



Cabinet Report

Date	9 MARCH 2023
Title	UNPAID CARERS STRATEGY 2023 – 2028
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The report seeks Cabinet approval of the Isle of Wight Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028. The Carers Strategy is provided as Appendix 1 of this report.
2. The strategy has been developed in partnership with the IW NHS Trust, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, and partners from the voluntary and community organisations on the Isle of Wight together with, most importantly, with direct input from our islands unpaid carers.
3. The new carers strategy has been co-produced through detailed and extensive consultation during 2021 – 2022 with our islands unpaid carers and our strategy steering group, which included representation from statutory services, and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector, including Healthwatch Isle of Wight, Carers IW, People Matter Isle of Wight and AGE UK IW.

RECOMMENDATION

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| 4. Cabinet approves the Isle of Wight Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 enabling the strategy to progress to approval and adoption by the Isle of Wight Health and Care Partnership Board |
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BACKGROUND

5. Supporting our islands unpaid carers is key to ensuring that they and the people they care for, who are often very vulnerable people within our community, live well and live the best lives that they can. The latest Census data has just been published which showed that 19,757 people on the Isle of Wight provide unpaid care to others, this is an increase from the previous census of over 3,000 of our islands residents, since the last census in 2011.

6. Our island's unpaid carers need to be supported to continue the selfless and relentless roles that they have. This in turn reduces the dependency of those needing support from statutory or formal care services, and it allows them as carers to not just simply survive but live the life they want to.
7. The work that our islands unpaid carers do, often behind closed doors and away from public eyes, needs to be recognized and a new unpaid carers strategy was needed as the previous strategies were out of date.
 - *"Working Together With Carers Strategy 2013 to 2016"*
 - *"Working Together With Carers Strategy 2017 to 2019" (Refresh) was out of date.*
8. The new unpaid carers strategy has been co-produced though detailed and extensive consultation during 2021 – 2022 with our islands unpaid carers and our strategy steering group, which included representation from statutory services, and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector including Healthwatch Isle of Wight, Carers IW, People Matter Isle of Wight and AGE UK IW.
9. The new carers strategy is now ready to be formally adopted and agreed by the Council. The Integrated Care Board and by the Isle of Wight NHS. The new strategy focuses on the direction and areas which need to change to better support our islands unpaid carers and make a real difference to those people supporting our islands most vulnerable residents.
10. The new strategy was developed in three stages.
 - (a) Stage one – a review was undertaken in early 2020 of the *2017 – 2019 Carers strategy refresh* and the current services supporting our islands unpaid carers. The strategy steering group looked at what was being done on the island to support our unpaid carers. We established some really important information that enabled us to ask the right questions and develop an island wide carer survey. The survey allowed us to gather more information on what services and support were needed, and what needed to change to better support those undertaking the vital role of an unpaid carer.
 - (b) Stage two – the strategy steering group undertook a programme of consultation and focussed engagement with local residents and professional partners, to gather their views and experiences of what areas are working well and what needs to improve to support our islands unpaid carers. The strategy steering group then used the feedback and data collected to develop the system wide carers strategy which is being presented for adoption.
 - (c) Stage three – once the strategy has been agreed and adopted by the Local Authority, The NHS Trust and the Isle of Wight Health and Care Partnership Board we will develop and implement a delivery plan for the strategy, which will be overseen by the established unpaid carers strategy steering group enabling the provision of regular updates detailing progress against the ambitions within the strategy to be provided.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

11. The Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 supports the core values as outlined in the Corporate plan 2021 – 2025 including
 - Being community focused
 - Working together
 - Being effective and efficient
 - Being fair and transparent
12. The Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 supports the following Alliance aspirations and priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025
13. **We will ensure that we listen to people. We will do so by holding consultations in which we will have a proper discussion with residents about issues.** We have listened to our residents on the island throughout the development of the strategy and co-produced the strategy and would like to record our thanks to them and our island partners.
14. **Prioritise dealing with the health inequalities and the resulting poverty highlighted during the pandemic.** The health inequalities identified in the Public Health Isle of Wight COVID-19 Health Impact Assessment published in October 2021 reported how the pandemic had highlighted existing health inequalities and had exacerbated health and social care vulnerabilities for people living with health condition on the Isle of Wight which has further increased the pressure on our island's unpaid carers.
15. **Support and increase the influence of Healthwatch and the voluntary sector.** The strategy development has been led by the islands unpaid carers and by the voluntary sector partners including Healthwatch Isle of Wight, Carers Isle of Wight, People Matter Isle of Wight and AGE UK Isle of Wight.
16. The aims of the Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 also align with the recently refreshed Adult Social Care – Care Close to Home Strategy 2022 – 2025 and the Alliance Administration priorities sent out in the Corporate Plan, by seeking to ensure that people and their families are provided with the information that they need and that they are provided with the support they need when they need it. Supporting our islands residents to live within their own homes and communities for as long as is possible, avoiding the unnecessary use of hospital care or care in funded care settings.

Responding to climate change and enhancing the biosphere

17. The Climate and Environment Strategy is not directly impacted by the Carers Strategy 2023 - 2028

Economic Recovery and Reducing Poverty

18. The Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 looks to influence both locally and nationally the support offered to our islands unpaid carers many of whom may be experiencing financial hardship whilst undertaking the demanding role of an unpaid carer.
19. The more support that can be offered to our island unpaid carers helping them where appropriate manage their finances and offer them the support that they need

when they need it will reduce any financial inequalities which can be the result of undertaking the vital role of an unpaid carer in our community.

