

# Commissioning for A Better Life for Carers in Dorset Our Strategy 2022-27

We want to identify potential carers of the future, register identified carers, support them throughout their caring journey and reach individuals at risk before they reach crisis. We want carers supported across the whole system, and for carers to be acknowledged and recognised as an important role by everyone, not just Adult Social Care.



# Foreword

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*To follow.*

## About these strategies

This is one of four strategy documents which is currently in development by Dorset Council, to shape its planning and delivery of adult social care services for the coming years. This draft, presented to the Overview Committee on 28 June 2022, marks the beginning of a wide set of discussions with key people, including our residents, users of our services, carers, our workforce, our partners and the social care market. Through these discussions we want to develop a set of social care plans that command wide respect, and which can shape the Dorset Council works with everyone to build a social care system that is fit for the future.

# Contents

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Foreword .....	2
Contents .....	3
About this Strategy.....	5
Who is a carer? .....	7
Vision for Carers in Dorset.....	10
Four outcomes .....	12
Services for carers .....	13
Universal Services .....	13
Targeted services .....	13
Additional Impacts .....	17
Our improvement priorities .....	20
National carers data: what carers say about their experience .....	20
Key engagement messages: what Carers in Dorset have told us .....	21
Culture, trust, respect and recognition .....	23
The information, advice and guidance offer .....	23
Commissioned Services .....	24
Carers assessments, personal budgets and direct payments.....	28
Community resilience and participation.....	29
Other aspects of service delivery to be explored .....	30
Our Action Plans .....	31
Year 1 implementation plan .....	32
Years 2-5 .....	36
Appendices.....	37
Appendix A: the Dorset Context .....	38
Appendix B: What is spent on support for carers.....	45
Appendix C: who we engaged with.....	47
Appendix D: relevant legislation and policy .....	48

*The final document will include appendices which will set out specific plans in a 'plan on a page' format. These are in development through the co-production process, so are not yet included in these drafts.*

# About this Strategy

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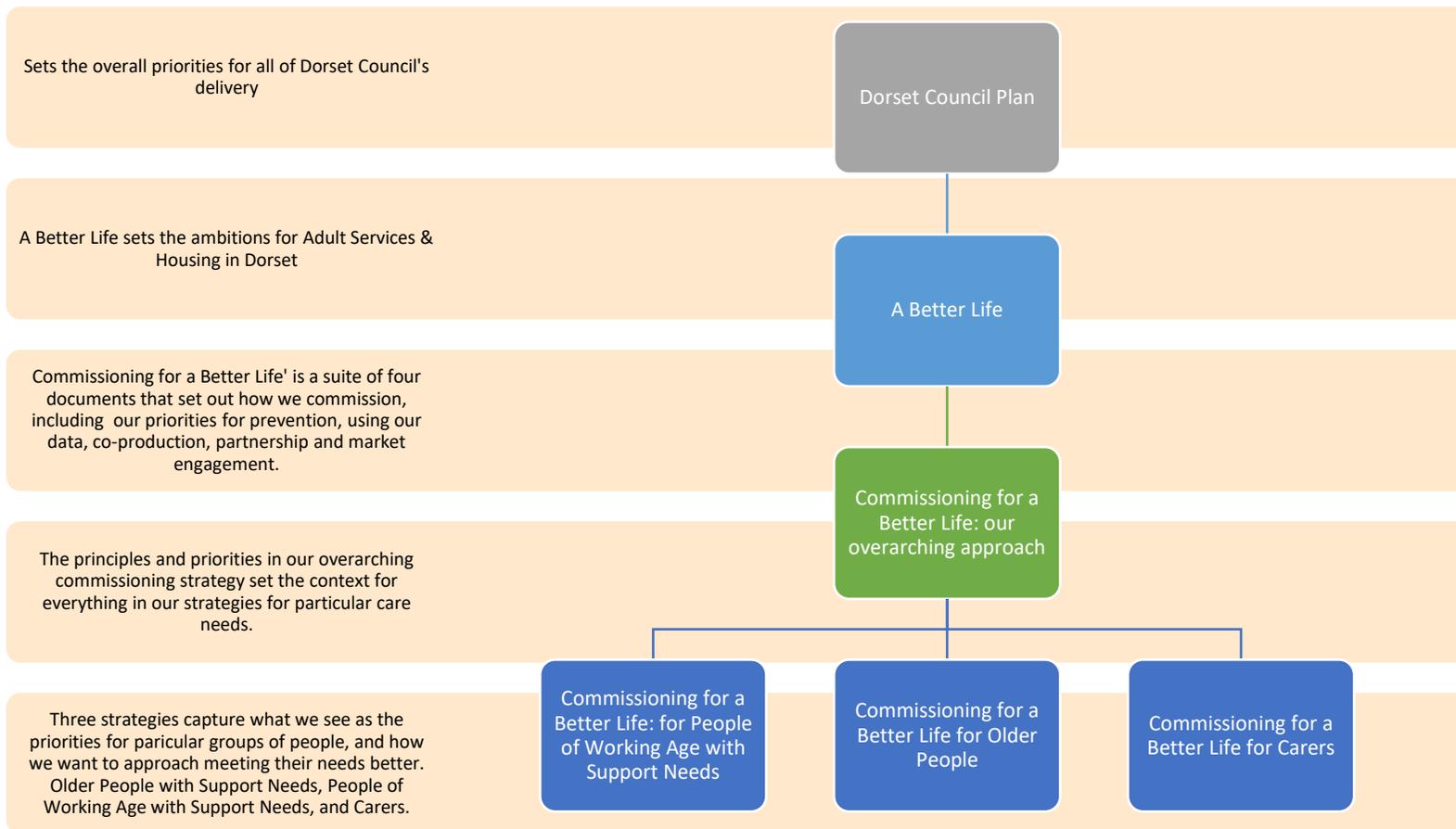
This is one of four strategies that sets the framework for how we will commission and develop services and support into the future. 'Commissioning for A Better Life' is the overarching commissioning approach, and should be read in conjunction with this document that deals more specifically with how we will improve the support that carers receive.

This strategy is intended to be used as a live document, allowing us to build on the existing service delivery, review progress to date and then continue to review throughout the 5-year period the strategy covers. It has been produced in mid-2022 to make it easier for people to engage with us and tell us what needs to improve and how we should do it. There will be further versions as we work with partners, carers and the community.

This strategy is as a result of much consultation, engagement, and research from carers, those with lived experience, providers, local councillors, and partners.

The strategy will be delivered in line with the attached implementation plan and will flex to accommodate any changes in national guidance and local pressures. It is also intended to support Dorset Council Adult Social Care respond to the forthcoming pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group refreshed Vision Strategy due in 2022, which is a carer-led high-level vision strategy to which all system partners in Dorset have committed.

## Our Strategy Framework



# Who is a carer?

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## Definitions

According to the Pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group Valuing Carers Vision Strategy the definition of a carer is “Somebody who provides support or who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their age, physical or mental illness, or disability. This would not usually include someone paid or employed to carry out that role, or someone who is a volunteer”.

The Care Act definition is... “an adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult (“adult needing care”)” clause 10 (3) Care Act (2014).

A young carer is... “a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work)...” ...section 96 Children and Families Act 2014

## Terminology

Government and the adult social care professional community frequently use terms including “informal carer” and “unpaid carer”. The carers that we spoke to were clear that these terms do not describe their role. Simply “carer” is sufficient and preferred. “Informal” suggests that it is only a casual role, rather than being an expert on the life of their loved one. “Unpaid” emphasises the transactional, and is particularly offensive when considered in light of the low levels of state support for carers. Further, for those in receipt of Carers’ Allowance, “unpaid” can simply be confusing.

In describing carers as such, we will need to be mindful that in some instances this can be considered to include those who do receive payment for their work. This includes not only those who are employed by a care agency, but also those self-employed as personal assistants and those who care for others as part of a Shared Lives arrangement. When we are describing carers, therefore, and wish to make the distinction between these responsibilities, we will need to take time to set out what we mean, rather than use shorthand terms such as “unpaid carer”.

It is important not to categorise or label carers too rigidly; however, when considering the different types of service, a carer may require at the various stages of their journey and for commissioning purposes it is helpful to consider the various types:

- Adult carer (aged 18+)

- Working carers
- Parent carers of an adult dependent with a disability or who is disabled
- Young adult carers (16 – 25 yrs.)
- Young Carers (under 16)
- Sibling carer
- Occupational Carers

## Adult Carer

An adult carer is someone who has a caring role over the age of 18 years. There are a high number of adult and older carers living in the rural parts of Dorset. In the rural areas there are less community-based opportunities and less providers. This makes the need for a joined up and responsive service key to their support. Often older carers in rural communities' health and wellbeing are impacted by their caring role as they cope with their own frailties and may not be digitally enabled.

