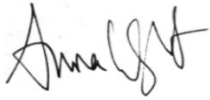


LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Carers Action Plan – follow up report to the themed July debate	
REPORT OF Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Council	DATE 14 th October 2024
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report provides an overview of the Full Council themed debate that took place on the 22nd of July 2024.</p> <p>The report summarises the key points made by the 7 speakers, and the subsequent debate at Full Council. The report highlights the next steps from the discussion, including an update on activities that have taken place since July’s launch, and the activities that are planned before the end of the year. This includes planning for the Borough Partnership Carers Board and the recommissioning of the carers support contract.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>The following reports were used to produce this report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Themed Debate – Launch of the Carers Action Plan 2) Carers Action Plan – Post Launch Update <p>Contact Officer: Jessica Lawson, Prevention and Wellbeing Service Manager; Adult Social Care, London Borough of Camden, 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG; 020 7974 5993; jessica.lawson@camden.gov.uk</p> <p>Shanta Joseph, Commissioning Manager; Adult Social Care, London Borough of Camden, 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG; 0207 974 2857; shanta.joseph@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>The Council is asked to consider and note the report.</p>	

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Wright', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Anna Wright, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

Date: 26 September 2024

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1. An unpaid carer provides essential support to someone they know, such as a family member, friend, or neighbour, helping with daily tasks that the person cannot manage alone. This care can involve practical tasks like personal care, cooking, and managing medications, or offering emotional support and advocacy. Carers may assist those with disabilities, long-term conditions, impacting their health and wellbeing, and or as they get older.
- 1.2. 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. Carers sometimes support multiple people or need care themselves.
- 1.3. 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.
- 1.4. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 1,415 people were known to Adult Social Care as unpaid carers, 769 of which were new to Adult Social Care services. At this time, 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.
- 1.5. 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.
- 1.6. 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.'
- 1.7. The strategy also states the Council's intention to achieve this priority "*by co-producing a plan with carers which focuses on the issues defined by them.*" This plan is the Carers Action Plan.
- 1.8. Alongside printed versions of the action plan, there is a dedicated website for the Carers Action Plan, which can be found at: <https://carersactionplan.camden.gov.uk>
- 1.9. 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.

- 1.10. The plan is currently focussed on carers aged 18 years and over who provide care for people who are 16 years and over. There are however plans to connect the work of the Carers Action Plan with Children and Learning's approach to young carers, as well as engage with The Children's Society, the newly appointed provider for the Camden and Islington Young Carers Service.
- 1.11. Development of the action plan started 20 months ago, and it has been co-produced at every stage of production.
- 1.12. The Carers Action Plan was presented to Full Council for debate on the 22nd of July 2024, to recognise the contributions of unpaid carers in Camden and to hear their lived experiences. It was also the launch of the Carers Action Plan.
- 1.13. The Council was grateful to have seven speakers join the debate, including five carers who have been involved in the Carers Action Plan development:
 - 1) Arun Kumar, carer and Camden resident
 - 2) Angela Tebe, carer and Camden resident
 - 3) Roushanara Khan, carer and Camden resident, Chair of Camden Carers Voice
 - 4) Kate White, former carer and Camden resident
 - 5) Jessica Hurst, former young carer and Camden resident
 - 6) Allegra Lynch, CEO of Camden Carers, commissioned service for unpaid carers support in Camden
 - 7) Becca Dove, Head of Children and Transformation, Children and Learning, Camden Council

2. SUMMARY OF FULL COUNCIL DEBATE

- 2.1. The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing, and Adult Social Care introduced the Carers Action Plan, followed by contributions from speakers from services and from carers themselves with varied lived experiences of caring. The debate helped the Full Council to understand and support the need to provide effective joined up support for carers across services and highlighted how the Carers Action Plan enables this.
- 2.2. Arun Kumar spoke to the social isolation, health impacts, and financial strain of being a single parent carer of a child with severe learning needs, urging for improved partnership working and respite care.
- 2.3. Angela Tebe emphasised the difficulties of caring for multiple people, and of transitioning from children's to adult services, underscoring the need for improved accessibility for carers, particularly with regards to travel and

transport associated with their caring responsibilities.

