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| <b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>  | <b>WARDS: ALL</b>                         |
| <b>REPORT TITLE</b><br>Themed Debate – Launch of the Carers Action Plan  |   |
| <b>REPORT OF</b><br>Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care   |   |
| <b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b><br>Full Council   | <b>DATE</b><br>22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024 |
| <b>STRATEGIC CONTEXT</b><br><br><p>We Make Camden seeks to bring communities together to tackle social inequality, making Camden a place where everyone can get the support they need. The Carers Action Plan recognises the diverse experiences of carers and sets out a range of actions to ensure they are supported fully in a joined up and cohesive way. It will bring together existing initiatives and new approaches, in line with the neighbourhood teams to support carers. It seeks to reflect both the diversity of carers' experiences and their lives beyond caring to avoid grouping people as carers and nothing else. The Way We Work<sup>1</sup> sets out a call to action for each of us to come together and explore complex issues in an open and safe way, enabling us to develop solutions that work for carers. We want carers to continue to feel proud to live in Camden, love our vibrant social mix, cultural and creative heritage, green spaces and strong local identity.</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 and associated statutory guidance gives clear duties to local authorities to identify unpaid carers, assess their needs and prevent, reduce and delay future need for support. These duties have influenced the Supporting People Connecting Communities strategy<sup>2</sup> which aims to ensure that Camden residents, including carers, live independently in the place they call home, doing the things that matter to them. It has specific aims to ensure carers feel valued and supported. In the strategy it demonstrates the Council's intention to achieve this priority 'by coproducing a plan with carers which focuses on the issues defined by them.' This plan is the Carers Action Plan.</p> |   |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b><br><br><p>This report provides background for the Full Council debate, on the Carers Action Plan, being held on 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2024.</p> <p>The Carers Action Plan is a commitment to recognise and provide better support to unpaid carers. It is a plan designed by carers for carers that will show services, what is important to carers and, what actions could be taken that would make a</p>  |   |

<sup>1</sup> [The-Way-We-Work.pdf \(wemakecamden.org.uk\)](https://www.camden.gov.uk/the-way-we-work)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.camden.gov.uk/supporting-people-connecting-communities>

difference to carers lives. This starts with an understanding of who a carer is and identifying more unpaid carers.

The action plan is for unpaid, or informal, carers. These are carers who are not paid by health and social care services, or the person they are supporting, for their caring role. The plan is currently focussed on carers aged 18 years and over who provide care for people who are 16 years and over.

During the debate, full Council will hear the lived experiences of carers in Camden, their aspirations for the Carers Action Plan and hopes for the future. The Council will also hear from Camden Carers who are an organisation that supports unpaid carers, and provide a range of services.

The report is being presented to the Council in recognition of the contribution made by unpaid carers in Camden; to understand the need to provide better joined up support for carers across services and highlight the Carers Action Plan as a way to do this.

The Full Council themed debate will also be the launch of the Carers Action Plan.

### **Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information**

No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report.

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council is asked to consider and note the report.

Signed



**Avril Mayhew, Director of Adult Social Care Operations**

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2024

## 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

### Who is an unpaid carer?

- 1.1. Everyday people take on new caring responsibilities, performing a crucial role in families and in their wider communities, by providing support, care and help with day-to-day tasks to and for those who otherwise would struggle to manage alone.
- 1.2. An unpaid carer supports someone they know, such as a family member, friend, or neighbour. Sometimes a carer takes on additional responsibilities gradually as the person they care for would struggle without their help. Unpaid carers are sometimes called informal carers.
- 1.3. Common definitions of unpaid carers speak of support for people who are disabled, have an illness or long-term condition, including mental health; learning disability and or substance misuse, neurodiversity, or support for people who need extra help as they grow older.
- 1.4. A carer could be supporting more than one person, or they could be providing support but also be in need of care and support themselves.
- 1.5. A carer might provide support with practical tasks such as with personal care, helping with cooking and cleaning, managing medications, taking people to appointments, helping them get out and about in the community and helping sort money and bills. Or carers may offer support such as advocating for people, finding information or providing emotional support.
- 1.6. Carers have said their caring role is broad. No two days are the same, and responsibilities vary from person to person. A carer can be providing support anywhere between a few hours a week to 24-hour care. They may live in the same house as the person they care for, or they may live somewhere else. A caring role can also change over time.

### Carer data

- 1.7. Carers provide invaluable support to residents with care and support needs who would otherwise need to fund their care or approach NHS or Council services.
- 1.8. According to the most recent census data, it is estimated that 14,605 carers live in Camden. This means 7% of Camden's population (aged over 5 years) are providing some level of unpaid care.
- 1.9. Between April 2022 and March 2023, 1165 people were known to Adult Social Care as unpaid carers, 580 of which were new to Adult Social Care services. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 4400 carers were registered with Camden Carers, an organisation that supports carers in Camden. This data suggests that there are people in Camden who maybe missing out on help

and support for their caring role.