## Working Carers

Corporately Dorset Council want working carers to feel supported and able to deliver both their work roles and their responsibilities as carers. There is work underway within the council to improve the information and support to working carers.

Carers should not have to give up their chosen career due to caring responsibilities, however this is often the case. Many carers will need to return to paid work to supplement income in the years ahead.

An information page dedicated to working carers employed by Dorset Council has been developed with links to support, advice, and policies to support them. A working carers support network has been advertised with a view to developing peer support and greater awareness across the organisation.

The Pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group have outcomes in relation to this which are to be reported on regarding delivering support for working carers. Two of the applicable outcomes are:

- We will develop workforce training solutions that raise awareness at a local level to enable us to listen to carers ideas and concerns.
- We will develop a peer support network for carers (can be workforce group)

Learning can be gained from the NHS employee leaflet Juggling caring and work leaflet.

## Parent carers of adult children

It is also important to recognise parent carers of disabled children or SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability). Getting information to parents and Carers at the right time regarding what support is available to them when the young person moves from childhood into adulthood, moving from Children's Services to Adult Social Care support can be challenging. Conversations are taking place between Adult Social Care and Children's Services regarding how to improve this.

## Young Adult Carers, Young Carers

Strategic plans are being developed in partnership with Children's Services under the Young and Thriving Strategy to improve young carers service delivery, including the whole family approach. Services are being developed in partnership with Children's Services, Carer Support Dorset, Health and

MYTIME Charity – see Young Carers section, and Young Carers Project information. The Project Group are committed to providing young carers with good support and protect them from inappropriate caring responsibilities which prevent them from learning and developing to their best potential.

## Sibling Carers

Within a family home where there is an Adult with health or social care needs, there children take on caring roles. Sibling Carers are children who care for their sibling to help the parents. Sibling carers who are often missed out of existing service deliveries. Children's Services are developing their strategy for this area as part of their Young and Thriving strategy.

## Occupational Carers

There are also paid carers, also known as occupational carers. This strategy does not include this group.

# Vision for Carers in Dorset

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The population of Dorset is increasing and with that, particularly with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of people providing care to another has dramatically increased. There is an assumption that most are not coming forward and identifying as carers. With the increased pressure on the care system, hospitals, and lack of professional care staff in the community, the burden on carers is expected to increase and further preventive support will need to be identified and developed by a systemwide approach including the Health, Social Care and Community networks.

Our vision draws on our learning from engagement with Carers, professionals and providers and the national guidance whilst also making it relevant to local needs. The overarching aim and set of objectives can be used to measure how we deliver better support for carers in Dorset. Dorset Council want to identify potential carers of the future, register identified carers, support them throughout their caring journey and reach individuals at risk before they reach crisis. We want carers supported across the whole system, and for caring to be acknowledged and recognised as an important role by everyone, not just Adult Social Care.

We will work together so that all carers are empowered to lead their best life, are respected, fully informed, involved, valued, and receive:

- the right support;
- at the right time; and
- in the right place.

## The Right Support

An immediate focus will be on further developing our information, advice and guidance offer to be more joined up, clear and easily accessible, including on some priority issues for carers such as planning ahead, financial planning, contingency planning and end of life. This needs to be shared activity with NHS partners, carers organisations and others, and involve carers in the design work.

We want to further develop the range of available support, with an emphasis on flexibly responding to carers needs, including those who work, and with elements of choice, crisis prevention and response. Developing an employment charter for carers would help focus on these commitments. We also want to develop a clearer carer break offer. Dorset Community Response and Help and Kindness have introduced new community volunteer support for carers which will continue to grow. Some parts of the support infrastructure could be further developed, with community supporting people to engage,

including the Carer Card and Caring Matters magazine. Technology can provide opportunities to make life easier and relieve some anxiety of caring at home, and assistive technology and equipment should be incorporated into every carers assessment.

We want more people to have a carers' personal budget and direct payment, and to have the freedom and flexibility to arrange the support that they need.

## The Right Place

Our Carers Case Workers provide valuable support on a one to one basis where there is complexity, however, there is a need to ensure resources are aligned to different locality need.

As part of developing the range of support available, we want to work to improve the consistency of availability of peer support groups across the county.

## The Right Time

We need to bring more people and organisations into the work of identifying carers and flagging to them that there is support available. This will enable more carers to access the timely support they need, and provide a more immediate response to crisis, as well as identifying those who may soon become carers, and those who are ageing and for whom caring is becoming ever more challenging.

For those young people who take on caring roles so early in life, the right support joined up across children and adult services is critical to their future growth and development.

## Continuing to deliver the objectives in the Valuing Carers partnership strategy

The Valuing Carers in Dorset strategy was written by organisations working in partnership towards integrated health and social care services including Dorset Council, BCP (Bournemouth Christchurch Poole) Council, Clinical Commissioning Group, Acute Hospital Trusts, Dorset Healthcare and Carers. It also underpins this Dorset Council Adult Social Care strategy. The Council have a strong working relationship with partners and are committed to building on this to deliver the Valuing Carers strategy identified 9 priorities which underpin this strategy:

- Support the early identification of carers, including self-identification
- Ensure carers receive relevant and timely information and advice about their caring role
- Develop the workforce to understand carers needs, improve identification and value their contributions
- Involve carers in local care planning and individual care planning
- Enable carers to fulfil their educational and employment potential
- Provide personalised support for carers and those receiving care
- Support carers to remain safe and healthy
- Deliver equality of services across Dorset by commissioning carers services in a joined-up way
- Ensure that carers rights are recognised at the same level as the cared for person
- Minimise stress and bureaucracy with a whole-team positive culture of enabling support

The aim is to produce a consistent approach for Dorset Carer's which prevents a postcode lottery and promotes prevent, reduce, and delay working with our partners BCP Council, ICS, NHS, DHUFT (Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust), CCG, VCSE. Commissioning joint services for Dorset Residents with BCP Council where possible.

## Four outcomes

All of these aspirations are captured in four high-level outcomes that guide our work. These help us to think about what the issues are that get in the way, and what we need to work on to fix them. At the end of this strategy is our action plan for year 1 and, in outline, for future years – the actions are grouped under these four outcomes.

1. Carers are respected and valued across social care and other council departments, and are included and involved
2. Carers can find the information that they want, when they want it, and in formats that work for them
3. Carers have access to a range of support, responsive to their needs both in the community and from the Council
4. Carers receive meaningful assessment, with responsive options for receiving the support that they need

# Services for carers

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## Universal Services

There are many other services or support for adult residents which also benefit Carers.

A 'Carers tool kit' was developed during 2020 to detail the universal services provided by the VCSE that was used by Councillors to enable them to sign post Carers to services. This would need updating for 2022 and would be continuous job to do so as services change and evolve.

'If Only I'd Known That' is a booklet produced by PramaLife and The Leonardo Trust which is based on a carers journey over 20 years ago, which is still very relevant today. The booklet is free to all carers and provides hints and tips on navigating the services and provides a helpful index of contact points at the back. This has been sent to all elected members and is sent to all registered carers.

## Targeted services

By having several commissioned services this offers the carer choice, however it can also cause confusion as to who to contact.

In house and externally commissioned services are currently funded via the Better Care Fund. The Better Care Fund is funding provided by CCG to Adult Social Care to jointly commission services to carers. In house Carers Case Workers support operational teams at a local level, and commissioned services include a Dorset Council led Carers support hub, as well as jointly commissioned services with system partners BCP Council, CCG and Health:

- Carers Case Workers – internal operational team
- Short Break Services- internal offer
- Carer Support Dorset – Dorset Council Commissioned Carers lead organisation
- Rethink – Dorset Council Commissioned support for Carers of people with mental health illness
- Carers Cards – Joint BCP and Dorset Council commissioned discount card
- Caring Matters – joint BCP, Dorset Council commissioned magazine
- Time to talk – joint BCP and Dorset Council commissioned counselling support service

In addition to targeted interventions, there are a host of other universal services. Please refer to Appendix B for more information.

## Dorset Council, Carers Case Worker role

The Carers Case Workers provide the Statutory support under the Care Act 2014 where there is complexity or safeguarding concerns - they do not undertake all Carers Assessments. They are strategically based across Dorset including localities and some hospital sites.