Impact on Young People and Future Generations

20. The decisions the Council makes now not only affect current residents, but may have long term impacts, both positive and negative, on young people and future generations. These impacts may not immediately be apparent or may not emerge for a number of years or decades. Impacts will be interrelated across the various domains of young people's lives from housing, employment or training, health and the environment.
21. The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989, in particular article 12, places a duty for children and young people to have an active voice in decision making on matters that affect them. We value the views of our young people. Incorporating coproduction and consultation with young people into our decision-making process is a robust way of ensuring young people's views are taken into consideration. Participation workers experienced in coproduction can support engagement with the Youth Council, our Island children and wider groups of young people to ensure the voice of young people is sought, heard and acted upon on important matters that will affect them.
22. The Isle of Wight Council understand and acknowledge that we have a number of young carers on the Isle of Wight who also need support and guidance. Our islands young carers under the age of 18 are supported by the Young Carers Service, who can be contacted on [01983 861071](tel:01983861071) at any time or email iowyoungcarers@ymca-fg.org. [Young Carers Service – IOW - YMCA \(ymca-fg.org\)](http://ymca-fg.org)

Corporate Aims

23. This strategy and the activity undertaken during its development supports the Alliance aspirations and priorities as outlined in the Councils' corporate plan;
 - We will ensure that we listen to people. We will do so by holding consultations in which we will have a proper discussion with residents about issues.
 - Prioritise dealing with the health inequalities and the resulting poverty highlighted during the pandemic
 - Support and increase the influence of Healthwatch and the voluntary sector

CONSULTATION

24. As part of phase two of the strategy development the strategy steering group delivered a lengthy and diverse programme of public consultation and engagement to ensure that the views of our islands unpaid carers and the people they care for were heard along with the voices of other partners and stakeholders, which is outlined in paragraph 11 of this report.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25. The Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 is being discussed by the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care on 6 March 2023.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

26. There are no direct financial budget implications with the endorsement and adoption of this strategy. However the strategy seeks to ensure that existing and future budgets can be used efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our islands unpaid carers, which will include the continuation of a Community Carers Support service.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

27. The Isle of Wight Council has duties under the Care Act 2014 to proactively assess and meet the needs of vulnerable adults when defined eligibility criteria are met. Many carers will have eligible needs as defined by the Care Act and as such this strategy will enable the council to meet its statutory duty.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

28. Our Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 provides a valuable opportunity to ensure that all Island residents, including those with protected characteristics benefit from care and support that best meets their personal needs and choices even when not specifically highlighted as impacted through the Equality Impact Assessment process.
29. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to assess how this strategy will impact on any persons with a protected characteristic. This EIA has been signed off by Legal Services and the Director of Adult Social Services and Housing Needs. A copy of the EIA is provided as Appendix 2.
30. The EIA assessment concluded that the Carers Strategy 2023 - 2028 will have a positive impact on all people undertaking the role of providing unpaid care on the Island regardless of any protected characteristic they may have. All unpaid carer support services will be fully inclusive.
31. The strategy will have a particular positive impact on the following protected characteristics
 - Age – The strategy will seek to improve services for all of our island’s unpaid carers regardless of age
 - Disability – the strategy will seek to improve the support available for all unpaid carers regardless of any disability they may have, and enable the right support to be available for them when they need it.

OPTIONS

32. Option 1 – Cabinet approval and endorsement of the Isle of Wight Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028, enabling the strategy to progress for formal adoption by the Isle of Wight Health and Care Partnership Board, and supporting a whole system approach to improving care and support for our islands unpaid carers.
33. Option 2 – Cabinet does not approve and endorse the Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028 resulting in the council not having an up to date or relevant strategy outlining the support available to local unpaid carers and assisting in the discharge of our statutory functions in this area.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Option 1

34. There is potential risk associated, post adoption of the strategy in the ineffective strategy implementation. This will be mitigated by the development of a robust delivery plan clearly outlining the actions required to drive forward the strategy's implementation and through ongoing leadership and scrutiny by partners in the voluntary sector.

Option 2

35. The failure to adopt a new and updated Carers Strategy will result in the support for our islands unpaid carers remaining which will place further pressure on statutory services. The needs of our islands unpaid carers will not be improved which will lead to
- Increasing the vulnerability to ours island cared for and unpaid cares
 - Increased levels of unpaid carers at crisis point
 - Increased financial pressure for the Council
 - Increased financial pressure for the NHS Trust
 - Reputational risk for the Council

EVALUATION

36. To progress with the implementation and adoption of the Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028. The adoption and endorsement of the strategy is needed by the Alliance. Once the strategy has been agreed and approved, the strategy can be presented to the Isle of Wight Health and Care Partnership Board. This will enable a detailed delivery plan to be coproduced with unpaid carers and the services which support and represent them to ensure that the strategy is effectively implemented to better support our islands unpaid carers.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 - Carers Strategy 2023 – 2028
Appendix 2 - EIA for Carers Strategy

Contact Point: Alaster Sims, Commissioning Officer, ☎ 821000 ext. 6934 e-mail
Alaster.sims@iow.gov.uk

LAURA GAUDION
*Director of Adult Services and Housing
Needs*

(CLLR) KARL LOVE
*Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
and Public Health.*