- 2.4. Roushanara Khan, who cares for family members with specific needs and health issues, commended the action plan's role in bringing together services and support for carers.
- 2.5. Kate White, a carer for her late partner with Alzheimer's, illustrated the time it takes to care for someone, and the emotional and financial impact of caregiving, calling for stronger collaboration between health and social services.
- 2.6. Jessica Hurst shared how at a young age her education, personal life and prospects were impacted by her caring responsibilities, highlighting the need for more support for young carers.
- 2.7. Allegra Lynch, CEO of Camden Carers, discussed the data surrounding carers, underlining that one in five people would become a carer at some point. Early identification was therefore crucial for getting carers the support they need. Allegra stressed the importance of respecting carers and providing them with joined-up resources, given the financial benefit they provide the borough.
- 2.8. Becca Dove, Head of Children's and Learning Transformation within Camden Council, highlighted the growing number of young carers and discussed the plans for refreshing strategies to support them.
- 2.9. There was collective support for the Carers Action Plan, with many Councillors wishing to address the meeting and direct questions to the speakers. A number of Councillors had been carers and spoke first hand of the challenging experiences faced by carers. Council members raised questions about carers' access to respite care, mental health support, and practical resources. There were also calls for public recognition of carers and a commitment to ensuring the Carers Action Plan was implemented effectively, rather than becoming a "tick-box exercise."
- 2.10. Arun Kumar said at the meeting, *"....at some point in our life we will play the role of a carer and we will need care at some point, so it is not something that is existing for somebody else, we are all involved in this. So this action plan is incredibly important because it sets that standard that impacts every single individual in this room. Caring is a journey that touches us all, so let's be patient about it. And when I'm standing here, I'm standing here not just as an advocate for these carers, but I am a carer myself...."*
- 2.11. The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from the Council to work with partners to deliver on the Carers Action Plan and provide long-term support for carers in Camden. It was recognised that the Carers Action Plan, co-designed with carers, aimed to address service fragmentation, improve access to support and raise awareness of services, and ensure carers' needs were met across the borough.

- 2.12. Councillor Revah said, “... *The best thing of tonight is the launch of this document in front of me [Carers Action Plan] and I think that this document is going to be something that we need to make sure the Council adheres to. But equally I think it is really important that we take it away and we look at all departments to make sure everything within this document is covered by all departments. This gives you [carers] a voice, which you might not have had before or you feel that you haven't had before, but this [Carers Action Plan] actually does give you that voice and this needs to really be addressed as such...*”
- 2.13. A recording of the July Council meeting can be viewed here: <https://www.civico.net/camden/19164-Council>
- 2.14. On the same evening there was also a reception with the Mayor, and an art exhibition for carers on the theme ‘what does caring mean to you.’ The exhibition was moved to 5 Pancras Square Library after the launch and was displayed until Wednesday 14th August.
- 2.15. Alongside and following the launch there was a range of communications, including positive media coverage in the local press. This coverage supports one of the actions in the action plan which is to promote and identify more carers.

3. CARERS ACTION PLAN: ACTIVITY JULY – SEPTEMBER 2024

- 3.1. The activities that have taken place following the launch, and the ones that are planned to take place until the end of the year, are mapped in the timeline in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2. The Carers Action Plan will continue to be co-produced with carers. In late July 2024 we held a focus group with carers from the Bengali Workers Association. To coincide with this a shorter version of the Carers Action Plan was translated into Bengali.
- 3.3. Other engagement activities have taken place to help inform how we meet diverse carer needs, including a focus group at the British Somali Community Centre in September 2024.
- 3.4. To increase its reach, the process for translating a hard copy of the Carers Action Plan and the Executive Summary into Bengali and Somali has started. Also, other community languages will be explored, including a British Sign Language version.
- 3.5. The Carers Action Plan website (<https://carersactionplan.camden.gov.uk/>) is a key engagement tool. It has been live since the date of the launch. It includes a function that translates the plan to multiple languages. It can also be dynamically adapted and shaped. Carer feedback on the website from August

2024 was incorporated, and an image map with carer priority areas is now live.