The posts were created to work with carers in more complex situations where there is a need for a formal Carers Assessment under the Care Act 2014, and it is not appropriate for an allocated worker to complete the assessment. This would include the following situations:

1. Safeguarding concerns and complications.
2. Where there is conflict between the carer and the cared for person, or where there are conflicting views between the carer and the cared for person about desired outcomes.
3. Where there are complex inter-relations between the needs of the carer and the needs of the cared for person and there is a need for independent support for the carer.
4. Where there is no allocated worker for the cared for person (private funders where there is no request for an assessment of the cared for person).

Carer Case Workers also offer support to bereaved carers in the short term and signpost to other organisations. There was an increase in welfare calls and sadly bereavement support during the pandemic. It is recognised that they offer valuable support to carers which was made particularly difficult during the Covid-19 pandemic with many Carers shielding and lack of resources to refer them to.

In addition, Carers Case Workers are the experts in their locality/specialist team and provide training, advice and support to colleagues undertaking Carers assessments. They hold local peer support groups and lead in their local communities working with the Primary Care Networks, GP surgeries, hospitals, the community and other organisations in the area. They are the primary coordinators of the Provider Forums and work very closely with primary care and other providers in their setting.

## Short Break Service and Personal Budgets

Short Break services have traditionally been an offer of support to Carers following a Care Act Assessment. These have taken the form of a replacement care service and the provision is not subject to a financial assessment.

The current offer is care-based and as such is subject to availability within the care market. The experience of Covid 19, where carers have been unable to access the provision, coupled with engagement feedback, demonstrated the need to revisit what constitutes a 'short break' offer. A more personalised offer is seen as a way of carers securing goods or services that support them more individually in their caring role.

According to the Care Act 2014, a Carer is entitled to a Personal Budget to spend on their wellbeing whether or not the adult being cared for has eligible needs (Carers should get personal budget regardless of whether Adult Social Care are working with the cared for person). Carers need a rest from caring responsibilities to look after their own physical/mental health and emotional wellbeing, social and economic wellbeing and to spend time with other members of the family and personal relationships (Care Act).

Eligibility for Carers to access services is clear and agreed support is detailed in a Support Plan. Examples include:

- a course of relaxation classes,
- training on stress management,
- gym or leisure membership,
- adult learning,
- development of new work skills or refreshing existing skills.
- pursuit of hobbies such as purchasing a garden shed, or laptop to stay in touch with friends and family

Whether or not there is a need for replacement care, carers may need support to help them to look after their own wellbeing. This may be, for example, a course of relaxation classes, training on stress management, gym or leisure Centre membership, adult learning, development of new work skills or refreshing existing skills (so they might be able to stay in paid employment alongside caring or take up return to paid work), pursuit of hobbies such as the purchase of a garden shed, or purchase of a laptop so they can stay in touch with family and friends.

Currently Dorset Council does not provide a Carer with a personal budget, however they do provide Direct Payments. This is an area for development which should have taken place with the introduction of the Care Act 2014.

The only direct funding a Carer receives from Dorset Council is used for the Short Breaks Service or provided by Rethink under the title 'Breakaway Fund'.

## Carer Support Dorset, Commissioned Carers Lead Organisation

Carer Support Dorset offers a 'front door, one stop shop' approach, for carers of all ages from Dorset Council. This service contributes to the collective model of early intervention and prevention, providing a preventative offer to delay carer breakdown and reduce the need for Adult Social Care intervention. They are the first point of contact offering the information, advice, support, signposting, befriending and guidance. They also hold the Dorset Carers Register on Dorset Councils behalf for Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

A vast amount of data is available provided by quarterly reports from Carer Support Dorset to understand about Dorset carers.

## Rethink – Dorset Carers Service – commissioned service

Rethink is the Commissioned service provider for Carers of all ages who live in Dorset Council area who care for people aged 18 or over with Mental Health Illness. They work collaboratively with Carer Support Dorset to promote and enable the early identification, carer recognition, support, and training for carers. They provide joint sessions with Carer Support Dorset to support carers suffering from mental health illness themselves and of those who they care for.

Currently the service supports people over the age of 17 and receive referrals predominately from Community Mental Health Teams. Children's Services are keen to explore opportunities to access mental health services for young carers. This is an area under review and possible development into lower age groups as part of Children's Services Young and Thriving Strategy.

The links with Rethink varies across CMHT depending on their staffing hierarchy. Most Carers assessments are being completed by CMHT (Health staff). Some have Carers Lead Officers or equivalent employed by Dorset Council, some do not.

The support offer can include a personalised payment of up to £300 to support Carers wellbeing administered through the Breakaway Fund. This is recognised as a model that can be used in addition to being awarded Short Breaks by Adult Social Care.

## Carers Cards

The Dorset Carers Card is a joint contract with BCP funded by the Better Care Fund. It gives access to a card that can be used as Carer identification and provides discounts across Dorset including at cafes, shops, attractions and with some professional services. There are hundreds of opportunities across Dorset to use the card. The Carers Card website which includes printable information helps Carers to discover the offers available.

The Carers Card scheme distributed to registered Carers - including adults, young carers and Parent carers of children who are disabled or with SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) - by Carer Support Dorset and CRISP (Carers Resource Information and Support) for BCP Council, although the scheme is currently coordinated by My Carers Card organisation.

## Caring Matters

A joint contract in partnership with BCP Council, funded by the Better Care Fund.

This bi-annual (6 monthly) magazines are prepared by Pan-Dorset system-wide partners for all Dorset carers.

Caring Matters is produced by Dorset Council and BCP Council in partnership with the NHS. Around 16,000 copies are printed which are given to GP surgeries, pharmacies, and professional carers leads, to distribute to carers across Dorset. It is also published on internet sites, including Dorset Council and BCP Council including CRISP websites, Carer Support Dorset's website and others of interest to carers.

See Appendix D for the Spring 2021 edition.

## Time to Talk

This is a counselling service, a joint contract with BCP funded by Better Care Fund.

The Time to Talk contract is a bespoke demand led counselling service jointly shared with BCP Council offering counselling services to carers for up to 6 sessions of approximately 50 minutes a session and with an optional additional 6 sessions if required. These sessions should take place over a relatively short time period. We expect the six sessions to be completed within a 4-month period. The aims of the service are to manage and improve the well-being of carers and sustain their ability to continue to provide care.

During the Covid-19 pandemic options were reduced, however, pre-Covid, counsellors were offering telephone, Zoom or face-to-face appointments. To access this there is a requirement for Dorset Council Carers to have a Carers Assessment under the Care Act 2014. There is currently low take up of this offer.

A Carers Assessment is required to access Time to Talk currently. However, following feedback from carers that their mental health has deteriorated during the Covid-19 pandemic and that carers often suffer poor mental health. To make the service more accessible from June 2022 Carers will be able to access this service without a Carers Assessment taking place.

## Additional Impacts

### Home first

National Research conducted by Professor John Bolton (visiting professor at the institute of public care/ independent consultant), identified the detrimental effect of patients remaining in hospital for longer than medically necessary. Bolton's research identified that 45% of patients, have no ongoing clinical support needs on leaving hospital, but may need some wellbeing support to remain well at home and maintain independence.

Home First – a partnership between local NHS and the two-council adult social care authorities – was launched last year to deliver the national 'discharge to assess' (D2A) model and help people to safely leave hospital without delay and with the right support to recover in the comfort of their own homes wherever possible.

While we have made good progress in improving the hospital discharge process, there is still work to do make sure carers consistently have a good experience of care, are supported to recover in the right place for their needs and don't experience avoidable delays.

Carers UK have also released a report 2021 – 2021 'Carer's experiences of hospital discharge - Discharge to Assess model' which includes the most recent guidance issued by the NHS England includes references to carers rights after Carers UK raised significant concerns.

### Response to Coronavirus Pandemic

The Pandemic hit people hard from all backgrounds, in particular carers who struggled to manage additional hours of providing care without support, which negatively impacted on their health and wellbeing. Not only were they looking after themselves, but they were also trying to care for someone else. Most people were not able to leave their home, and majority of services closed or stopped for a period which impacted on their loneliness and isolation. Finding replacement care that was provided inside or out of the home was extremely challenging and continues to be. Even with restrictions being lifted, some services have returned to a new normal, some online, some face to face, however many services have not reopened their doors, including peer support groups and activities Carers and their cared for person relied on.

