

# Title of report: Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Thursday 18 July 2024</b>
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	<b>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Report author:</b>	<b>Senior Commissioning Officer, Community Wellbeing</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

### Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029

## **Recommendation(s)**

### **That Cabinet:**

- a) Approves the Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029**

- b) **Delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Community Wellbeing and the Corporate Director for Children and Young People to take all operational decisions, as set out within this report and appendices, that fall within the responsibility of Herefordshire Council.**

## Alternative options

1. There are no other options. The Herefordshire All Age Strategy sets out our intentions for supporting unpaid carers, which includes the provision of 'accessible, up-to-date, accurate, comprehensive but proportionate advice and local information relating to Care and Support for people and Support for carers' as required by Section 4 of the Care Act 2014

## Key considerations

### Background

2. The previous Carers Strategy ended in 2021. As a result of the pandemic and its aftermath, there was a significant delay in being able to progress work on the revised Herefordshire Carers Strategy due to other competing priorities
3. At the beginning of September 2023, work commenced on the revision and update of Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy
4. It was important that the development of the new strategy be co-produced with involvement from a wide range of organisations and people who have experience of being an unpaid carer, or as a representative of organisations that help to support unpaid carers of all ages.
5. A working group was set up to help develop the strategy and identify key areas to focus on. Membership of the working group was broad with representation from Children and adults social care, Talk Community, Integrated Care System (ICS), National Health Service (NHS) and primary care, along with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations who work directly supporting unpaid carers. In addition, some of the membership were also carers themselves.
6. Between September and December 2023 a series of engagement events, face-to-face meetings with carers, presentations and Q&A sessions took place to gather information and understanding about the key issues faced by carers across Herefordshire. Details of these meetings and the feedback received can be found in the draft strategy at appendix 1.
7. The aim of this new strategy is very much to focus attention on the incredibly valuable work that unpaid carers undertake, often without being fully appreciated. We intend to raise the profile of carers of all ages and do our best to ensure appropriate support, information and guidance is available and easy to access.
8. The strategy identifies six key priorities:

**Value and Recognition:** It is important that unpaid carers feel recognised and valued, and that should they themselves need some help or support, it is available for them. An important element of meeting this objective will be the introduction of a Carers Partnership Board

**Young Carers:** The strategy recognises the challenges that young carers can face, not only in their caring roles, but additional challenges they can experience in education and

other life experiences. Young carers should have the same opportunities to enjoy a childhood that aligns with their peers.

**Technology-Enabled Care (TEC):** As developments in TEC advance, there are clear opportunities to introduce new technology that can help to support, not only the cared-for person, but provide additional reassurance for carers.

**Carers Assessments and Support:** the process of accessing carers' assessments should be straightforward and stress-free. Carer assessments are important for identifying and directing individuals to sources of information and support

**Information, Advice and Guidance:** There is always a need to improve the quality and accessibility of information and resources available to carers. This involves ensuring information is clear and easily available from different sources.

**Staying Healthy:** Ensuring caregivers' well-being is important, as they will often put the needs of the cared for person ahead of their own. The strategy aims to help them maintain good health while balancing their caregiving and other life demands.

## Community impact

9. The Carers strategy has identified a number of key areas with an action plan that will help to improve the services and resources available for cares of all ages. Taken together there will be a positive impact on the lives of carers and for the cared for person also.
10. There is a particular focus on young and young adult carers. They can often be unseen and unrecognised for the support they provide to family members, and research tells us that many young and young adult carers can suffer bullying at school, while their caring responsibilities can impact on their education and their own life opportunities. The strategy sets a number of ways that recognition and support to this group can be improved.
11. Many aspects of the strategy are linked closely to the recently published joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which sets out how the Council and its local partners plan to address the health and wellbeing needs of its population.

## Environmental Impact

12. Whilst activity because of the implementation of this strategy will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the Council's environmental policy.
13. The fundamental aim of the Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029, is to support unpaid carers so they can continue providing this important role. Consequently, this will help to minimise demands on public services within the county.
14. The Council provides a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, there is a shared strong commitment to improving the environmental sustainability and achieving carbon neutrality in Herefordshire.

## Equality duty

15. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

16. The decision does not discontinue any service and has no detrimental impact to eligible service users under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

17. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. All partners are aware of their statutory requirements in regards to equality legislation.

18. This proposal will contribute to providing support and improving the quality of life to unpaid carers of all ages and protected characteristics

19. When we undertook consultation meetings with individuals, groups and organisations, we gathered diversity data. We also gathered data from the 2021 census about unpaid carers.

20. Disability – According to data from the 2021 Census, the majority of the unpaid carers of Herefordshire were not disabled, 28% (4,615) were disabled under the Equality Act. (This figure is significantly higher than the proportion of disabled people in the general population of Herefordshire which is 17%). Almost a half of these carers (1,705) provide 50 or more hours of unpaid care a week. This is similar to the proportions reported for England and Wales. Some of the unpaid carers who themselves have a disability, may also have eligible needs for support under the Care Act 2014.