- 3.6. Accessibility testing for the website was completed in July 2024 and work with the web provider, that supports development, is being undertaken to ensure the website meets the new version of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines by the end of September 2024.
- 3.7. Funding has been agreed through the Better Care Fund for three dedicated roles to embed the Borough Partnership Carers Board and support the work of the Carers Action Plan. This will include increasing promotion and visibility of the plan and continued co-production and community engagement.
- 3.8. Recruitment has concluded for one of these roles. The Carers Project Lead started in September 2024. Recruitment for the two other roles has started. All roles should be in post from Autumn 2024.
- 3.9. Camden Carers, a commissioned carers service within Camden, hosted their 30th anniversary celebratory event in September where the Carers Action Plan was presented by Kate White, former carer and one of the co-producers of the Carers Action Plan who also spoke at the Full-Council event, with Jessica Lawson, Prevention and Wellbeing Service Manager. Opportunities for further involvement were shared with carers who were present.
- 3.10. The Carers Action Plan was brought to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 9th September 2024 where recent activity and next steps outlined in this report were also presented by Jessica Lawson and Kate White.
- 3.11. The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee as well as Councillors commented on the Carers Action Plan's impact and commended the Carers Action Plan's process of co-production.
- 3.12. Kate White said, *"What is crucial is we engage in a new round of enthusiasm and participation by both carers who have been involved and to include more and more diverse communities... we need to do so much more, and that involves staff in different settings, hospitals, community settings and services, also noticing 'ah' is there a carer involved here, and how are we going to engage with you?"*
- 3.13. Kate also reflected *"when you call up, you want to feel more like you are getting a hug than a push back",* adding *"we know services are under huge pressure, but we also recognise that [carers] teamwork with everybody who is involved with the clients, the patients... we are part of that team, and we can really help. We are an asset and not a problem."*
- 3.14. The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee raised questions on whether there had been an increase in identification of carers since the debate

in July, what progress had been made on the work focussed on young carers, and the responsiveness and reactivity of the new Project Team. Questions were also raised about the short-term funding related to the three carer roles, and how impact will be measured.

- 3.15. Allegra Lynch, CEO of Camden Carers, highlighted that carer identification is an ongoing issue, and that data is regularly monitored. Allegra also underlined that Camden Carers already have plans to work with the newly commissioned young carers service, the Children's Society, to improve pathways to support.
- 3.16. Jessica Lawson, Prevention and Wellbeing Service Manager, clarified that the carer roles were two-year fixed term and resourced through the Better Care Fund. This is to engrain responsiveness and flexibility, with the current phase of the Carers Action Plan set out to focus on the implementation of the priorities and establish the Borough Partnership Carers Board. It was explained that mid-way through the current funding, progress would be assessed and longer-term plans regarding the roles would be explored.
- 3.17. It was confirmed in the meeting that the [Good Life Camden Framework](#) is the local measure to monitor impact and identify what matters most to carers in terms of the plan's success. The [NICE Quality Standards for Supporting Adult Carers](#) also will inform impact monitoring.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. At the heart of the development of the Carers Action Plan, is a working group that includes carers and former carers in Camden. These carers have shared their experiences and knowledge and have connected with other carers outside the group to ensure their views are also represented. The members of the working group includes officers from Adult Social Care, North London Mental Health Partnership, Camden Carers and Mobilise.

Borough Partnership Carers Board

- 4.2. To continue an approach that centres on carers' voices, in August 2024 the working group met and agreed plans to shift its focus to the development of the **Borough Partnership Carers Board**, recognising that delivering on carers needs requires collaboration across multiple services and organisations beyond Adult Social Care.
- 4.3. This Board will be chaired by carers and will include senior representatives from organisations that sit within the Camden Borough Partnership. The Board will be responsible for reviewing and tracking the progress of action plan priorities and ensuring that Camden and partner organisations are accountable for their part in the delivery. A Terms of Reference will be created by the Borough Partnership Carers Board to set out and agree actions and responsibilities.

