



**ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**6 JUNE 2022**

**CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE**  
**AND RUTLAND CARERS STRATEGY 2022-2025**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS OF**  
**ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES AND**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the outcomes of an engagement exercise and invite comments on the draft joint Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Carers Strategy 2022-2025, as part of the formal consultation process (subject to Cabinet approval on 27 May 2022).
2. The report also outlines the procurement of Carer Support Services.
3. The LLR Carers Strategy 2022-2025, attached as Appendix A, is a joint Strategy which is being developed by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) across the LLR area.
4. The document is a refreshed version of the LLR Joint Carers Strategy 2018–2021 Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers. The aim of the refresh is to make the Strategy clearer and more accessible.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

5. The relevant policy framework includes:
  - The Care Act 2014
  - The Children and Families Act 2014
  - The White Paper - People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform - December 2021.
  - Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020 – 2024
  - Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032
  - SEND and Inclusion strategy 2020-2023
  - Leicestershire County Council Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021.
  - Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

6. The LLR Joint Carers Strategy 2018–2021 “Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers” set out eight key strategic priorities relating to unpaid carers of all ages, and was written as a joint Strategy by Leicester City, Leicestershire County and Rutland Councils and CCGs across the LLR area.
7. An engagement exercise undertaken during the summer of 2021 demonstrated that Leicestershire Carers continue to identify with the priorities contained in the 2018-2021 Strategy.
8. On 27 May 2022, the Cabinet will be asked to approve a formal six-week joint consultation, alongside the partner Councils and CCGs on the priorities and actions identified for supporting unpaid carers, to commence week beginning 6 June 2022, during National Carers Week.

### **Background**

9. The LLR Joint Carers Strategy 2018–2021 “Recognising, Valuing and Supporting Carers”, sets out eight key strategic priorities relating to unpaid carers of all ages. The priorities were built upon the feedback of carers across the LLR area and are set out in the diagram below:



10. Each partner organisation was responsible for their individual supporting delivery/action plans for delivery of the Strategy priorities (Appendix B) to this report sets out the most recent review of Leicestershire’s plan). This plan has been used to drive improvements across the organisation including:

- Training sessions for staff working with carers
- Online carers assessment application system
- Dedicated carers team within the Customer Service Centre.

11. There have also been a number of collective achievements from the 2018-2021 Strategy including:

- Launch of the Carers Passport across the LLR area
- Quality markers introduced in GP surgeries
- Staff training around carer awareness, across a range of organisations
- Information for carers reviewed and updated this includes web pages and information booklets.
- Increase in the numbers of people on carers registers
- An LLR carers group working with Sortified Community Interest Company (a social enterprise and consultancy) promoting carers engagement.

12. There remain ongoing challenges which will be addressed by the Strategy refresh, notably:

- Continuing to raise awareness of the issues faced by carers and promoting early identification of carers.
- Ensuring information is updated regularly.
- Involving carers at a strategic level in service planning and design.

13. The Government White Paper, “People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform”, published in December 2021, builds on the national Carers Action plan 2018-2020 and is centred around three core strands:

**a. Working with the sector to kick-start a change in the services provided to support unpaid carers.**

- i. The Department of Health and Social Care has pledged to work with the sector (including local authorities) to further explore:
  - the different models of respite
  - how respite services are accessed by carers
  - any barriers to accessing these services that carers might experience.

**b. Identifying, recognising and involving unpaid carers.**

- i. Increase the voluntary use of unpaid carer markers in NHS electronic health records, including introduction of a marker indicating the presence of a contingency plan.
- ii. Creation of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to involve carers when exercising their commissioning functions, ensuring impact on carers is considered.
- iii. A new assurance framework for local authorities which will include assessing how local authorities are meeting the needs of unpaid carers.

**c. Supporting the economic and social participation of unpaid carers.**

- i. Tackling loneliness and improve the health and wellbeing of unpaid carers.
- ii. Plans to provide more choice and control to unpaid carers to help them to access and stay in work whatever their personal circumstances, including flexible working and the introduction of carer's leave.
- iii. Young Carers - adult and children's services need to work together and take a 'whole family' approach to the identification and support of young carers. Local authorities must now offer young carers assessments and consider young carers' needs when assessing support for adults.