- 1.10. A 2021 report published by Public Health England<sup>3</sup> concluded that there was mounting evidence that unpaid caring should be considered a social determinant of health; and that people with caring responsibilities often experience poor mental and physical health and have their own unmet care needs.
- 1.11. Carers UK reported unpaid carers continue to suffer poorer health with some groups adversely affected, noting 60% of carers report a long-term health condition or disability compared to 50% of non-carers.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.12. The 2021 census found that, 5% of carers in Camden were themselves long-term unwell or disabled. Moreover, a greater proportion of carers in Camden reported less good health than non-carers whilst still supporting the people/person they care for.
- 1.13. In the 2021-2022 Survey of Adult Carers in England, when asked how much time carers in Camden have to look after themselves (in terms of getting enough sleep or eating well), 63.9% of respondents said either they can't look after themselves well enough or feel they were neglecting themselves.

#### The Carers Action Plan

- 1.14. Supporting People, Connecting Communities is the Council's strategy for Living and Ageing Well in Camden. There is a priority within this strategy to ensure 'carers and other informal networks of support are valued and supported.'
- 1.15. The strategy also states the Council's intention to achieve this priority "*by coproducing a plan with carers which focuses on the issues defined by them.*" This plan is the Carers Action Plan. The Carers Action Plan can be found in **appendix A** and an executive summary of the Carers Action Plan can be found in **appendix B**.
- 1.16. The Carers Action Plan is a commitment to recognise and support carers better. It is a plan to enable all services across the Camden Borough Partnership to work together to meet the needs of carers. This is in recognition that a whole system approach was taken to develop this plan, and this approach will also be needed to effectively support carers. The Borough Partnership is a partnership of Adult Social Care, Health partners, Voluntary Community Sector organisations and related commissioned services.
- 1.17. The action plan is for unpaid, or informal, carers. These are carers who are not paid by health and social care services, or the person they are supporting,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/caring-as-a-social-determinant-of-health-review-of-evidence>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.carersuk.org/press-releases/unpaid-carers-continue-to-suffer-poorer-health-with-some-groups-adversely-affected/>

for their caring role. The plan is currently focussed on carers aged 18 years and over who provide care for people who are 16 years and over.

- 1.18. Development of the action plan started 18 months ago, and it has been coproduced at every stage of production. This is detailed in section 4.
- 1.19. Alongside printed versions of the action plan, found in appendix A and B. There will be a dedicated website for the Carers Action Plan, which can be found at: <https://carersactionplan.camden.gov.uk>
- 1.20. The website will have the function to translate the site into different languages. An easy read version of the action plan will also be created. Over time, the action plan will be translated into at least Bengali and Somali, with other community languages considered as needed.
- 1.21. This report, and the Carers Action Plan, has been presented to full Council for debate, to recognise the contributions of unpaid carers in Camden and to hear their lived experiences. The report will also help full Council to understand and support the need to provide effective joined up support for carers across services and highlights the Carers Action Plan as a way to do this.
- 1.22. It is hoped that the full Council themed debate will use the opportunity to celebrate the launch of the Carers Action Plan.
- 1.23. This report will briefly show how the action plan is set out; how the action plan was coproduced and next steps after the launch of the Carers Action Plan.

## **2. CARERS ACTION PLAN: PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES**

- 2.1. The Carers Action Plan is designed to be a dynamic document and will change over time, as carers and services move forward together to deliver things that matter to carers in Camden.
- 2.2. The Care Act 2014 and associated statutory guidance gives clear duties to local authorities to identify unpaid carers, assess their needs and prevent, reduce and delay future need for support. Whilst these duties are in place, carers expressed concerns that not all carers identify themselves as carers and do not know their rights or how to access support. Carers also speak of the need for having better joined up health, social care and other council, voluntary and community services.
- 2.3. During coproduction activities, themes were identified from what carers said were important to them. These have been developed into five key principles to support carers, as well as priority areas for action.
- 2.4. The **principles for supporting carers**, can be found in Part I of the Carers Action Plan. These are fundamental and should underpin everything services do to support and relate to carers. These are fixed and are unlikely to change. The principles are:

- Identifying as a carer is an essential step to accessing support.
- Caring is intrinsically connected to a relationship.
- A carer is an individual person with their own needs and context.
- Caring responsibilities require time and energy.
- Connected services are vital to carers.

