

BRIEFING NOTE**Agenda Item No. 8**

FROM: Paul Davies – Executive Director. Social Care and Inclusion
TO: Social Care and Inclusion – Scrutiny and Performance Panel

DATE: 21 February 2012

RE: Carers Work Stream – Update

Purpose

This paper provides an update of work relating to the Carers work stream, as requested by the chair of SCI Panel, to be presented on the 21 February.

The total budget to support Carers is 943k (2011/12). There is currently a large amount of activity relating to carers and how they are supported across Walsall. However, the most recent Carers Strategy in place is due for update, and so it has enabled a review and refresh to take place. This will reflect the many changes that have taken place locally and nationally over the past few years.

Establishment of Programme Board

A Carers Programme Board has been established, jointly with NHS Walsall, to ensure full involvement from all agencies, thus capturing all aspects of caring where possible.

This is led by the Head of Community Care, and its membership includes: Operational Managers, Service Development Staff, joint LA/NHS Commissioning Manager and Communication Officers.

Its purpose is to:

- Identify and understand current spend and activity relating to carers support, across Local Authority and NHS
- Identify activity and support available from the Carers Centre
- Develop a Strategy for future services required to continue to support carers, underpinned and informed by robust engagement and consultation
- Develop a joint consultation plan, to ensure full engagement in developing the strategy and subsequent ongoing planning, developing and commissioning of specific services
- Identify activity around carer assessments, which will enable more robust target setting and performance management
- Develop carers assessments format in line with Self Directed Support principles

Work to Date

- Services commissioned and funded via previous Carers Grant identified
- Engagement with Carers Centre commenced, to understand activity, and to ensure full engagement in review of strategy
- Benchmarking both locally and nationally, to understand performance and compare where we are

- Requested children's services representative on Programme Board to ensure all carers needs are identified, regardless of age, and to specifically ensure that the needs of young carers are articulated and captured
- Consultation Plan finalised
- Consultation events being planned in a range of settings and areas across the borough
- Formal launch of strategy planned for Carers week, week commencing June 18th 2012

Communication and Engagement

- The Communication Plan identifies how we will communicate and engage with and involve the relevant individuals and groups, both to develop the draft strategy and to launch the final strategy document.
- There will continue when the strategy is written, to ensure full involvement in how we implement the strategy, plan and deliver services, and to ensure that we champion and raise awareness of carers and their issues throughout the borough.
- The Key Message contained in the plan is our commitment to involve carers in developing services and listen to their views, ideas and experiences.
- The plan details key objectives and target audiences together with a range of communication methods that will be implemented.
- Consultation questions will be phrased using the national priorities and previous locally identified themes.
- There will be inbuilt systems that will allow us to monitor and evaluate the success of the communication and engagement work stream.

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