



# EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Adults Social Care & Health, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Strategic Director of Adults and Health, Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
<b>DATE:</b>	Thursday, 11 July 2024

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Adults and Health, Children, Young People & Education

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** (All Wards);

**SUBJECT: Carers Strategy 2024-2028**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At their meeting in November 2023, the Place-based Partnership (“PBP”) received an overview of an emerging Carers Strategy for Blackburn with Darwen and as a result the PBP Board agreed to support the development of the Strategy.
- The strategy has been shared with Corporate Assurance Board, Adults & Health & Childrens & Education Senior Policy Teams and endorsed by Place Based Partnership Board.
- The purpose of this report is to share the final BwD Carers Strategy and seek endorsement from the Executive Board.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Endorse the Blackburn with Darwen Carers Strategy as a key strategy to guide PBP delivery.
- Agree the following next steps and take collective responsibility for their delivery:
  - i. Support the co-production of a Delivery Plan with service users from across the breadth of the Place-based Partnership.
  - ii. Support the development of a Carers Board to oversee the delivery of the strategy.
  - iii. Extend their thanks to all those involved so far in developing the strategy.

## 3. BACKGROUND

The Blackburn with Darwen Carers strategy has been co-produced across service users and partners and is designed to demonstrate our commitment to support and empower the invaluable carers within our borough. This strategy encompasses the geographical scope of Blackburn with Darwen, aiming to address the unique needs and challenges faced by carers in our diverse community.

## 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

There are a number of key priorities within the strategy, that are intended to inform specific delivery plans which will be co-produced with services users over coming months. These commitments are articulated as 'I' and 'we' statements and are as follows:

- **Challenges of Caring**

Carers said: "I need to be understood and supported in my role." Carers shared the challenges of managing their own physical and mental wellbeing alongside the complex health conditions of those they care for.

We will:

Provide comprehensive physical and mental wellbeing support. We understand that it's possible for someone to live with good mental wellbeing despite having a mental illness, or conversely, to have no mental illness but experience poor mental wellbeing. In this light, we are committed to providing comprehensive support that addresses the full spectrum of physical and mental health needs, focusing on enhancing both the emotional and functional aspects of wellbeing for carers in our community.

- **Service Gaps and Accessibility**

Carers said: "I need access to timely information, advice, and respite services." Carers express a significant demand for clear, accessible information and respite opportunities, which are crucial for their wellbeing and the sustainability of their caregiving.

We will:

Enhance informational support services and increase accessibility to respite care: We recognise the service gaps and commit to improving the delivery and accessibility of services, including conducting more Statutory Care Act Carers Assessments through the Local Authority.

Engage with carers as part of our service transformation developments to ensure their needs are known and understood and we are clear about how our services will meet their needs.

- **Financial and Employment Struggles**

Carers said: "I need help managing the financial impact of caring and balancing work with my caregiving responsibilities" Carers express a significant demand for clear, accessible information and respite opportunities, which are crucial for their wellbeing and the sustainability of their caregiving.

We will:

Provide benefits support and encourage flexible working arrangements: We acknowledge the financial and employment challenges and will offer assistance with navigating benefit systems and accessing employment support services tailored to adult and young carers' needs.

- **Future Concerns**

Carers said: "I am worried about what the future holds for me and the person I care for" The uncertainty and lack of long-term planning options are significant concerns for carers.

We will:

Provide long-term support planning and future care options: We commit to addressing these concerns by offering assurance and resources for long-term care and supporting carers with developing their own personal aspirations, including access to education, training, and volunteering opportunities.

- **Interpersonal Relationship Struggles**

Carers said: "I struggle with maintaining relationships while managing my caring responsibilities" Carers speak about the challenges of sustaining personal relationships amidst the intense demands of caring.

We will:

Continue to resource and develop services which provide support for carers to maintain and nurture their interpersonal relationships. Recognising the importance of a supportive network, we will provide resources and services that help carers balance their roles and maintain healthy relationships within their wider families and wider communities.

- **Positive Aspects of Caring and Support**

Carers said: “I find personal fulfilment in caring, and I appreciate the services that support me” Some carers highlight the positive aspects of caring and the satisfaction derived from certain services.

We will:

Continue and enhance the services that carers find beneficial: In response to the expressed satisfaction with certain aspects of support, we will ensure the continuation and improvement of these services to foster the personal fulfilment and positive experiences of carers.

- **Addressing the Needs of Young Carers**

Young Carers said: ““I often hide how I’m feeling to stay strong for my family, but sometimes I struggle with anxiety and stress.”

“I love my family deeply, and finding moments of happiness in caring is important to me.”

“I appreciate the young carers’ services; they give me the break I need and help me enjoy being young.”

We will:

Pledge to listen, understand, and act, ensuring that our young carers receive the comprehensive support they deserve.

## **5.POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Care Act & the Children & Families Act set out when the local authority has a responsibility to meet someone’s care and support needs, including those of all age carers.

This strategy sets out a vision for supporting young carers and adult carers in Blackburn with Darwen which is to:

*“create a community where every carer feels listened to, supported, and empowered. We envisage a borough where carers have access to the resources and help they need, where their contributions are recognised, and their challenges are addressed with empathy and efficiency.”*

There are ten core principles that underpin the strategy, these are:

1. Early Identification
2. Tailored Support
3. Respect and Recognition
4. Clear Communication
5. Quality Service Delivery
6. Reducing Bureaucracy
7. Preventing Isolation
8. Supporting Employment and Education
9. Inclusive Approach
10. Continual Learning and Adaptation

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## 6.FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no new financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

There will be a comprehensive review of existing services to ensure alignment with the new strategy. This may necessitate individual service providers developing their own response plans to adapt and integrate their services effectively within the broader strategy framework. These steps are essential for the successful realisation of the strategy's vision and objectives, ensuring a cohesive and efficient support system for carers.

## 7.LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Sections 10-13 and 20 of the Care Act 2014 give local authorities the legal duty to assess a carer's need for support and to meet eligible support needs in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Adult Social Care is regulated by the Care Quality Commission and the provision of services to assess and support carers' needs is part of the Care Quality Commission assessment framework.

Sections 17ZA-F of the Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) gives local authorities a duty to assess young carers and parent carers in their area if (a) they request an assessment of their needs for support or (b) it appears they may have needs for support. The aim of the amended legislation is to ensure that the needs of the whole family are met and prevent or reduce inappropriate or excessive caring by young carers.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

A strategic delivery plan will be created to guide the implementation of the strategy. This plan will serve as a roadmap, detailing specific actions, responsibilities, and timelines to achieve the strategy's goals.

The Place-based Partnership have endorsed the strategy and committed to taking collective responsibility for the delivery of a strategic plan and review of existing services.

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## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

**Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.**

Option 1  Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2  In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3  In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

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## 10.CONULTATIONS

- The methodology for producing the strategy was grounded in a co-production approach. We structured a carers' survey and focus groups around five key questions. There were 226 completed surveys, and 53 carers participated in focus groups. In addition, a stakeholder survey was completed by seven organisations.
- The draft version has been shared for feedback with carers and partners to inform the final version shared today.
- The strategy has been shared with Corporate Assurance Board, Adults & Health and Childrens & Education Senior Policy Teams and endorsed by Place Based Partnership Board.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Angela Longworth</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	4.6.24
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	The Carers' Strategy 2024-28 is attached as Appendix 1
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