

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19TH APRIL 2016

**SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING ACT: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME
CWM TAF CARERS STRATEGY**

**REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES, IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLORS
FOREY AND COUNCILLOR HOPKINS**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates partners on the development of a draft Cwm Taf Carers Strategy. It outlines the engagement undertaken to date and how this has influenced the development of a draft Strategy that is now being consulted on until April 6th.
- 1.2 This report provides an opportunity for Cabinet to note the consultation exercise and provide comment as appropriate.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes that a Consultation exercise is being undertaken on the draft Cwm Taf Carers Strategy up to 6th April 2016.
- 2.2 Consider the draft Carers Strategy and participate in the consultation process with comments as appropriate.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that Cabinet Members have an opportunity to discuss the carer's strategy and contribute to the consultation process.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In response to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB) and the repeal of the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010, one of the workstreams included in the Cwm Taf SSWB Regional Implementation Plan requires the development of a new Cwm Taf wide Carers Strategy.

- 4.2 The UHB, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council are committed to working together to improve the ways we provide support to Carers of all ages.
- 4.3 The SSWB Act comes into force in April 2016 and will transform the way social services are delivered, promoting people's independence to give them stronger voice and control. The SSWB Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, **and** Carers who need support. It simplifies and consolidates the law relating to Carers and, for the first time, gives them equivalent rights to those that they care for. The Act applies to Carers of all ages.
- 4.4 The new Cwm Taf Carers Strategy will replace the separate Carers Strategies that had been produced by the two Local Authorities and the Cwm Taf Information and Consultation Strategy. Colleagues from the Third Sector and Carers themselves have been part of the multi agency steering group responsible for the development of the Strategy.

Initial Engagement with the public

- 4.5 In working together to develop a new Carers Strategy, we particularly wanted Carers to help inform and shape our plans. From the work undertaken locally to develop the previous Carers' plans in RCT and Merthyr Tydfil, and from what Carers have told us, 5 main aims were identified as important to support Carers effectively (see the bullet points below).
- Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions
 - Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice and assistance to Carers of all ages
 - Providing support, services and training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages
 - Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice and control over their lives
 - Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages
- 4.6 We sought the views of the public on these 5 main aims in the autumn of 2015 and invited people to raise other issues that we should address in our plans.
- 4.7 The engagement process circulated widely throughout the Cwm Taf area and was presented at a number of events and meetings together with a questionnaire, including the UHB's Stakeholder Reference Group. Workshop events were organised to explore Carers views in more depth, including Carers Strategy Engagement events in both RCT and Merthyr Tydfil. Activities were also arranged to enable Young Carers to have their say. An online version of the engagement paper and questionnaire was available to all local

residents via the Cwm Taf Community Engagement Hub and was promoted using Local Authority and Partner websites.

4.8 The engagement was carried out over a 6 week period in October and November 2015 and resulted in a total of 90 individual responses, plus a large amount of feedback from discussions at group meetings. A full Engagement Analysis Report is available but, in addition to widespread support for the 5 aims stated above, the following were the most common issues raised:

- Easy access to a central point of up-to-date, easy to understand information and advice.
- Access to respite and short breaks to recharge batteries and more free time for young Carers to spend with friends/socialise.
- Professionals should respect, communicate and listen to Carers.
- Awareness raising is needed to increase knowledge and understanding of the caring role, both in society and with professionals.
- More practical support would ease the pressure on Carers.
- More emotional support would prolong the health and wellbeing of Carers.
- More funding and resources is needed for Carers.
- Support Groups for both younger and older Carers are highly valued.
- Carers would like accessible and discounted transport.
- Better understanding is needed from employers and schools.
- Carers need more understanding of Carers Champions and their role.
- Better communication is needed between different agencies with automatic referral processes.

4.9 The findings from the engagement exercise have informed the development of the draft Strategy, and direct quotations from the responses are incorporated for illustration.

The draft Cwm Taf Carers Strategy

4.10 The draft Strategy has been considered by the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership in March 2016 and the Board have authorised for the Carers Strategy to proceed to a final consultation phase.

4.11 The draft Cwm Taf Carers Strategy is attached as Appendix 1 and the consultation document as Appendix 2.

Of note:

- The document covers a three year period as this was felt to be an appropriate timeframe given the need for various aspects of the SSWB Act and new ways of working to be embedded in delivery.
- The document is high level as there are a number of key aspects of the SSWB Act (such as the new Information, Advice and Assistance Service, and new arrangements for Assessment and Care Planning,) which will impact on Carers but for which detailed work is ongoing through other

workstreams to plan implementation arrangements. The full implications for Carers are therefore still being addressed. Following approval, a detailed Action Plan will be developed for implementation.

- It is anticipated that during consultation, Carers will want to be reassured about the operational delivery of the Strategy and the tangible actions they feel are needed. It will be important to ensure feedback and continuous engagement with Carers of all ages.
- Consultation will take place in March and the beginning of April. The draft Strategy and accompanying questionnaire will be widely circulated and also available online via partner websites and the Cwm Taf Consultation Hub. Both documents are available in Welsh.
- The draft Strategy will be amended to reflect the outcome of the Consultation and the final version will be submitted to the SSWB Partnership Board and the individual partners for approval.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

A full equality impact assessment will be completed for the final carers strategy

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 An Initial engagement process was carried out prior to the development of this draft strategy in the autumn of 2015/16.
- 6.2 This public consultation process is intended to ensure the strategy has covered the key areas of concern for the public and our partners.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

Carers Measure Allocation

- 7.1 Funding has been available from Welsh Government for the last few years to deliver the Carers Measure -whilst the funding has gone to the UHB (because under the Measure Health Boards were given the lead for implementation) the funding has to be used in partnership. In Cwm Taf we have received £107k pa which was due to come to an end in March 2016.
- 7.2 We have recently received a letter from WG indicating transitional funding of £1million pa for Wales in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to protect and build on progress to date under the Carers Measure and to prepare for the expansion of carers rights on the implementation of the SSWB Act. It is not clear yet what amount of funding will come to the Cwm Taf region but the funding will be provided on the understanding that we develop proposals setting out how we will work in partnership to implement the Act by:--
 - Strengthening the partnership approach at a local level;

- Creating opportunities to enable third sector to fully participate in the delivery;
- Setting out how we intend to plan and deliver the increased responsibilities for health and the new responsibilities for local authorities;
- Ensuring this transitional funding is used as the means to embed the practice of mainstreaming carers' needs, so it is common practice.

7.3 In Cwm Taf, the allocation was primarily used to fund three Carers Measure coordinators, one in the UHB and contributions to the costs of one each in RCT CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC (employed through VAMT). We have used these posts effectively to raise awareness, train staff, recruit and support Carers Champions across the organisations (now over 300 in Cwm Taf) including in 8 GP practices (which is a key area we need to take forward to cover all practices)

7.4 The new Carers Strategy will assist to identify priority areas for investment but it is anticipated that the coordinator roles will continue

7.5 Under the requirements of the Carers Measure, an Annual Report is required by Welsh government at the end of May. This report will be brought to the relevant groups for approval at the same time as the final Carers Strategy.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 This work meets requirements set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and supports the implementation programme aligned to this Legislation

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

9.1 The Carers strategy will compliment the Council's Corporate priorities to promote independence and positive lives for everyone by ensuring:

- Health and social care services will be personalised and integrated with more people supported to live longer in their own homes.
- Rhondda Cynon Taff's children and young people will receive a great start in life.

Other information:

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

- Health and wellbeing scrutiny committee
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers:

Draft Cwm Taf Carers Strategy
Consultation Document

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