

3rd April 2025

Title of the Report: All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027

Ward(s):

Portfolios: Councillor Pedley – Adult Social Care
Councillor Elson – Children and Young People

1. Aim

- 1.1 The Strategy was approved at Cabinet on 12 February 2025.
- 1.2. The aim is to present to Scrutiny the All-Age Carers Strategy plan to be co-delivered by Adult Social Care commissioning and Children’s Services.
- 1.3. The aim of this strategy is to highlight the role of Carers in Walsall and outline our strategic intentions for improving the wellbeing of Carers living in the borough by helping them access quality services when they need it, and in a way that works best for them.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Scrutiny acknowledge the Walsall All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027 is a joint and collaborative strategy across Adult and Children’s Services.
- 2.2. That Scrutiny provide feedback of Walsall All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027.

3. Report detail – know

Context (Background)

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 defines a Carer as ‘An adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult (adult needing care)’ Section 10 (3) Care Act 2014’. And NHS England defines a Carer as ‘Anyone who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support.
- 3.2 Carers provide unpaid care alongside their other responsibilities, with people often putting their lives on hold to provide care for a loved one, friend, neighbour or relative. This care could be for a few hours a day or more and could be around the clock care. Anyone can become a Carer.
- 3.3 Carers often say they did not choose or plan to become Carers, and caring responsibilities can arise unexpectedly without any training, knowledge, or preparation. People do it out of love, kindness or a sense of duty. Many people do not see themselves as Carers because they are simply doing what they can for a relative, a friend or a neighbour who needs them because of their disability or illness.

- 3.4 The local authority has a responsibility to identify and support young carers. These responsibilities are set out in the Children's Act 1989 (as amended by the Children & Families Act 2014) and under the Care Act 2014. The latter introduced new rights for young carers to ensure young carers and their families are identified and their needs for support are assessed.
- 3.5 Young Carers are children and young people under the age 18 who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally disabled or misuses substances.
- 3.6 Under section 63 of the Care Act the Local Authority must assess the needs of a young carer who is approaching the age of 18 when:
- a. It appears that the young carer has needs for Support; and
 - b. It appears that the young carer is likely to have needs for Support after becoming 18.

Know (Report Detail)

- 3.7 Key statistics about Carers in Walsall:
- There were 26,415 unpaid Carers in Walsall in 2021
 - This represents 10% of the total population in the Borough
 - The majority of unpaid Carers are woman (66%)
 - The largest group of Carers is aged between 45-64 years of age
 - There are currently 276 young Carers from the age of 8 – 21 years of age
 - Over 60% of young Carers are female
 - The largest group of young Carers are aged 13 – 15 years old
 - Around 60% of Carers provide care for 20 hours or more per week
 - 35% of Carers in Walsall provide over 50 hours of care each week
 - The economic value of unpaid care is estimated to be around £605 million per year
 - Around 60% of Carers provide care for a spouse or partner
- 3.8 It was agreed at EDMT on 8 August 2024 to develop a 3 year 'All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2027,' and that Adult Social Care and Children's Services should collaborate to coproduce the strategy.
- 3.9 Adult Social Care Commissioning and Children's services worked collaboratively to align and integrate their individual strategies to co-produce the All-Age Carers Strategy. The Draft All-Age Carers Strategy was presented at EDMT on 09 October 2024 and presented at Children's DMT on 24 October 2024. Where it was signed off.
- 3.10. This strategy builds on the progress made over recent years in identifying and improving the experience and wellbeing for Carers. Carers of all ages have shared their experiences of what caring is like and what support they need. These views have shaped and informed the priorities in the strategy.
- 3.11. This strategy has been developed through a process of coproduction and ongoing communication with Carers, Carer's Hub, the voluntary sector, Walsall Young Carers service and other key stakeholders.
- 3.12. Both Adult Social Care and Walsall young carers service support carers of all ages and through the All-Age Carers strategy have set 6 priorities in line with the Care Act 2014.

Priority 1 - Identification and Recognition

Priority 2 - Improving the health and well-being of unpaid Carers

- Priority 3 - Improving information, advice and guidance to Carers
- Priority 4 - Supporting Carers to have a good life outside of caring, as well as after caring ('Time for Me')
- Priority 5 - Improving Carers Assessment and Support
- Priority 6 - Crisis management and professional awareness.

- 3.13. In order to effectively address the gaps that exist in meeting the needs of carers in Walsall and to implement the strategic priorities within the strategy, the development of a delivery plan identifying the stages of work required over the next three years, considering the financial challenges the local authority and health service are currently under, is being developed.
- 3.14. We will introduce a robust governance structure and Carers Matter Partnership Board, where partners and Carers will be represented. The Board will oversee the delivery of the strategic priorities within the Strategic Delivery Plan. The Commissioning Manager (CBS) will have overall responsibility for its delivery via the All-Age Carers Steering Group which will report to the Carers Matter Partnership Board.

4. Financial information

Currently we are working on the delivery plan for the strategy. Until this is completed the financial implications are unknown. Once this is completed it will be clearer what the potential financial envelope required will be if any and how it will be resourced.

5. Reducing Inequalities

To identify any anticipated impact on residents, service users and staff an Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.

6. Decide

- 6.1. A copy of the All-Age Carers Strategy is attached (Please see appendix 1)
- 6.2. A copy of the Priorities and detail 2024-2027 is attached (Please see appendix 2)

7. Respond

- 7.1. To help support the delivery of this strategy, we will work in partnership with Carers, Walsall Children's Service, Health and Adult Social Care, Walsall Together, statutory and voluntary agencies to provide the local steer for the commissioning and development of Carer services and the Carer Offer within Walsall.
- 7.2. Delivery Plan 2024-2027 is currently being devised will be discussed and agreed within the All-Age Carers Steering Group and brought back to CMT in spring 2025.

8. Review

Reviews to take place through the All-Age Carers steering group

Background papers

All Age Carers strategy (Appendix 1)

All Age Carers Strategy 24-27 Priorities (Appendix 2)

Author

Amandeep Rai

Carers Lead – Adult Social Care commissioning team

☐ 652058

☐ Amandeep.Rai@walsall.gov.uk

Supported by

Donna Ricketts Family Support Team Manager – Early Help 0-19

Sponsoring Director

Andrew Osborn

Director of Commissioning

Kerrie Allward

Executive Director, Adult Social Care and Public Health

Colleen Male

Executive Director: Children's Services