

Slough Borough Council

REPORT TO:	Cabinet
DATE:	18 September 2023
SUBJECT:	Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26
CHIEF OFFICER:	Marc Gadsby, Executive Director People Adults
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jane Senior, Associate Director People Strategy and Commissioning
WARD(S):	All
PORTFOLIO:	Cllr Anna Wright, Social Care and Public Health
KEY DECISION:	YES
EXEMPT:	NO
DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL IN:	YES
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 2 – Carers Strategy Appendix 3 – Carers Strategy Consultation

1 Summary and Recommendations

This report requests approval of the Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26, to replace the existing Carers Plan. The Strategy sets out how the Council, working with its partners, will support and encourage carers to manage their own health and wellbeing, and ensure that that right support is known about and available at the right time.

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that Slough is a place where carers can balance their caring roles with achieving a desired quality of life. Importantly, the Strategy seeks to minimise the negative impacts of caring upon health and wellbeing, and prevent carer breakdown. This will be through a range of initiatives set out within the action plan.

The Strategy has been informed by engagement with carers. The engagement confirmed that the carer's voice should be central to service development. Delivery of the action plan contained within the Strategy will be overseen by a Steering Group comprising carers, the Co-production Network, Council officers and professional stakeholders including representatives from Frimley ICS.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to approve the Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 set out at Appendix 2.

Reason:

To ensure that a fit for purpose Adult Carers Strategy with a clear action plan, and deliverables is in place.

Commissioner Review

This report has been reviewed by Commissioners who wish to make no specific additional comments.

2 Report

Publishing the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 contributes to the following priorities:

Draft Refreshed Corporate Plan

A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

- Working with partners to target health inequalities and promote wellbeing
- Supporting residents to be as independent as possible whilst providing quality services for the most vulnerable.

Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25

Priority 2: Integration

- Increase the number of people living independently at home and decrease the proportion living in care homes
- Increase the number of people who are managing their own health and care needs.

Options considered

Option	Pros	Cons
<p>Option 1</p> <p>Approve and implement the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26</p> <p>Recommended</p>	<p>Up to date Carers Strategy in place which is informed by carer engagement.</p> <p>Implementation of action plan overseen by Steering Group comprising carers, the Co-production Network, Council officers and professional stakeholders and reported through existing Council governance arrangements.</p>	<p>No clear disadvantage to approving and implementing the Strategy</p>

<p>Option 2</p> <p>Retain the existing Carers Plan.</p> <p>Not recommended</p>	<p>No clear advantage to retaining the existing Carers Plan.</p>	<p>The Carers Plan is out of date and no longer fit purpose.</p>
<p>Option 3</p> <p>Do not approve and implement the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26</p> <p>Not recommended</p>	<p>No clear advantage to not approving and implementing the Strategy.</p>	<p>Missed opportunity to implement an effective strategy which is aligned to the draft refreshed Corporate Plan and the Slough Wellbeing Strategy and thereby supports the delivery of broader corporate objectives.</p>

Option 1 is recommended.

Background

2.0 The Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 provides an opportunity to strengthen the Adult Carers offer within the town - based upon evidence and information obtained through engagement. The Strategy sets out 6 key priorities for Adult Carers, aligned to intended Corporate Objectives (which are currently out to consultation). The priorities are to:

- Enable carers to access information and guidance
- Identify and recognise carers at an early stage
- Promote carer awareness – including the valuable role they play and the challenges they face.
- Provide person centred support – to enable carers to manage their own health and wellbeing and to access the right support at the right time
- Ensure that carers are viewed and listened to by professionals as experts in care
- Support effective integration and partnership work – including co-production and ensuring that carer voice is central to any service development.

Further detailed information concerning each of these priorities is found in Section 8 of the Strategy.

The Strategy contains an action plan setting out a range of initiatives which will be implemented to deliver against the priorities. These include mapping the customer journey and developing a clearer operational pathway, increasing the number of carers assessments, facilitating carer-led training to promote carer awareness, and reviewing the current respite and short breaks offer for those who are eligible, and opportunities for development to prevent carer breakdown. One of the key elements of the action plan is to gather more information to support early identification of carers from particular communities (BAME, LGBT etc) to ensure that their needs can be met. Carers play an important role in the adult social care economy and their caring can prevent the cared for person moving into expensive residential care.

The Action Plan will be overseen through a Steering Group comprising carers, the Council and its partners with responsibility for delivering against the strategy resting with the People Strategy and Commissioning Team.

The Carers Service transferred in house to the ASC Operations Team in July 2023 and the Steering Group will also be responsible for overseeing the development of the Service.