Not being able to leave the house raised anxiety, caused mental health illness to increase and in some household's domestic violence. Not being able to 'escape' from the 4 walls of home and have a break is still something that Carers are experiencing even today.

The community stepped up in support of their neighbour, helping one another who they may not even know, with simple but essential chores such as food shopping or collecting medicines. Social Media played a strong part in supporting people with the setup of friendly community groups where people offered to help one another, often complete strangers. Community groups were trusted with confidential information and supported with delivery of services which they may not have had opportunity to before,

a real team approach in partnership with the Council for greater good. These acts of compassion should not be lost and built upon as we move forward into a new normal.

Some services were able to quickly adjust to online services, which met some people's needs and opened new opportunities for people who had not tried it before. However, this also left behind others who didn't have the means or understanding to access these services. Going forward in a digital World, it is felt it is important to use this as a building block to take services forward in a hybrid manner and support those who didn't engage for whatever reason to be able to access Digital services.

But included:

- Laptops, equipment funding or hardship grants provided via The Leonardo Trust
- Carers helpline - Dorset Mental Health Forum Carers
- Telephone support and specific advice for new accidental carers/people caring for neighbours – Age UK

The Covid-19 vaccination programme also raised anxiety and confusion for Carers as to whether they qualified for an early vaccination under cohort 6 and whether the carer, cared for person and household would have the vaccination at the same time not. This led them to feeling left out, angry, and vulnerable.

Learning from this is still be collated with some early findings pointing to a lack of clear guidance information to support issues at a local level. However, a survey conducted by Healthwatch gathering feedback on people's experience of the Covid-19 vaccine and so far, the results are very positive but there have been some issues raised by carers around their ability to get a vaccine if they were not in receipt of Carers Allowance.

A call to action from the UK's young carers and young adult carers In June 2020 Carers Trust asked children and young people aged between 12 and 25 about their experiences of caring during the pandemic. Even amongst everything else they must do, 961 found the time to reply.

“Before coronavirus I was living quite a normal life at university in another city, but I have now come back home where I care for my sister who has severe mental health issues and my mother who has mild ones. There is nowhere to get away to for a break as even when things aren't quite as bad all I feel like doing is resting/sleeping in bed. My biggest worries used to be exams and boyfriend troubles, now they are making sure everyone is alive this time tomorrow”. Young adult carer, aged 19

- 67% of young carers and 78% of young adult carers are more worried about their future since coronavirus.
- 11% of young carers and 20% of young adult carers said the amount of time they spend caring per week increased by more than 30 hours. That is around 1 in 5 young adult carers.
- A shocking 8% of young carers and 15% of young adult carers cared for over 90 hours per week during the pandemic.
- 30% of young carers and 31% young adult carers are now caring for more people.

## Domestic Violence

The Dorset Safeguarding Adult Board have completed a Safeguarding Adults Review which focuses on domestic abuse in later life and will include a multi-agency action plan to consider how older people can be more effectively supported when they are victims of domestic abuse, and this will include Carers. The report is yet to be published

Paragon (formally You Trust), Dorset Council's commissioned Integrated Domestic Abuse Service has a free awareness workshop for people in the community and organisations. The aim is to increase awareness across our most hard to reach communities by creating 'champions' who can act as a link to specialist support services. It's not about safety planning. It's called the 'Dragonfly Project'.

## Cross Border Protocol

It is not unusual for carers, especially in urban areas, to live in a different local authority area to the person they support. They have tended to be known as "cross-border" carers. There are also situations where people live some way away and are known as "distance carers" of an adult with care and support needs.

Carer Support Dorset have been asked to advertise on their website border information to help carers who live on the border. This is already in place for Carers who reside in Bournemouth, Christchurch, or Poole (still Dorset) but not for other Dorset borders – Somerset, Hampshire, and Devon.

Carers have expressed their confusion in relation to borders and why services differ across them. Dorset PCN's also do not relate to Dorset Adult Social Care borders which adds to confusion as to where to register.

The SE ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) Carers Leads Network developed a cross border protocol on 07.07.21 which was shared with SW ADASS Carers Leads Network. They are considering whether to adopt it.

It is understood that these carers services will be low-cost services, often provided by the local carers centre/service and sometimes referred to as 'the universal offer' and thus will incur nominal costs to the host LA (local authorities). Does not include entitlement to a Carers Direct Payment.

There is some cross border work taking place in the North Dorset area, however the good practice learnt here needs to be spread across to the other areas to benefit all carers who live on the borders.

# Our improvement priorities

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## National carers data: what carers say about their experience

Carers UK - State of Caring 2021 - key findings:

- In 2021, 8,500 current and former carers shared their experiences and helped inform our State of Caring 2021 report. Read more in the full report here:
- One in five carers are worried they may not cope financially over the next 12 months
- One in four carers (23%) may not have enough money to cover their monthly expenses
- Carers spend an estimated £1,370 a year on average on services or equipment for the person they care for
- Over half of Carers (52%) feel anxious or stressed about their finances
- 63% are worried about continuing to care without a break
- 72% have not had any breaks in the pandemic
- 74 % are exhausted as a result of caring
- 71% are stressed and anxious
- 65% feel lonely and isolated
- 35% say they feel unable to manage their caring role
- Carers UK report 'Caring behind closed doors: six months on' reports:
- 78% are caring for someone whose support needs have increased
- 64% have not had a break
- 64% have worse mental health.

Carers UK report 'Breaks or Breakdown' reports:

- It is difficult to estimate the savings carers make to the economy, however, as of 2020, Carers UK facts and figures report estimates there are around 13.6 million people caring through the pandemic.
- Carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer
- 5 million people in the UK are juggling caring responsibilities with work - that's 1 in 7 of the workforces.
- However, the significant demands of caring mean that 600 people give up work every day to care for an older or disabled relative.

- Carers Allowance is the main carer's benefit and is £67.25 for a minimum of 35 hours, the lowest benefit of its kind with many carers not being eligible.
- People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled

## Key engagement messages: what Carers in Dorset have told us

Carers voices, providers and professional carers leads have been instrumental to feeding into this strategy ensuring the right services are commissioned and assumptions are not made. We are very grateful to everyone who has taken part.

Key findings headed under three themes: activities, wellbeing, and pathways.

- Activities
  - Day centres and services are valued and more activities with the carer/without the carer are wanted
  - Carers want activities, not just meeting other carers, they want to be distracted of their caring role
- Wellbeing
  - Carers do not get a break from their caring responsibilities (this can describe hours, days, weekends, overnights)
  - Carers report feeling isolated, lonely, and deteriorated mental health illness
  - Caring had escalated and become more difficult and challenging throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, in particular lockdowns were mentioned where the lack of support and activities/respite was not available.
  - Some of the carers were elderly, had health needs themselves, or the cared for person didn't want support, which made caring more challenging.
  - Carers want some or more time off, to see friends, have a weekend away, to have fun separately and together, but didn't complain and a couple commented it was their 'duty'.
  - Most welcomed more sup/port for their wellbeing, by means of day trips, wellbeing treatments and to be able to eat out and admission tickets attend events/shows.
  - Many carers reported they did not have family, friends, or neighbours to ask for support/give them a break/rest.
- Pathways
  - Assessments are not received by all, and some felt it was difficult to get an assessment
  - Carers are not sure if they are registered with Carer Support Dorset
  - Carers are not always clear which organisation provides the support they receive
  - Access to services and care in the rural parts of Dorset are harder to find or don't exist
  - We know at least 30% of the carers are not digitally enabled
  - Some carers appear not to know what is available to them or how to access it.
  - Most carers do not access and don't know how to access the Short Breaks service

From the work that has taken place we have listened to what carers have told us they need to support them in their caring role. There is lots of work to be undertaken to improve the marketing of the existing offer, making it clearer to understand what is available and how to access it.

- Carers have told us what they want and need
- Councillors have advised us what they would like to see improved.
- Providers have told us how to improve services.

- The community have been telling ABL (A Better Life) what they want
- Collaboration with BCP Council to improve services jointly commissioned for Dorset resident carers is underway

As part of the Summer of Coproduction the members of public and representatives from Dorset Council and providers/partners who participated included some carers, this is what they told us:

People have told us they want to:

- Go back to what they were doing before Coronavirus
- Be independent, feel valued and live their life with purpose
- Be listened to, trusted, valued and treated with respect
- Have support staff who care and know them well
- Socialise and make new friends
- Get a break/rest from caring responsibilities
- Be offered more choice of activities
- Get better information about day opportunities
- Be helped to access the support they need even if they can pay for it themselves

People have told us they want to:

- Find work
- Volunteer
- Learn life skills
- Take part in sport
- Explore new places
- Go on walks and day trips

Further information on who we engaged with, can be found in Appendix A.

