

REPORT TO: Health Policy & Performance Board
DATE: 20th February 2024
REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director of Adult Services
PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care
SUBJECT: Respite Care Policy
WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share with Health PPB members a copy of a newly developed policy – Respite Care for Adults with Care and Support Needs and their Carers (attached).
- 1.2 This policy has been developed further to previous reports that have been brought to Health PPB (in 2019 and 2022) regarding respite care provision within adult social care.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

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- 1) the report be noted; and**
- 2) the Board endorse the Respite Policy for implementation within Adult Social Care.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 A report respite care provision was brought to HPPB in 2019 following an issue experienced by a carer and difficulties arranging respite. In summary, it related to a daughter caring for her mother who had a diagnosis of dementia, but the family were going on a holiday abroad and the mother needed care whilst the family was away. A shared care voucher had been issued (as assessment had identified the need for 28 days residential respite) and the daughter had wanted to arrange a care home placement to cover the holiday period. However, the daughter had found the care home sector unable to accommodate a planned period of respite in the future because it would mean having to keep a bed available and potentially refusing permanent placements.
- 3.2 Previous reports outlined how the provision of the shared care voucher had seemed to create an unrealistic expectation that the required respite would be accommodated by the local care home

sector when, in fact, it would not be possible for a care home to keep a bed available for a future planned holiday.

- 3.3 The previous report in 2022 detailed that shared care vouchers were to be permanently discontinued, as they were not fit-for-purpose and did not offer a practical or user-friendly option for carers. In addition, use of shared care vouchers had been in steady decline prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, at which point the voucher process was suspended.
- 3.4 It was determined that there was a need to develop a Respite Policy to clearly describe the local respite offer for those requiring support from adult social care (the two main client groups being adults with learning disabilities and older people). This would effectively support Care Management to explain the range of options available to carers in need of respite provision for their loved one. It was agreed that the policy would set out a range of respite options, including alternatives to traditional bed-based respite such as care at home, Shared Lives and Direct Payments etc.
- 3.5 The 2022 report informed HPPB that a working group had been established to develop a Respite Policy. The group's work has now concluded, and a policy has been developed, which includes a leaflet for clients and their families/carers. The policy has been approved by Adults Senior Management Team and is shared with HPPB for information since previous reports have been considered on this subject by HPPB.
- 3.6 The draft Respite Policy attached defines respite care as something that allows carers to have a break from their caring role while someone else looks after the person they usually care for. The Council recognises the essential contribution made by informal carers and wishes to support them to maintain their wellbeing.
- 3.7 The policy describes that respite can take a variety of forms including traditional residential respite, care at home and support in someone else's home (e.g. Shared Lives). It can also include the use of Direct Payments so that people can arrange their own respite flexibly and creatively.
- 3.8 The policy further details the assessment and eligibility process and how respite is recorded and arranged via the support plan documentation.
- 3.9 The local respite offer is described, which includes the following services:
 - Bredon – residential respite for vulnerable adults with learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injuries, physical disabilities and people with complex needs or behaviours which may challenge.

- Care homes (in-house and independent sector) – residential respite subject to availability of beds.
- Direct Payments – for those who can choose for themselves the type of respite they want and when they want it to take place.
- Home-based respite care in the person’s own home.
- Shared Lives – adults with care and support needs can be supported in the homes of approved Shared Lives Carers.

3.10 A leaflet for adults with care and support needs and their carers has been developed and is available at appendix 1 of the policy. This was shared with a carers group during development and positive feedback was received.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This newly developed Respite Policy will help to ensure that the local respite offer for vulnerable adults and their carers is communicated and applied clearly and consistently.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications of implementing this policy, as it does not represent any changes to current practice; it simply clarifies the local respite offer.

5.2 Respite care is chargeable to individuals at the same rate as permanent care and a financial assessment will take place to determine how much someone can afford to pay towards their care (in line with the Care Act 2014).

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Family carers play a vital role in supporting those with care and support needs and it is essential that there is a clear and comprehensive respite offer to allow carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring responsibilities.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton’s Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The original issue that led to the development of this policy was due to a complaint being received because of difficulties arranging respite. In the most part, these difficulties arose because of unrealistic expectations, and this policy will help to ensure that teams can clearly explain the range of options available for respite and support people to access the most appropriate provision according to their individual needs. It is anticipated that the leaflet for individuals/carers will be clearer and more user-friendly than the previous shared care voucher process. It is therefore hoped that there will be no further complaints of a similar nature to the one described at the outset of this report.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on the Respite Policy with no adverse impact identified. The policy will positively support vulnerable adults and their carers to maintain their general wellbeing.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 None identified.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.