The Strategy has been shaped by engagement with carers. Some of the consistent themes emerging from the engagement were the need for accessible information (not just digital), the importance of preventing carer breakdown, hearing the carers voice and being able to access the right support at the right time. Full information concerning feedback from the engagement, including cross-referencing back to the Strategy, is contained at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications directly relating to the publication of the Carers Strategy. Any procurement activity arising out of the Action Plan will be subject to approval through the Council's Contract Procedures Rules and will only be authorised subject to the availability of budget.

The current total budget for 2023/24 for Adult Social Care & Public Health is as follows:

	£m
Gross Expenditure	52.0
Income	(35.4)
Net Expenditure	16.6

The gross expenditure budget includes £39.5m (80%) which is expended on care and support services that are commissioned externally from both private and voluntary sector providers through contractual arrangements. The remainder of the budget funds frontline services and operational employee costs.

The current expenditure on direct payments is £5.4m across the care groups. Increases in direct payments for those who are eligible including carers will need to be monitored through the usual budget management processes.

3.1 Legal implications

The Care Act Section 10 sets out duties in respect of assessment of a carer's needs and support. Assessments should include an assessment of whether the carer is able and willing to provide care alongside the outcomes that the carer wishes to achieve in day to day life and to what extent the provision of support could contribute their achievement. The assessment must involve the carer and any other person whom the carer asks the local authority to involve. A carers assessment must consider what matters other than support could enable the

delivery of identified outcomes and anything which might be available within the community. The Carers Strategy Action Plan contains an action to increase the number of carers assessments within the town.

The Care Act Section 20 places a duty on local authorities to meet a carer's needs as well as a discretionary power to provide services even if the carer is not assessed to have eligible needs. The Council must also provide information and advice to all carers about services available in the local area. The power includes the discretion to provide support to a carer of a child who is about to transition to adult social care services.

The Care Act 2014 also contains duties in relation to actively promote wellbeing and independence and to provide services, facilities or resources to prevent, delay or reduce the need for care and support. Carers play a significant role in prevention, both in terms of the person being cared for and themselves. This prevention duty is distinct from the assessment and meeting eligible needs duties.

Whilst not a specific duty, it is recommended that a local authority develop an evidence-based local strategy for supporting carers. This will help to identify gaps in the market or at a commissioning level, ensure improvements to local services to support carers achieve appropriate outcomes. The strategy should include:

- Analysis of local needs and requirements, integrated with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Engagement with carers and families in the area.
- Demand and supply analysis.
- Market structure and intervention.
- Resource allocation and procurement.
- Confirmation as to how the strategy aligns with the adopted corporate plan.

3.2.3 The Carers Strategy should be produced following consultation and engagement with carers and it should be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the population and focuses limited resources in the right areas. Information consultation and engagement which has taken place is contained both within the Carers Strategy and its appendix.

3.2.4 Section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced a duty at Section 2B of the NHS Act 2006 for the council to take appropriate steps to improve the health of the people who live in its area. The Carers Strategy places an emphasis upon carer health and wellbeing,

3.3 Risk management implications

3.3.1 Overall, the risks associated with approving the Strategy are set out below.

Risk	Assessment of Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Insufficient staffing resource to implement the	Medium	Recruitment to any vacant posts and staff retention endeavours.	Low / Medium

action plan within the strategy.		Input from Data and Insight, Communications and other functions as appropriate to support elements of action plan.	
Insufficient budget to support any commissioning intentions arising out of the Carers Strategy Action Plan.	High	<p>Budget availability to be confirmed in advance of commencement of any particular commissioning project.</p> <p>Ensuring best value considerations.</p> <p>Robust analysis as part of project of effectiveness and efficiency of any existing current supply.</p>	Medium

3.4 Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications

3.5 Equality implications

Approval and implementation of the Carers Strategy should have a positive impact in regard to protective characteristics. For example, many carers are older people caring for a loved one. It is intended that the Strategy will have a positive impact upon their lives by supporting individuals to manage their own health and wellbeing needs and to access the right support at the right time. This applies to carers of any sexual orientation, including carers who are married or in a civil partnership.

The Strategy sets out a particular commitment to understand the particular difficulties which black and minority ethnic carers can experience and to better identify carers from black and minority ethnic groups in order that their needs can be met. A full Equalities Impact Assessment is set out at Appendix 1.