## Task-and-finish review of carer support, April 2022

In March 2022 a Task & Finish Group was established to look into the issues facing carers in Dorset, and to produce recommendations for improvements to the support that is made available. This was intended to inform the commissioning strategy, which was in development at the time.

The group brought together carers, carer representative organisations, and relevant Council officers to explore a number of themes. It was chaired by Cllr Cherry Brooks. It met four times, with a number of carers involved through the process, as well as individuals running organisations providing support to carers, and a number of people who also talked both from their professional perspective and a personal perspective as carers themselves.

- respect carers, their work, and their challenges
- make the different support offers clearer
- improve information and support, including accessibility
- remove the operating silos
- take a more “relational” approach to supporting carers in their lives and work
- review and improve the impact of carers’ assessments
- review the rules around short breaks, where possible
- greatly widen the uptake and provision of direct payments or individual service funds
- review the contract of Carer Support Dorset and make the offer clearer
- review the Carer Caseworker service and make the offer clearer

- ensure carers are considered in the assessment of future housing demands
- diversify the provision of day opportunities, including virtual contact and addressing digital exclusion

The feedback provided during this process has been instrumental in helping to shape this strategy.

## **Culture, trust, respect and recognition**

Carers tell us strongly that they deserved recognition for the hard and complex work that they do, and the impact that it has on their lives. This sounds like a simple statement, but behind it is a frustration with the difficulties of navigating not only the care system, but all statutory sources of potential help, finance, and support, including housing, benefits, and other areas.

Carers tell us that too few interactions with Council officers gave them confidence that their lives as carers were understood, or that there was appreciation of the stresses and pressures in a carer's life. They also talk about not feeling trusted in their caring role, including where they are taking financial decisions with their cared-for person. This is a key part of better respecting and recognising carers, and they tell us that culture and behaviours need to change. They say that they want a more 'human element' to their support. This 'relational' approach is a long-term piece of culture change work, but it is an important journey to take. The importance of 'walking in our shoes' cannot be overstated, as well as having insight into life as a carer. And crucially, it should be a whole-council endeavour.

There should be more campaigns about the carer role, which would build awareness, but could also help in identifying carers and improving the levels of carer registration so that support could be offered. We will also implement a wider training programme for Council and other organisations' workforce, including using the high-profile national carer support campaigns (e.g. Carers Week) to maintain visibility.

In all of our work to strengthen the voice of the carer, we must also be careful not to lose the voice of the person with the care needs. This is a delicate balance, and includes issues around privacy and data protection that must be sensitively handled. Carers tell us that they understand that these are issues, but when navigating the issue they want us to be more attentive to their needs as people intimately involved with the care of their friend or family member.

## **The information, advice and guidance offer**

Information and advice provision is a critical part of getting carers the support they need, when they need it. With a number of different web offers on information and advice, carers tell us that this causes confusion and, whilst there are links and routes between them, this remains confusing. There is also in some cases easy access to information on the important issues that carers needed to know. For some, they didn't know some of what they might need to know and therefore didn't know how to ask for it until too late. However, this was not solely about information on being a carer; it also applied to information about arranging and managing care for their loved one. These themes are relevant for the work being undertaken to redesign the Council's information and advice offer, and work to replace the Our Dorset Adult Social Care platform with new pages on the main Council website.

For some the reliance solely on websites was not sufficient, and some carers appreciated printed matter as a source of information that they could retain and refer to at a later time. This is not incompatible with a fundamentally digital offer, and it is possible to facilitate this with, for example, the ability to output webpages as printable PDFs, which professionals and support organisations could then share with

carers on demand. Relying on a suite of PDFs uploaded to the site was recognised to be problematic in accessibility terms, and for keeping them updated.

Carers also tell us that the adult social care system is complex and difficult to navigate, and when a carer is in need of information they are also likely to be in a place of distress or anxiety. Therefore, the Council needs to give thought to how people can get have a meaningful conversation to get to the answers that they need: in short, a 'human touch'.

Discussions on this theme also point to the importance of digital exclusion, and work to tackle it, in support carers' wellbeing. Evidence and survey results have evidenced many Carers are not digital, with a high percentage being older adults. In talking about digital offers, therefore, there was a strong recognition that levels of digital exclusion in Dorset were high, and that therefore carers should be "high up on the list" for any support to get online and overcome this exclusion. Other things to consider when attempting to reach carers in Dorset is mainly urban which a high population of elderly people, including people with disabilities, blindness, sensory impairment, or other difficulties, which will include carers.

## Commissioned Services

Some carers to whom we spoke had differing experiences of accessing support in their caring role. Whilst some had a positive experience, for a number of them the system of support was difficult to navigate, and levels of available support were insufficient (see points made later in this paper about carers' assessments and provision). They told us that the difference between the Council's "front door" and particularly Carer Support Dorset was not sufficiently clear, and the same applied to understanding what they could get from each. The two different websites caused confusion and, whilst there are links and routes between them, this remained confusing. Beyond the website, it was suggested that specifically what Carer Support Dorset and the Council each offer should be reviewed and made clearer.

There are opportunities to develop existing commissioned services, enhance service delivery and reshape services responding to current need whilst considering the recent impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Work is being undertaken (with BCP Council Commissioners where there are jointly commissioned services), to review services through consultation with carers, providers, and professionals. We are taking steps to coproduce new developments and services at every opportunity. Further work and identification of resources will be required to take this forward whilst ensuring demonstrating value for money.

### Carer Support Dorset

Although Carer Support Dorset is no longer still in its infancy, considering it was commissioned November 2019 most of its operation has been during the pandemic. It is developing as the lead carer organisation, the front door for Dorset Council resident Carers. Their reach and registration of carers and young carers is growing on an upward trend evidenced by quarterly reports. They have positive survey results of carers they have surveyed regarding the services they provide, which include:

- They are recognised by health and partners as the lead carer organisation for Dorset Council, however they are not recognised as the lead carer organisation for Dorset Council by all providers and carers. Carers report there is confusion as to who to contact and how to access an Assessment under the Care Act 2014.
- The newly formed Reference group has had two meetings to date (Oct 21) and is likely to develop into a very successful group over time with Carer Support Dorset's leadership.

- Newsletters are sent on a regular basis (electronically and by post) to inform carers of training opportunities, news, and information. Currently welfare checks are not part of the service delivery but to support the carer as their journey changes there are plans to develop this.
- Carer Support Dorset are keen to get involved in community activity which has increased post Covid restrictions and want to meet with carers. They are increasing networking and sharing of universal information to carers of services from across Dorset.
- Training is very much carer led; however, Carer Support Dorset are developing a training strategy to shape the offer with targeted cohorts and key areas of information.
- Peer support groups are scattered across Dorset, with some areas (particularly rural) lacking therefore providing opportunities for Carer Support Dorset to start new ones at grass roots and nurture them into self-managed groups.
- Regular advice and guidance and support for those who have registered.
- Welfare checks are being developed.

There is an opportunity to work closer with the community, to allow them to volunteer for Carer Support Dorset, providing the much needed and valued Here to talk befriending service and other areas such as peer support groups. This is an exciting area that is just beginning to flourish. Joint work with Help and Kindness Community Response will open more doors to Carer Support Dorset to connect with community and voluntary organisations to improve the service and response to carers at a community local level.

We are aware many citizens are funding their own replacement care so to support them information needs to be developed to inform them what is available and make it easier for them to access it. This should help with decision making and encourage self-management and planning ahead.

Carers who are no longer caring or would like to enhance their learning or develop as a volunteer need information to understand what is available to them. Some joint work with organisations such as the Dorset Volunteer Centre, local educational settings and Adult Education will enable this area to be developed.

## Rethink Dorset Carers Service

Rethink Dorset Carers Service are an established service. Their referral rate has doubled in the most recent quarterly report (Quarter 1 April – June 2021) of reach is growing on an upward trend evidenced by quarterly reports.

The recent Partnership Mental Health Social Care Review Mental Health Carers Findings and Reviewers Recommendations Log stated 'Rethink's carers support offer is extremely robust; it is staffed by a highly experienced and dedicated team of senior mental health recovery workers; and it promotes a strengths-based approach that assists carers in identifying their own outcomes and supports them in achieving those outcomes through a combination of services'. Refer to the Partnership Mental Health Social Care Review Mental Health Carers Findings and Reviewers Recommendations Log Appendix E.