### Engagement with Carers in Leicestershire

14. It was originally intended to begin the refresh of the Strategy in the summer of 2020 but this was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
15. In the summer of 2021 work on the refresh began, through engagement with carers in Leicestershire and voluntary sector partners regarding the current Carers Strategy and their caring situations. This included an online survey, which received 62 responses, and group sessions where officers met with carers. Additional feedback was provided by the voluntary sector partners on behalf of some carers who had been unable to attend the meetings.
16. The progress of the County Council's current implementation plan was shared with carers. This detailed achievements to date and ongoing developments. The implementation plan has been used alongside the carer feedback to prepare the Strategy refresh and the subsequent supporting action plan for 2022-2025 (attached as Appendix C).

### Feedback from the Engagement

17. An overview of Leicestershire's engagement findings and next steps can be found in the engagement summary report attached as Appendix D.
18. County Council officers met with partner organisation leads across the LLR area to consider the outcome from the engagement. It was indicated that similar feedback themes had been received and the priorities should remain broadly the same as the existing Strategy, with some amendments to current priorities suggested.
19. The top priorities in the Strategy for carers were found to be:
  - Priority 7 - Carers can access the right support at the right time – Services and Systems that work for carers.
  - Priority 5 - Carers have a life alongside caring - Health, employment and financial wellbeing.
20. Carers do not identify particularly well with Priority 6, concerning carers and the impact of Technology Products and the living space. They felt issues around living spaces were not generic enough to be a main priority to a small number of carers. However, with the wealth of technology available, all organisations are keen to see this priority continue to be represented and have therefore suggested an alternative

priority titled “Care with Confidence – Technology and skills supporting you to care effectively”.

21. Feedback from Leicestershire young carers is not included in the engagement summary document, as it was received following production of the document. The young carers requested removal of Priority 8, Supporting Young Carers, as they would like to be recognised and included in all the other priorities, albeit as a recognised group with particular needs. However, young carers in other areas within LLR wished to retain a specific priority. It is therefore proposed to keep Priority 8 as currently drafted as well as including young carers in the other priority areas. It is hoped that by ensuring young carers get the visible representation within priorities numbers 1 to 7 they are able to see the recognition they are receiving as part of an inclusive group.
22. A key element from the feedback was that the existing Strategy document is overly and unnecessarily long. It is intended that the refresh will result in a document that is simpler and easier to read whilst still clearly relating back to the original Strategy.

#### Re-procurement of Carers Support Service

23. The current Carers Support Service contract “Support for Carers” is provided by Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL). An extension of this contract was approved in June 2021 utilising the plus one of the contract to extend until 31 October 2022.
24. The Service currently provides the following:
  - a) A telephone advice line open Monday-Thursday 9 am-5pm and Friday 9am-4.30pm.
  - b) Carers Support Groups – Face to face meetings have been reinstated in localities, however, the service continues to offer a well-attended Zoom group allowing participation from across the County.
  - c) Carers Passport Scheme
  - d) Links to GP surgeries
  - e) Telephone Befriending Service
  - f) Care for Carers – help to look after their own health and wellbeing
  - g) Social Media pages
  - h) Information for professionals – refer a carer for help.
25. The Support for Carers Manager is a member of the local partnership delivery group which meets regularly and is actively involved in the ongoing work to deliver the aims of the Strategy, such as GP quality markers (measures devised by NHS England used by GPs to demonstrate how effective they are in recognising and supporting carers), young carers project work, and led on the launch of the LLR Carers Passport Scheme in November 2020.
26. A strategic review of the current service has been completed, comprising analysis of performance and service manager meetings, and carer and stakeholder feedback collected via a short online survey.

27. The outcome of this indicates:
- The current service is performing well and referrals are consistent
  - The service provider adapted very well to ensure continued delivery of service during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - The service provider has been a key driver in the launch of the Carers Passport Scheme across the County and working in partnership to aid launch across LLR.
  - An increase in the number of people in contact with the service including:
    - rise in number of working age carers
    - rise in number of male carers
  - Black and Minority Ethnic carer numbers were impacted during the pandemic, but these are now on the rise again.
28. A procurement process is needed to secure a new contract to commence on 1 November 2022. It is proposed to publish the tender documents on 13 June 2022 to facilitate an award of contract in August with a contract start date of 1 November 2022. Feedback from the informal engagement on the Carers Strategy indicates the Strategy priorities are still very relevant to carers. This has informed the specification for procurement including requirements to:
- Identify and meet carers needs and outcomes with a focus on strengths and not on their deficits.
  - Promote and improve carers quality of life and inclusion in society and community life.
  - Assist carers to stay healthy and live well themselves.
  - Support carers to identify and access opportunities for employment, leisure and volunteering as appropriate.
  - Support working carers through signposting to agencies that can support employer good practices assisting in improving the lives of working carers.
  - Support the development of carer friendly communities.
  - Engage and support carers to plan for the future.

