is presented for information and, as such, does not have a specific EQIA attached to it. An EQIA was completed in terms of our initial response to COVID-19 and, where services are introduced, changed or decommissioned, a specific EQIA would be carried out. Further, a specific EQIA was completed in preparation for the Carers Strategy 2019-22.

21. Climate implications: None

22. Security implications: None

Conclusion

23. This report updates Members on the support available to informal carers in the City of London. These services sit within the priorities of the Carers Strategy 2019–2022 and associated workstream plans.
24. The pandemic has had an impact on delivery of the Carer Strategy action plan, and services have had to adapt to the changing context. Therefore, the action plan is in the process of being refreshed to incorporate the emerging needs, and a commitment made to review the action plan annually. Carers are now involved in workstream plans and the Carer Strategy Implementation Group meetings.

25. Further action has been taken to discuss existing services with carers and consult on a pilot for an enhanced service to begin shortly.

Appendices

- [Community and Children's Grand Committee Carers Update Paper, 29/01/2021](#)
- [Appendix 1 Carer concerns and responses](#)
- [Appendix 2 Carers LA comparison](#)
- [Appendix 3 City of London Unpaid Carers](#)

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