They can evidence good outcomes for those who they support in the quarterly reports which include case studies and are developing good working a relationship with Carer Support Dorset including offering joint information and training sessions to carers on a regular basis.

The pathway to access Rethink needs improvement and there is an opportunity to review it with an aim to apply a consistent approach in respect of pathway and workforce across Dorset Council area. However, resources would need to be identified to support this exploration work across Adult Social Care and Health including CMHT.

This contract expires January 2023 and therefore work is underway to understand how best to commission a new service to meet the needs of Carers, whilst being mindful of the detrimental effects Covid-19 pandemic has had on carers.

## Young carer support

The Young Carers offer which started to be developed late in the contract (Feb 2021) needs reshaping, to ensure the priority areas are supported, children in need are identified and safeguarded. The Young Carers element of the contract will be developed in partnership with Children's Services and Carer Support Dorset in response to the Young and Thriving Strategic work being developed by Children's Services in partnership with Adult Social Care, Health, and providers.

Opportunities are being explored with Children's Services to develop the Rethink support for young carers and young adult carers as part of all ages contract in place, joining up the mental health support services for young.

## Carers Case Workers

Carers Case Workers based across the Dorset locality/specialist teams have a wealth of local knowledge and expertise. The relationships they hold with their local communities, colleagues, Health partners and Primary Care Network enables good outcomes for Carers. The Provider Forums they host provide opportunity to share good practice, hear about risks and gaps and new services for carers in their respective areas. In addition, they hold local peer support groups to keep in touch with the Carers, providing a forum for feedback and change. A good partnership exists between the Operational lead, Carers Case Workers, Commissioner, Commissioned services, and partners that needs to continue to strengthen with clear direction from this Strategy taking new opportunities forward to progress the service delivery.

However, some carers told us that there was confusion about whether the carers caseworker service was a universal one, including the provision of carers' assessments to anyone who came forward for one, or whether it was a targeted service aiming to intervene where carers are in difficulty or crisis. There was a clear sense that people didn't know what they might get from an assessment, or the support of a Carer Caseworker, and that others had received some substantial support. Whilst this may, in reality, be needs-led, it was also perceived as inequitable. Alongside the clearer specification and communication about the role of Carer Support Dorset, it was suggested that a similar exercise needs to happen for the Carer Caseworker service. It was suggested that this work be done in tandem, so that the two services can be presented side-by-side, and complementary to each other.

## Carers Cards

The cards are often used as carers ID more so than the discount card they were intended to be. Providers report carers do not use their services although there is an appetite to provide good quality discounts and special offers provided by over 400 registered providers.

During 2021 parent carers of children with SEND needs have been offered a carers card as part of joining up services, providing a seamless link to Carer Support Dorset who administer the cards.

A review with businesses registered has taken place in early 2021 which indicates that there is scope to improve this service with:

- improved marketing,

- making the information more accessible (paper based or App development),
- having 1 card design rather than the 3 current cards to improve trust in the scheme and
- developing the offer to be more attractive to younger carers

During April 2022 a survey of Carers has provided feedback as to what they think of the card, it's purpose and suggestions for improvements including better marketing, improved discounts which are more relevant to carers including free entry information to attractions and activities.

In response to this during the Winter of 2022 this contract will be expanded to include advertising of day opportunities, activities in the local community, free or discounted entry to theatres and cinemas and any other opportunities identifying as a carer can bring. We hope this will provide an incentive and encourage carers to come forward and register to obtain a card.

## Caring Matters Magazine

The magazine is distributed widely across Dorset and can be found in many GP surgeries, libraires and public places, including pharmacies. They offer the opportunity to someone who has not yet identified as a carer to access information, but also offers an interesting read with real life stories to registered carers. It is also distributed by lead carer organisations and Health partners. There is opportunity to modernise the format and content responding to the wishes of carers.

Carer Reference Groups have been consulted for their views during September 2021 and the general feedback is the magazine should continue as it is useful, however needs some improvements which will be actioned as part of the refresh. Opportunities to coproduce the magazine with partners, and carers will be a priority.

Carers were also invited to respond to a survey in the Spring 2021 edition, however 26 responses were received which were mostly positive and suggested ways to improve content which will be incorporated into the Winter edition. An article including the responses received was included in the December 2021 edition with a view to seeking further views from Carers. To date this has not been successful therefore we are still unclear as to whether Carers value Caring Matters.

## Time to Talk Counselling service

Those who are referred to the service do receive a prompt service and the reporting provided by the Counsellor at the end of the sessions evidences the impact they have made and improvement to the persons depression, anxiety, and stress levels.

The service is underused and following review it was agreed to transfer all referrals to The Leonardo Trust from June 2022.

## Short Breaks

This has not been developed as a personalised offer for the carer, it provides replacement care for the cared for person which in return, provides a brief short break for the carer. However, this can mean a 1- 1.5-hour break which doesn't provide opportunity to do something meaningful for themselves. However, the carer can choose to organise the 20 hours over 3 months as they would like it and on occasions put a few hours together providing more flexibility.

Breaks can be many different things – from short breaks in residential care, sitting services, through to family holidays, shared activities or time out to relax. Good breaks are personalised, planned, offer

flexibility, a positive experience and are enjoyable. Support to enable carers to sleep or attend medical appointments is not a break.

Carers report they have not had a break or cannot arrange replacement care. Many carers have struggled to look after their cared for persons for a long time, Covid-19 having impacted on them immensely with the withdrawal of any external support, day centres, activities, respite, and residential/nursing care.

This is a national problem that has various reasons of impact, including lack of capacity in the care workforce, care providers, and services. Carers report they want support with arranging care, they find it stressful, difficult and time consuming to organise replacement care. It is difficult to organise care when they want it, a consistent person to deliver the care and where they want it (often in the home).

The difficulty many carers face is trying to find good quality replacement care for when they need a break. Carers emphasise the importance of consistency of replacement care, with someone who they know and their cared-for person knows, familiar with their routines and needs.

Workforce commissioning is essential to improve the choice for Carers to access replacement care services. The Carers Strategy links with micro-provider, community response and workforce development opportunities in the overarching Commissioning Strategy, to encourage people to come forward to volunteer or start their own business as a carer. Higher incentives have to be given to encourage more people into caring roles.

## Day opportunities

The A Better Life project is developing day opportunities, which can be used by Carers as an alternative to organising replacement care. It is hoped there will be activities that the carer and the cared for person can attend together as well as separately. These ideas are subject to availability in the community, cost, accessibility and funding. It is useful to remember Carers have told us that a distraction from their caring role can improve their wellbeing. A 'Memorable Moments' pilot it to be explored to adapt the current Day Opportunities offer for carers. An example being, something challenging, and out of the ordinary such as paddle boarding can really help to take their mind off the pressure they are under.

We have heard that the 'Zoom' and 'safe places' offer that had been put in place by Tricuro and some voluntary and community providers through the pandemic was appreciated. It was felt that this should be an integral part of the on-going offer as we emerge from covid restrictions. This applied both to options for the cared-for person, that allowed for a small break for the carer while their loved one was online, and also online sessions provided specifically for the carer.

In general, carers have spoken of day opportunities as being really important for creating small spaces in the day in which they could do other things in their lives. There was support for diversity of provision, and this will be something that Care Dorset will be thinking about as it evolves and rebuilds an offer post-pandemic.

## Carers assessments, personal budgets and direct payments

For all of these possible community-led options and breaks, personal budgets and Direct Payments for carers is key to unlocking the flexibility that carers say they want. Currently, Dorset is performing very poorly compared to the rest of the country in the provision of carers' direct payments, ranking 136<sup>th</sup> of all local authorities on 15.5% (compared to 75% nationally).

A Direct Payment would mean that a carer could “buy in” the support that worked for them and met the identified priorities of the support plan and, together with provision of Individual Service Funds for those who want someone else to make the arrangements, is critical to improving choice and control for carers. It also opens up the possibility of a range of flexible and responsive brokerage support options, so that community-based organisations could start to offer assistance to get the support in place that the carer wanted.

The option of an ‘individual service fund’ would provide similar flexibility but also involve a support organisation to provide the assistance that some carers are asking for to make the arrangements for the support that they need.

There are delays in the social care system to obtain a Carers Assessment under the Care Act 2014. Reporting shows this has increased during the Coronavirus pandemic with levels of assessment being lower than previous years. As Carers Assessments are undertaken by all Adult Social Care Staff to help prevent delays and not just the Carers Case Workers who undertake the complex ones it is possible to reduce the delay if more Carers Case Workers were employed to undertake the assessments or commissioned to another organisation to undertake.

