

Committee:	Dated:
Community and Children's Services Committee	11 September 2015
Subject: Carers' Strategy	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Decision

Summary

This report seeks approval for the draft Carers' Strategy 2015–18, which sets out the City Corporation's priorities for supporting adult carers in the Square Mile for the next three years.

The strategy has been developed based on analysis of evidence and consultation with carers and stakeholders, and in the context of recent legislative change. The strategy sets out six priorities that will inform an action plan to improve outcomes for carers in the City of London. A key aim of the strategy is to identify and support more carers across the City, at an earlier stage, with a focus on improving their health and wellbeing. For existing carers the strategy will deliver improved support and services tailored to individual needs.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- approve the Carers' Strategy 2015–18.

Main Report

Background

1. The Carers' Strategy 2015–18 has been prepared to replace the current strategy, which has now reached its expiry date. It aims to improve the early identification of carers, deliver improved support and services to carers, and ensure the City Corporation is delivering the requirements of the Care Act 2014.
2. The document sets out the legislative framework and context within which carers' needs are met and profiles carers providing care to someone living in the City, and sets out the findings from a range of stakeholder engagement. From this evidence base a set of six strategic priorities are described which will inform the strategy's implementation.

Current Position

3. The Care Act 2014 includes significant and welcome measures to improve the rights of adults caring for adults, including:
 - giving eligible carers a right to receive services
 - placing a duty on local authorities to promote the wellbeing of carers
 - duties to provide information and advice, advocacy and preventative services which reduce carers' needs for support
 - new rights to assessment, meaning that carers are put on an equal footing with the person they care for
 - a national eligibility threshold bringing greater clarity around entitlement for carers and for those they care for
 - measures to ease the transition between children's and adults' services.
4. The Census 2011 identified 576 carers living in the City. The large majority (79 per cent) provide care of between 1–19 hours a week, with 12 per cent (70 carers) reporting providing in excess of 50 hours' care a week.
5. The proportion of the City's population providing care to another adult makes up 7.8 per cent of the population – lower than both the wider London population (8.4 per cent) and across England (10.2 per cent).
6. The number of carers identified by the Census is significantly higher than those known to services provided by the City Corporation. In 2014/15 the City Corporation assessed the needs of 53 carers – about one in ten of those reported by the Census. Carers who are known to City services are more likely to be those providing higher levels of care (more than 20 hours weekly), those whose caring role is impacting on their health and wellbeing, and those who are older carers.
7. Analysis of the Census identifies that 29 per cent of the carer population are from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds.
8. The City Corporation supports carers through a commissioned City Carers' Service which provides support, information and advice to adult carers and can help them to find practical and emotional support. Other support is provided through universal services such as City Advice, City 50+ and the work of the Adult Social Care team.
9. To develop a new strategy to support carers the City Corporation commissioned Carers UK – a specialist national charity working to support carers and improve services provided for them. Carers UK work across the UK and therefore their work is informed by knowledge of national good practice.
10. To develop the strategy Carers UK surveyed City carers and consulted with key stakeholders. Information was also drawn from the Carers Survey – a mandatory biennial survey undertaken by the City Corporation. This process has identified a number of opportunities to improve support through more flexible provision, better advice and awareness, promotion of services, better signposting by General Practitioners and more tailored support and service offers.

11. The resulting strategy that has been developed identifies six priorities:

Priority 1: carers are identified at the earliest opportunity and offered support to prevent, reduce or delay their needs and the needs of their cared for

Priority 2: carers are provided with personalised, integrated support that is tailored to their assessed needs and aspirations, gives them choice and control, and allows them to take a break

Priority 3: carers are involved and consulted in the care and support provided to their loved ones, treated with respect and dignity, and have their skills and knowledge recognised

Priority 4: carers are supported to improve and maintain good physical and mental health and wellbeing

Priority 5: carers are supported to improve their individual social and economic wellbeing, reduce isolation and fulfil their potential in life

Priority 6: carers are supported to cope with changes and emergencies and to plan for the future, including when the caring role is coming to an end and to have a life after caring.

12. For each priority the strategy sets out the outcome measures that will reflect their achievement. This achievement will be driven by an action plan that will be developed once the strategy has been approved. Key actions will include:

- mainstreaming of carer identification across health, social care and other internal and commissioned services
- preventative support services including improved advice and information
- assessments compliant with the requirements of the Care Act
- support to improve social and economic wellbeing
- support to carers to have a life beyond and after caring.

13. The strategy recognises the diversity within the City's population of carers. The strategy is committed to delivering more personalised approaches, ensuring the support is tailored to the needs and aspirations of individuals. Through this we will meet the needs of carers from all communities in the City, based on their individual needs.

14. The action plan driving the delivery of this strategy will be reported to and monitored by the Adult Wellbeing Partnership. Its delivery will be the responsibility of the Adult Social Care team and the City's commissioned providers.

15. Members should note that the City Corporation is participating in a peer review of its services for adult carers which will take place in September 2015. This is led by members of the London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. Any recommendations arising from this review will also be incorporated into the strategy's action plan.

16. Members should further note that the needs of children and young people who provide caring roles are the subject of a separate Young Carers' Strategy, which reflects the specific needs and protections for this group.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The renewal of the Carers' Strategy is an action of the Department of Community and Children's Services Business Plan.

Conclusion

18. Carers play a vital role in supporting vulnerable adults and enabling them to stay in their own homes and local communities. However, caring can have an impact on a carer's own health and wellbeing, and therefore it is critically important that they receive the support and services they need. This strategy sets out the City Corporation's commitment to deliver this support to ensure that our carers remain valued and are given the help they need in the caring role, and their life beyond that.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Carers' Strategy 2015–18

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