2.5. The **priority areas**, can be found in Part II of the Carers Action Plan. These are the identified priority areas where all services, but particularly those in health and social care, could make changes to benefit carers. As more information emerges and work continues with carers, Part II will be updated. It should reflect the views and experiences of as many carers as possible. The current priorities are:

- Communication
- Information and Advice
- Mental Health Support
- Carer Conversations (assessments)
- Emergency / Future Planning
- Health and Hospital Discharge
- Young Adult Carers (YAC) Support
- Carers Breaks
- Accessibility
- Financial and Legal Support
- Employment, Education and Training

2.6. Part III of the Carers Action Plan is an action tracker. This shows the actions that are needed to achieve the priorities. The tracker will be updated as the action plan progresses.

### 3. NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING THE CARERS ACTION PLAN LAUNCH

3.1. The Carers Action Plan started as a mechanism through which Adult Social Care could better support carers. However, as themes were identified it was found that in order to deliver on what carers were saying, support would need to come from a wide range of services and organisations.

3.2. To ensure that responsibility for the action plan is shared across all organisations within the Camden Borough Partnership, a carer partnership board will be established by the end of 2024. This will be called the **Borough Partnership Carers Board**.

3.3. This Board will be chaired by carers and will include senior representatives from organisations that sit within the Borough Partnership. The Board will be responsible for reviewing and tracking the progress of action plan priorities, and ensuring that organisations are accountable for their part in the delivery.

3.4. The board will report to decision-making groups, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, to ensure that actions are agreed and prioritised at the highest level. A Terms of Reference will be created by the Borough Partnership Carers Board to set out

and agree actions and responsibilities.

- 3.5. Funding has been agreed through the Better Care Fund, for three dedicated posts to support the work of the Carers Action Plan and embed the Borough Partnership Carers Board. These roles will be in post from Autumn 2024.
- 3.6. A budget of £15,000 per year for two years, has also been sourced from the Better Care Fund. This will be the participatory budget used to deliver the priorities within the action plan. The Borough Partnership Carers Board will hold this budget and agree how this will be spent.
- 3.7. Although, the focus of the Carers Action plan is on carers aged 18 years and over who provide care for people who are 16 years and over, the aim is to expand the action plan to be an all-age plan in the future. Children and Learning are planning to update the young carer strategy, and the action plan and strategy will be aligned as this work progresses.

#### **4. COPRODUCTION OF THE CARERS ACTION PLAN**

- 4.1. The journey to develop the Carers Action Plan started 18 months ago. Every stage of the Carers Action Plan has been coproduced.
- 4.2. At the heart of the development of the plan, is a working group that includes carers and former carers in Camden. These carers have led the development of the plan, sharing their experiences and knowledge and have also connected with other carers outside the group to ensure their views are also represented. The members of the working group also includes officers from Adult Social Care, North London Mental Health Partnership, Camden Carers and Mobilise.
- 4.3. As the draft action plan was progressing, it was presented to many organisations and services to test and grow the ideas in the plan. This included carer focus groups that helped to develop specific areas of the plan, for example, single parent carers and male carers. Camden Carers Voice, a group led by carers for carers and facilitated by Camden Carers, were also a key voice in helping shape and develop the plan.
- 4.4. Many organisations and services already recognise and support carers, and may even have their own carers strategy or action plan, and this has been acknowledged within the development of this plan. Every opportunity has been taken to connect the Carers Action Plan into these organisations to ensure there is a whole system approach to supporting carers. They include:
  - Mental Health Carers Partnership Board,
  - Local Care Partnership Board, Camden Borough Partnership group leading on the integration of health and care,
  - Carers Council, a group for carers which is part of the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust,
  - Camden Patient and Public Engagement Group, and

- Planning Together, a partnership board for people with learning disabilities and family carers to meet with people who manage services they may use.

4.5. An Equality Impact Assessment has been created for the Carers Action Plan. The outcome of this assessment was that any negative impact on protected groups would be mitigated.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add to this report.

## **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. This report provides background for the Full Council debate, on the Carers Action Plan. The Carers Action Plan is a commitment to recognise and provide better support for unpaid carers. Funding for two full time fixed term posts and one part time estimated to cost £171,000 per year for two years has been agreed to be funded from the Better Care Fund (BCF), however, for 24/25, a part year budget of £128,250 is required due to recruitment timelines. These posts will support the work of the Carers Action Plan and embed the Borough Partnership Carers Board. An additional budget of £15,000 per year will also be funded via the Better Care Fund, this is to be used as participatory budget to deliver the priorities as stated in the action plan. The funding provisions from the BCF covers the 2 years of the implementation of the Carers Action Plan. Any funding needed after this initial period will need to be sought from other sources.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. This project has no environment impacts.

## **8. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Carers Action Plan**

**Appendix B: Executive Summary of the Carers Action Plan**

**REPORT ENDS**