There were mixed views expressed about whether carers’ assessments that members of the group had undertaken had been impactful. Some felt very strongly that they were a “box-ticking exercise”, whilst others had found them helpful for exploring ways that they could manage the impact of their caring upon them. Absolutely critical to the effectiveness of the carers’ assessments were the following two points on short breaks and direct payments.

## **Community resilience and participation**

There is an opportunity to work closer with the VCSE who are already engaged in projects such as the Dorset Community Response. The Weymouth Information Shop has provided a venue to develop services for carers in partnership with the VCSE and our commissioned service Carer Support Dorset. As this partnership is developed it will be reviewed to consider how to mirror the approach in other areas.

There is already an appetite for partnership working with the established provider Forums. This now needs to be developed to the next stage of how to join up the services for Carers regardless of their entry to request for help. We need to consider how best to make it as easy as possible for carers to access services with no wrong front door. Carer Support Dorset have launched as part of Carers Week a stakeholder event to understand how they can work closer with other organisations.

The new Carers Card scheme due to launch November 2022 also provides an opportunity to explore more community-based support where carers cafes and support groups can become embedded in local businesses signed up to the Carers Card scheme. This can provide opportunity to develop Community Champions and possibly local business awards.

The Dementia Friendly Purbeck scheme is a good example of organisations and the community working closely together to make the community a welcoming place for the people with Dementia and their carers. Help and Kindess are already working on further exploration work to understand what other friendly communities are in Dorset and their assets. This will link very nicely to Carers and help us understand what is available and what the gaps are.

By developing the Direct Payment offer as part of the Personal Budget flexible developments as requested by Carers we will not only increase the ASCOF reporting to align with other local authorities

but also involve the community to respond and support the Carers and person they care for with local organisations services, volunteers, friends and family support.

## Other aspects of service delivery to be explored

There are also a number of issues around carer experience and support that will need to be taken into account in delivering the priorities outlined above. We will continue to explore with carers as we co-produce the solutions to the issues we have identified, but some of the points include:

- Inconsistent offer between Dorset Council and BCP Council for Dorset Residents
- Workforce capacity to provide replacement care
- Specific workforce training on carers services and assessments
- Sharing of information between Social Care, Health, CMHT, providers and Dorset Care Record
- Assistive Care Technology and basic equipment accessibility
- Social Prescribing
- Carers Case Worker links with the NHS Carer Support and Patient Information Advisers based in the Acute Hospitals and some hospital wards
- Digital exclusion, and digital solutions including online assessments, e-marketplace, etc.
- Emergency response or contingency planning
- Resources and advice to plan ahead for parent carers and for potential future carers
- Working carers support including guidance for employers
- Support to people who fund their own care to coordinate the care

# Our Action Plans

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The outcomes set out in the Implementation Plan that follows were shaped in discussion with the Task-and-Finish Group participants in May 2022.

Objectives are taken from *Valuing Carers in Dorset*, the pan-Dorset Carers' Steering Group strategy, which is due to be refreshed, but which means that the Council's strategic vision remains in line with the partnership strategy that was set out in 2016.

## Year 1 implementation plan

Outcome 1: carers are respected and valued across social care and other council departments, and are included and involved

- Develop the workforce to understand carers needs, improve identification and value their contributions
- Involve carers in local care planning and individual care planning
- Ensure that carers rights are recognised at the same level as the cared for person

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Expected date</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Issues</b>
Continue to work with system partners through the Steering Group to ensure that carer voice is included in the developing new partnership strategy	December 22	AD	Underway - agree date with Steering Group for new p'ship strategy engagement.
Deliver a programme of workshops on important themes for carers about improving service	July 2022	JM	Underway - review point in October then rethink future topics/themes.
Develop a training strategy listening to providers, carers and reacting to themes for professionals, volunteers and the carer support workforce.	September 22	CSDorset/AD/ L&OD	Capacity for learning/engagement.
Carers Week: deliver a programme, and major new comms campaign, and use to build engagement in carers' issues in key parts of the Council	June 22	AD	Underway - timeframe short, engagement of teams.
Scope a campaign for 'Carer Friendly Community', involving carers in the design and working with community partners	August 22	CSDorset/Help and Kindness/AD	Challenge to encourage sign up across community.
Carers Toolkit Update for 2022/23	November 2022	AD	Changing landscape difficult to maintain accurate record.

## Outcome 2: carers can find the information that they want, when they want it, and in formats that work for them

- o Ensure carers receive relevant and timely information and advice about their caring role

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Expected date</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Issues</b>
Build on messages of the Task-and-Finish to review and rebuild web information around carer journey	July 22 December 22	Digital Team/AD	Underway - initial review, followed by further development as part of ASC reform.
Develop accompanying suite of information in range of formats and accessibility, ensuring self-serve opportunities are available	October 22	Comms/Digital Team/Carers Case Workers	Coproduction takes time but important to getting this right. Resources may need to be outsourced. Cost.
Work with Carer Support Dorset as they design and produce factsheets	June 22	AD	Ensuring information is accessible and clear.

### Outcome 3: carers have access to a range of support, responsive to their needs both in the community and from the council

- Support the early identification of carers, including self-identification
- Enable carers to fulfil their educational and employment potential
- Support carers to remain safe and healthy
- Deliver equality of services across Dorset by commissioning carers services in a joined-up way

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Expected date</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Issues</b>
Agree clear strategic plan with Carer Support Dorset, for development of the service	May - July 22	AD	Underway - linked to recommissioning timeline.
Develop specification for Carer Case Worker service	September 22	Operational lead Martin Turner/AD	Resistance to change. Training opportunities.
Agree Council approach to Direct Payment/Individual Service Fund uptake	September 22	AD/Julia Ingram	Will need full policy review, costing, etc.
Recommission Carer Card	May - November 22	AD	Underway - commissioning process may not identify a suitable organisation and costs could be higher.
Review Caring Matters and its impact	August 22	AD	Carers not engaging. No contract in place. Magazine dated but only one of its kind.
Initiate a pilot project on digital exclusion to support carer connectedness and wellbeing	July 22	AD	Already underway, but may need initial review/refresh.
Make it easier to access Personal Assistants for replacement care	July 22	AD	Underway - not all carers are digitally enabled. Rural communities have less opportunity.
Carers are regularly contacted to check they are coping, if they need different support as their role changes	August 22	Carer Support Dorset/AD	New role will take time to bed-in, limited resource to contact all registered carers. Impact responding to need could create demand for response.

## Outcome 4: carers receive meaningful assessment, with responsive options for receiving the support that they need

- Provide personalised support for carers and those receiving care

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Expected date</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Issues</b>
Work with operational colleagues to develop consistent approach to carer assessment	December 22	Martin Turner/Julia Ingram/Carers Case Workers/AD	Also linked to ASC reform programme.
Review short break opportunities, alongside Direct Payment /ISF expansion	September 22	Martin Turner/Julia Ingram/AD	Strategy not approved. New ISF provider to be identified for carers. Short breaks changes could impact carers negatively. Change of policy may be required. EQIA required.
Work with Children's Services through Young & Thriving on the development of seamless young carer support pathways into settled adulthood	December 22	Simon Fraiz-Brown, Children's Services/AD	Already underway.

## Years 2-5

Priorities that will inform the plans for the following four years of the strategy will include:

- Develop social events and activities for carers to increase peer support and improve well being
- Continue to embed carer awareness through all Council departments and partners
- A regular and sustained comms approach/strategy on carer awareness
- Continued review I&A
- Direct Payment/ISF
- Carer Support Dorset – recommission and re-specify for the future
- Housing
- 'Tell us once' – increasing partnership working to make contact easier – 'no wrong door approach'.
- Triangle of Care – embed in Adult Social Care
- Carers and Making Safeguarding Personal – continue to embed the approach and explore the issues arising from casework

# Appendices

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- Appendix A** The Dorset Context
- Appendix B** What we spend on carer support
- Appendix C** Who we engaged with
- Appendix D** Relevant Legislation and policy

## Appendix A: the Dorset Context

The Dorset Council Local Plan indicates that 376,480 people live in Dorset.