21. Gender – According to 2021 census data, there are more females (9,940 – 60%) providing unpaid care than males (6,640 - 40%). Similar to nationally, the majority of these carers are aged 50 years or older. Women are more likely to become carers and to provide more hours of unpaid care. More women than men also provide high intensity care at ages when they would expect to be in paid work.<sup>1</sup>

22. Age profile - In Herefordshire, the number of unpaid carers below the age of 50 is lower than the average for England and Wales - (30% compared with 40% for England and Wales). However, from 50 years upwards, the percentage of carers in Herefordshire begins to increase noticeably, with Herefordshire reporting 69% of carers over 50 compared to 59% for England and Wales. This is not surprising, as we know that the population of the county is getting older. According to the 2021 census, the number of people aged 65 to 74 years rose by just over

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<sup>1</sup> Carers UK – [Key facts and figures about caring](#)

5,000 (an increase of 24.4%) since the previous census in 2011 while the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by around 6,000 (16.0% decrease).

23. Ethnicity – In 2021, 8.9% of the county’s total population identified themselves as being of an ethnicity other than ‘White: British’ - which is very low compared to nationally (26%). Of the total number of unpaid carers identified in the 2021 census, 98% (16,250 respondents) identified themselves as White. This would include people who are White but non-British. Despite these low numbers, we need to remain mindful that some carers may need additional support, for example language barriers or cultural differences.

Table 1: Ethnicity of unpaid carers, Census 2021

	Herefordshire unpaid carers		Herefordshire general population
	Count	Percentage	
White	16,250	98.04%	96.9%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	126	0.76%	1.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	107	0.65%	1.1%
Other ethnic group	56	0.34%	0.5%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	36	0.22%	0.3%
Grand Total	16,575	100%	100%

## Resource implications

24. There are no financial implications associated directly with the approval of this strategy as the resources to take forward the strategy in relation to the development of implementation plans will be delivered within current revenue budget constraints. Any resource implications that are identified as part of implementation plan development will require the development of business cases, which will need to be approved by the relevant organisation(s) prior to proceeding.
25. There is a resource implication in that, all stakeholders will need to work together to achieve successful completion of the actions set out in the strategy work plan. Oversight of this work will sit with the Carers Partnership Board, to which partners will need to commit to supporting

## Legal implications

26. There are clear legislative duties, both from a Children’s and Families point of view as well as an Adult Social care prospective, requiring support for carers.
27. The Care Act 2014 recognise that supporting carers is as important as supporting the people for whom they care. Adult carers under the Act has the right to seek support which can include information, advice, preventative services, have their own carers assessments and support to meet their needs based on the eligibility criteria. The Act goes further to place a duty on identifying Young Carers and providing support as they became adults. The Children and Families Act 2014 covers the rights of both Young Carers and Parent Carers.

## Risk management

28. The new strategy sets out our vision and the key aims and objectives we wish to achieve, but it is important for all partners and stakeholders to remain involved in the process to ensure success and on-going improvement for services, information and resources for Herefordshire carers.

29. Without consistent support and engagement from a wide range of public, voluntary and private sector partners, there may be a risk that the Council will not be able to deliver the intended improvements and outcomes of the strategy

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
There is a risk that some of the key objectives of the strategy may not progress as expected if partners and stakeholders do not work together	A new Carers Partnership Board will take responsibility for developing an annual work plan. The Partnership Board will oversee delivery of expected outcomes, based around the key priorities of the strategy.
Some areas of the county, particularly rural and isolated communities may not be able to access carer support services	We will work with our carer support provider to develop networks, taking advantage of the Talk Community Hubs that are available in most parts of the county.

## Consultees

30. Between September and December 2023 a number of engagement events including presentations and question and answer sessions, face to face meetings took place to gather information and understanding about the areas of support that carers feel would benefit them the most

31. Engagement events took place with:

- Community Partnership (supported by HealthWatch)
- Survey of local organisations that support unpaid carers
- Face to face meeting with young and young adult carers
- Autism Partnership Board
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Making It Real Board
- Primary Care Network meetings
- Dementia Partnership and Programme Boards
- Face to face meeting with adult carers

32. A co-production event with unpaid carers, carer support groups and statutory agencies took place on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024 at the Kindle Centre in Hereford. Later that same day a similar event took place with a group of young and young adult carers. At both events, attendees reviewed the six key priorities of the new strategy, and helped to define our vision for the strategy.

33. A Political Groups Consultation took place on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024. There was a thorough discussion about the strategy and carers in general, but no changes to the document were requested.

34. Details of comments, suggestions and feedback are contained in the draft Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy that can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Herefordshire All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

## Background papers

None

## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 17/04/2024
Finance	Kim Wratten	Date 06/06/2024
Legal	Sam Evans	Date 10/04/2024
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 29/05/2024
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 17/06/2024
Risk	Jo Needs	Date 10/06/2024

Approved by	Hilary Hall	Date 04/07/2024
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