- 4.4. Co-production and engagement will continue to be a focus and feature of the Borough Partnership Carers Board. £15,000 per year for at least two years has 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.
- 4.5. The Borough Partnership Carers Board will continue to connect into other groups across the Camden Borough Partnership, so that actions can be agreed and prioritised across the organisations that make up this system.

Continued co-production activities

- 4.6. At the same August 2024 carers working group mentioned in 4.1, it was also proposed that two subgroups related to the working group will meet from September 2024 until December 2024. The frequency of these meetings is to be determined. These subgroups will be formed to co-produce and help by:
 - considering the structure for the Borough Partnership Carers Board, including chair and partners membership. It has been identified that a person with lived experience of caring would be most suited to the chair role, and plans are underway to move forward with recruitment to this role by December 2024.
 - coordinating communications across working group partners, promoting the Carers Action Plan, carer experiences and support services, and to begin progressing work around the information and advice priority area outlined in the Carers Action Plan. This will involve developing and distributing leaflets and posters, as well as identifying and utilising effective locations for advertising and promotion to ensure the widest possible reach and impact.
- 4.7. Although the Borough Carers Partnership Board will need to mutually agree outcome measures and what success looks like, a carers focus group will be organised to co-produce the Board's accountability framework, agreeing key performance indicators, signals and measures of success. This will then have to be discussed and ratified by the Board. Progress has started to map the Good Life Camden Framework against the Carers Action Plan's Action Tracker and the steps to achieve what matters to carers.
- 4.8. A celebration event focussed on bringing together extended partners involved in developing the Carers Action Plan is planned to take place at the Greenwood Centre in October/November 2024. It is hoped this will bring relevant key stakeholders together to network and promote the development of the Borough Partnership Carers Board.
- 4.9. There are also plans to continue to bring the plan to various forums and meetings, including the Local Care Partnership Board, Camden Carers Voice, and diverse community groups. For example, an update on the plan was taken to Camden Carers Voice, a forum for carers led by carers and facilitated by

Camden Carers, on the 2nd October 2024.

Commissioning of the new carers support contract

- 4.10. The current carer support contracts end on 31 March 2025 and the Council will be going out to tender for a new contract in October 2024. The aim is for the new carers service to go live on 1 April 2025.
- 4.11. The carer support service is commissioned by the Council, and funded by the Council and Integrated Care Board. Officers are currently taking a commissioning strategy and proposals on the future service through the internal approval process. The proposal for the future service will be presented to Cabinet in October 2024. Following approval at Cabinet, the services will be subject to a tender process, based on overarching principles identified by carers that should be at the heart of how health, social care and the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) services relate to carers. Carers will be involved in the evaluation of any tenders.
- 4.12. The proposed service will align with the priorities of the Carers Action Plan so that services reflect the voice of carers and embody the principles of the plan. Flexibility will be built into the service specification to ensure the service is dynamic and responsive to changes and developments in the Carers Action Plan as it develops over time. A key expectation of the service will be the incorporation of co-production, providing carers with meaningful opportunities to participate in the co-design of the service, taking a strengths-based approach to ensure it meets the needs of carers.

5. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

- 5.1. This report provides an update on activities undertaken since the launch in July, along with an overview of planned activities for the remainder of the year. It has been confirmed that the three dedicated roles supporting the Borough Partnership Carers Board and Carers Action Plan will be funded through the Better Care Fund (BCF). Additionally, the Borough Partnership Carers Board has been allocated an annual budget of £15,000 from the BCF. This participatory budget will be used to implement the priorities outlined in the Carers Action Plan. The BCF funding will cover the initial two-year period of the action plan's implementation. Beyond this timeframe, any further funding will need to be sourced.

6. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 6.1. The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on the report and has no comments to add to the contents of the report.

7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1. This project has no environment impacts.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Carers Action Plan activities from August to December 2024 – Key Milestones

REPORT ENDS

Appendix A: Carers Action Plan activities from August to December 2024 – Key Milestones

Carers Action Plan: Next steps