### **Consultation and Next Steps**

29. Each partner to the Strategy is engaging in its review through their respective organisations.
30. A formal consultation exercise will assure the partnership that the draft refreshed Strategy fairly reflects priorities from a carer's perspective and will support the development of a more detailed implementation plan for Leicestershire.
31. It is intended that the consultation will be undertaken for six weeks beginning on 6 June 2022 and closing on 17 July 2022. The plans for Leicestershire are set out in the table overleaf and the draft consultation documents are attached as Appendix E.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
6 June 2022 – National Carers Week	Launch formal consultation for six weeks, which will include a face to face consultation event.
6 June 2022	Meeting of the Adults and

	Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (the Chairman and Spokespersons of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be invited to attend for this item).
17 July 2022	Consultation closes.

32. The consultation will seek the views of the general public, carers, service users, organisations that work with carers, and Council staff through an online questionnaire and via targeted group consultation with carers, particularly those who are currently accessing support from the Council.
33. The consultation will determine the final version of the refreshed Carers' Strategy for the coming three years, establish future implementation plans across the partnership, and set out specific actions for the County Council to address in Leicestershire.
34. The consultation findings will also further inform the County Council's approach to future support for adult and child carers, and guide future commissioning decisions.
35. The consultation outcomes, the final refreshed Strategy and an action plan for Leicestershire will be submitted to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet in the autumn ahead of Carers Rights Day on 25 November 2022, when it is intended to launch the Carers Strategy refresh.

### **Resource Implications**

36. Within the Adults and Communities Department funding for specific adult carers services includes voluntary sector support, access to one-off and regular personal budgets and respite provision. The total spend for 2020/21 was £2.53m, consisting of £171,000 used to fund the carers support service across Leicestershire and £2.36 million spent through carers direct payments post carers assessment, although it must be highlighted that some carers support may also be delivered within the personal budget of the cared for person, therefore this does not represent carer support costs in its totality.
37. The proposed contract value for the Carers Support Service is £684,000 (across a four year period) giving the successful provider a level of security to deliver services and attract inward investment into the County to support carers. This is the same yearly total spend as the current contract.
38. The Children and Family Service has an in-house service supporting young carers across Leicestershire.
39. There are no specific resource implications relating to the proposed consultation on the Strategy. Any additional resource implications arising from the outcome of the consultation and the resulting implementation plan will be reported to this Committee and the Cabinet in the autumn.

40. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

41. Partner organisations are progressing through their respective governance processes to ensure alignment with the planned consultation launch date.
42. A further report will be submitted to this Committee and the Cabinet in the autumn presenting the outcome of the consultation, the refreshed LLR Carers Strategy and supporting action plan for consideration and approval by the Cabinet.

### **Conclusions**

34. The Committee is invited to comment on the draft refreshed LLR Carers Strategy 2022-2025 and action plan.

### **Background Papers**

Report to the Cabinet: 16 October 2018 – LLR Carers Strategy 2018-2021

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5184&Ver=4>

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018-22

<https://bit.ly/3Pe6nh5>

Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire – Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020-24

<https://bit.ly/3swoTal>

People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper

<https://bit.ly/3w7FfsE>

Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032

<https://bit.ly/3L8nbTe>

SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2023

<https://bit.ly/3N8CJji>

Leicestershire County Council Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021

<https://bit.ly/39Pzw1L>

Report to the Cabinet: 27 May 2022 – Draft joint Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Carers Strategy 2022-2025

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=6744&Ver=4>

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

43. None.



## **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

44. A comprehensive Equalities and Human Rights Impact screening assessment has been conducted and approved by the Adults and Communities Departmental Equalities Group. The Strategy was noted to have a positive impact on carers and all of the protected characteristics.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A Draft LLR Carers Strategy 2022-2025  
Appendix B Current Progress - Strategy Review 2021  
Appendix C Draft Action Plan Leicestershire  
Appendix D Review of Carers Strategy Engagement 2021  
Appendix E Draft Consultation documents

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