3.6 Procurement implications

None

3.7 Workforce implications

None

3.8 Property implications

3.8.1 None

4. **Background Papers**

None

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment

Directorate: People Strategy & Commissioning People (Adults)								
Service: Adults Carers Strategy 2023-26								
Name of Officer/s completing assessment: Jane Senior								
Date of Assessment: 3/8/23								
Name of service/function or policy being assessed: Adult Carers Strategy								
1.	<p>What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing?</p> <p>The Strategy sets out how the Council, working with its partners, will support and encourage carers to manage their own health and wellbeing, and ensure that that right support is known about and available at the right time.</p> <p>The aim of the Strategy is to ensure that Slough is a place where carers can balance their caring roles with achieving a desired quality of life. Importantly, the Strategy seeks to minimise the negative impacts of caring upon health and wellbeing, and prevent carer breakdown.</p>							
2.	<p>Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, service, and department including any external partners.</p> <p>Delivery of the action plan contained within the Strategy will be overseen by a steering group comprising carers, the Co-production network, Council officers and other professional stakeholders including representatives from Frimley ICS. It is intended that reporting will take place into the Slough Wellbeing Board .</p>							
3.	<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc. Please consider all of the Protected Characteristics listed (more information is available in the background information). Bear in mind that people affected by the proposals may well have more than one protected characteristic.</p> <p>The Strategy affects Carers and indirectly the person who they care for.</p>							
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Characteristic</th> <th>Positive , Negative,</th> <th>Rationale for Assessment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Characteristic	Positive , Negative,	Rationale for Assessment				
Characteristic	Positive , Negative,	Rationale for Assessment						

		Neutral or Unknown Impact	
	Age	Positive	Many carers are older people. It is intended that the Strategy will have a positive impact upon their lives by supporting individuals to manage their own health and wellbeing needs and to access the right support at the right time.
	Disability	Positive	Many carers support people who have a disability. The Strategy therefore indirectly benefits disabled people as it seeks to prevent carer breakdown.
	Gender Reassignment:	Positive	The Strategy will benefit all carers including those who have undertaken gender reassignment.
	Marriage and Civil Partnership:	Positive	Many carers support a partner. The Strategy is likely to have a benefit upon those who are married or in a civil partnership as it will support carers within their caring roles.
	Pregnancy and maternity:	Positive/ Neutral	The Strategy should have a positive benefit on carers who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby.
	Race:	Positive	The Strategy sets out a particular commitment to understand the particular difficulties which carers from black and minority ethnic people can experience. The Strategy should have a positive benefit.
	Religion and Belief:	Positive	People of any religion and belief who are carers should benefit from the Strategy.
	Sexual orientation:	Positive	People of any sexual orientation who are carers should benefit from the Strategy.
	Other:	Positive	
4.	<p>What are any likely positive impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? You may wish to refer to the Equalities Duties detailed in the background information.</p> <p>Better support to individuals across all equalities categories to enable individuals to maintain their caring roles and to receive the right support at the right time.</p>		

5.	<p>What are the likely negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? If so then are any particular groups affected more than others and why?</p> <p>There will be no negative impact.</p>
6.	<p>Have the impacts identified in (4) and (5) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Please state evidence sources and conclusions drawn (e.g. survey results, customer complaints, monitoring data etc).</p> <p>There has been extensive engagement to support the development of the Strategy including the Priorities. The Strategy contains a commitment to gather further information on the needs of carers from diverse communities in order that carer identification can be improved.</p>
7.	<p>Have you engaged or consulted with any identified groups or individuals if necessary and what were the results, e.g. have the staff forums/unions/ community groups been involved?</p> <p>The Strategy has been shaped by engagement with carers. Implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by a Steering Group comprising carers, the co-production network, council officers, and other professional stakeholders including representatives from Frimley ICS.</p>
8.	<p>Have you considered the impact the policy might have on local community relations?</p> <p>A demonstrable commitment to delivering the strategy should have a positive impact upon community relations.</p> <p>.</p>
9.	<p>What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate any likely identified negative impacts? For example what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</p> <p>There are no identified negatives.</p>
10.	<p>What plans do you have in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? (The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented). Please see action plan below.</p> <p>Implementation of the Action Plan Oversight by a Steering Group</p>

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	✓
Outcome 1: No major change required. The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	✓
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers identified? (Complete action plan).	
Outcome 3: Continue the policy despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact (see questions below). (Complete action plan).	
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (Complete action plan).	

It is also proposed that progress against the action plan is reported through the Slough Wellbeing Board.

Action Plan and

Timetable for Implementation

At this stage a timetabled Action Plan should be developed to address any concerns/issues related to equality in the existing or proposed policy/service or function. This plan will need to be integrated into the appropriate Service/Business Plan.

Action	Target Groups	Lead Responsibility	Outcomes/Success Criteria	Monitoring & Evaluation	Target Date	Progress to Date

Name: Jane senior
Signed:(Person completing the EIA)

Name:
Signed:(Policy Lead if not same as above)

Date:

