

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 5 November 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Health & Community

SUBJECT: Joint Carers Commissioning Strategy
2009/12

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present Executive Board with the draft Joint Carers Commissioning Strategy 2009/12 attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive Board agree the draft Strategy and associated action plan.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Strategy builds upon the aims, objectives and activities outlined in the 2008/9 Carers Strategy, including an action plan, to support services in Halton move toward a more focused way of commissioning services for Carers over the next 3 years.

3.2 It has been developed as a result of research carried out in terms of other Local Authority plans and ongoing consultations and contributions from all stakeholders, including: -

- Local Implementation Team (LIT) Carer Sub Groups
- Carers
- Health Halton Policy & Performance Board 15.9.09
- Halton Carers Strategy Group
- Halton LINK
- Halton & St Helens NHS Trust
- Halton Carers Centre
- Voluntary Sector organisations
- Staff and managers from the Health & Community and Children & Young People's Directorate

3.3 The format of the commissioning strategy follows a similar one adopted with other Joint Commissioning Strategies within the Directorate and also takes account of the contents of the National Carers Strategy published in June 2008, by focusing commissioning intentions on: -

- Integrated and Personalised Services
- A Life of Their Own

- Income & Employment
- Health & Wellbeing
- Young Carers

3.4 The main objectives of this Commissioning Strategy are not only to move towards a process for the commissioning of services but to continue to assist in the identification of hidden carers and improve information and access to support services. It should be noted that a balance will need to be achieved between commissioning and the work that continues to take place in supporting voluntary sector organisations.

3.5 The LIT Carer Sub Groups and the multi agency Carers Strategy Group will undertake monitoring of the implementation of the Commissioning Strategy and associated action plan.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None specifically identified.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Carers Services in the main are funded via the Carers Grant (full details outlined in the Commissioning Strategy) and the introduction of a Joint Commissioning Strategy is critical in ensuring that the Carers Grant continues to be ring fenced for use with carers as the Grant now forms part of the Area Based Grant. It should be noted that the Carers Grant funding is only available until the end March 2011. The Strategy therefore does not include any Council financial commitment beyond March 2011. Work will need to commence during 2010 on the development of a funding exit strategy outlining how the Commissioning Strategy could potentially be funded from April 2011 although this is dependent upon the announcement surrounding the grant. This could potentially look at alternative sources of funding from partner organisations or the redistribution of other funding available to the Local Authority.

5.2 Carers Grant Allocation 2009/2010

Halton Borough Council	£647,000
NHS Halton and St Helens PCT	£134,000

Carers Grant Allocation 2010/2011

Halton Borough Council	£687,000
NHS Halton and St Helens PCT	£268,000

5.3 As part of the National Carers Strategy the Department of Health (DoH) have allocated £150m to PCTs to support carers breaks in 2009/10 and 2010/11. Halton and St Helens PCT have ensured that these funds

will be utilised to support Carers and have ring fenced funds during 2009/10 and 2010/11 (details outlined in Commissioning Strategy). Discussions are currently taking place with the PCT as to how the funds would best be utilised.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The strategy in relation to the future provision of Carers Services would benefit children and young people under 18 who have caring responsibilities, whose lives are often restricted in some way because they are supporting or taking responsibility for the care of a person who is ill or who has a disability etc.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The strategy would ensure opportunities for work, education and learning for Carers are maximised to their full potential.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The strategy clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment, as a major stakeholder, in recognising the needs of Carers and in promoting their health and wellbeing within the Community.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There continues to be an increase in the national and local agenda around carers particularly in light of the publication of the National Carers Strategy. The draft Strategy and associated action plan aims to address issues for carers in Halton in a structured way thus ensuring that, through working in partnership with Health, Voluntary Agencies and Carers that carer's needs can continue to be met.

7.2 The Care Quality Commission closely monitors the Council's performance on carer's services and to date has judged that Halton delivers a good service. This introduction of this Strategy will seek to maintain this judgment

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on the Strategy is currently being developed using the new corporate procedure, which is in the process of being drafted. Once the EIA is finalised it will be reviewed by the Health and Community Directorate Equalities Group.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

9.1 Halton Borough Council and its partners recognise and value the essential role that carers play in supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our community. We believe that in adopting this Strategy it will demonstrate our commitment to recognising, valuing and working with local carers in delivering effective services, support the National Carers Strategy and the legislation relating to Carers

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10.1 The alternative option would be not to have a Commissioning Strategy and as a result this may impact on the continued structured development of services for carers within Halton.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

11.1 The Strategy is effective from 1st April 2009 and will run until 31st March 2012.

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

12.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.