Dorset has an older population when compared to England as a whole, with an average age of just under 47 compared with just over 40 for England. In Dorset 29% of the population are aged 65 or over, compared with the national average of 18%. One in three of the population in the east of the area is over 65. Corresponding with the national trends, the population of over 65's is expected to grow at 1.5% annually alongside a marginal decline in working population. The impacts of this are vast and will not only be felt through a strain on Dorset's healthcare services but also as an economic impact as there will be a smaller workforce for employers to recruit from.

As described in the Local Plan we know that villages without 'Local Plan Development Boundaries' or villages included within (washed over by) the Green Belt are typically smaller villages which have a population of less than 500 and few facilities.

Dorset would appear to have a large percentage of carers that are unknown to the council and we want to focus on ensuring that we have systems and processes in place that we reach as many as possible.

- Dorset's register has circa 3,841 carers and in total combining this with the client data we hold there is a total of 7,700 people are known to Adult Social Care as carers as of 16 March 2022.
- A CCG search in SYSTMOne PowerBi dashboard reports there are circa 26,000 (active) carers in Dorset as of 21 September 2021. This is both formal/occupational and "informal" carers.
- According to the 2011 Census, 43,334 (11%) of the population of the Dorset Council area classed themselves as carers\*, with over 9% providing over 50 hours of care a week. Almost 24,000 of these were aged over 65 years. (\*<https://www.dorsetccg.nhs.uk/services/keeping-adults-and-children-safe/carers/>)
- The 2021 Census information will provide an up-to-date insight into Dorset however the ONS (Office for National Statistics) (Office for National Statistics) is planning on publishing the initial findings from the Census a year later, in March 2022. However, the full results covering all Census data will be revealed a year after that, in March 2023.
- Given the projected population of carers, it would appear there are many carers who do not receive help until crisis occurs. Carers may not register with Carer Support Dorset (the commissioned front door) and only seek help when they or the Cared for person become ill.
- The latest ASCOF (Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework) bi-annual survey results have provided a clear picture of Carers that have been affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is the first return following the withdrawal of the population of Christchurch due to Local Government Reorganisation. It is clear Carers do not feel supported and we can do better. Therefore, this provides a new benchmark to take forward into 2025.

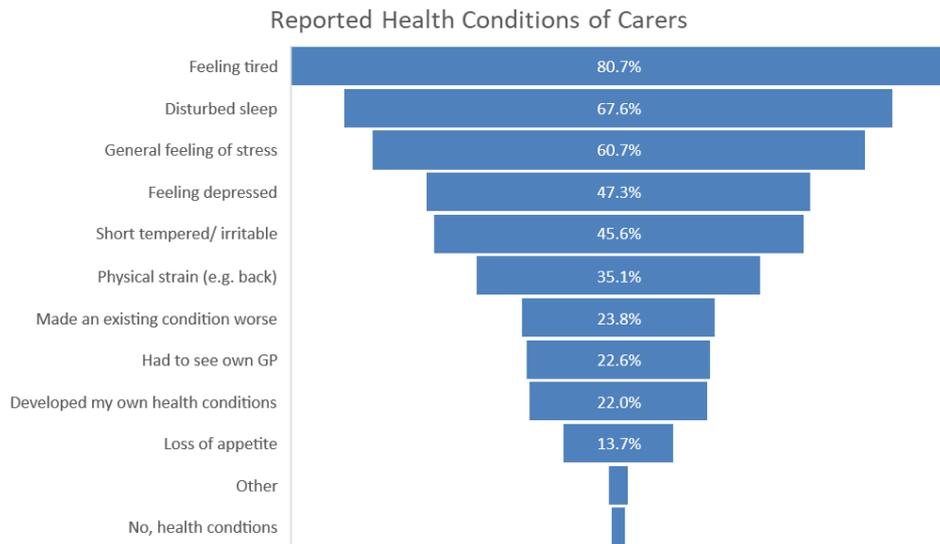
Since the last ASCOF Carers Survey in 2018/19 Dorset Council has been through:

- Local Government Reorganisation in April 2019
- Carer Support Dorset taking responsibility of Carers Register in November 2019
- Covid-19 Pandemic in March 2020

The current picture from provisional results across the South West show:

- A decline for the majority in Carers feeling consulted and finding it easy to find info about services
- No improvement in Carers reported quality of life

- 70.5% had some time to do the things they value but not enough
- 21% felt they had no encouragement or support
- 64% had some control over their life but not enough
- 16% felt they were neglecting their selves
- 50% had some social contact but not enough
- 80% had no concerns about their personal safety
- 64.5% have no other caring responsibilities
- Over 80% of responses to the 2020/21 Carers Survey had reported they were feeling tired
- Only 10% of these carers said they had accessed support or services that allowed them to take a break from caring for more than 24 hours
- 15% had said their cared for person had attended day centres of activities
- 46% of these Carers had been caring for over 10 years



ASCOF description	Dorset	Devon	BCP	Wiltshire
Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021-22 (postponed from 2020-21)				
Carer reported quality of life	7.4	7	7.4	6.6
Proportion of carers who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	29.1%	20.5%	24.7%	16.0%
Overall satisfaction of carers with social services	33.6%	39.8%	34.7%	39.3%
The proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for	68.0%	67.8%	61.8%	65.7%
The proportion of carers who find it easy to find information about services	62.0%	64.3%	59.0%	58.9%
Short- and Long-Term Services (SALT) 2020-21				
Proportion of carers who receive self-directed support	98.3%	69.9%	38.1%	100%
Proportion of carers who receive direct payments	15.5%	69.9%	4.1%	100%
	Southwest		England	
Proportion of carers who receive self-directed support	81.7%		87.1%	
Proportion of carers who receive direct payments	70.8%		75.3%	
				

We will work with the person in a strengths-based person-centred approach. There has been a shift to person centred and strengths-based care. In 2019 when the current carer provider contracts were written it was hoped a whole family approach will be embedded in access to the services. This reflects how carers may often care collectively for the cared for person, with varying impact on families and individuals.

## Understanding who are carers in the Dorset Council area

Significant work is underway to understand the picture in Dorset. However this is limited to those carers identifying themselves within that role and removing duplicated records. Historically there has been a reluctance for family members – especially long term or married partners – to identify themselves in this way, seeing the caring role as a responsibility of their longer-term commitment to each other.

Currently this number stands at 7700 using Mosaic the internal client database data combined with commissioned services data included.

A carers dashboard was created in 2021 of data from Dorset Council internal client database Mosaic, Carer Support Dorset data and Rethink data to create an overview of service delivery and demand. This is the first time the data will be available with informative charts and insights. This will also enable commissioning to be responsive to need, gaps and operationally review the quality of provision.

Further work needs to take place to link Dorset Council data sets with Health data. Joint working

The ICS (Integrated Care System) system will enable us to work closer together with our partners to achieve more for carers, enhancing support for carers of all ages.



Dorset is leading the way with good integrated working across Health, Social Care and voluntary and community sector in the context of Carers. There is joined up thinking and collaborate working across Health and Social Care and with BCP Council including some co-production elements, although there are opportunities to develop this further.

Established carers lead network:

- DCPG (Dorset Carers Partnership Group) network - joint working with Carers leads from Acute Hospitals, Primary Care Networks, NHS, CCG, Public Health, Health Watch, Providers, voluntary and community sector, third sector providers. Delivers Carers support in a joint up way with shared aims and public messaging.
- Survey responses from Carers
- Engagement with Councillors
- Reference Group
- Learning from Carer Support Dorset and Rethink commissioned services
- Direction and challenges from the Pan-Dorset Carers Steering Group

The Steering group is a coproduction group of carers and professionals led by a carer. They meet on a regular basis to discuss carers services, scrutinise spend, request improvements as well as produce the vision strategy. Since 2016 there has been a focus on achieving the outcomes with a review of the progress being published in the Autumn of 2021.

- Provider forums – developed in the North, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Carer Provider Forum and East areas in partnership with Health Primary Care Networks. The Purbeck area does not currently have a provider forum.
- Information from: National intelligence, SWADASS, NICE, DCPG network and best practice from other Local Authorities
- Closely working with Primary Care Networks (PCN's).

- Children's Services joint planning meetings
- CMHT (Community Mental Health Team) teams are integrated with Adult Social Care.

There are many voluntary and community sector organisations which also support Carers . The forum for these organisations to share their areas of work, challenges and opportunities to work together is via the Provider Forums led by Adult Social Care Carers Case Workers in partnership with Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust.

The current process has delays in receiving aspects of support. More early preventative work needs to take place to improve the support to carers. The support a carer needs will evolve as their caring role changes and becomes more complex. We need to ensure Carers are offered everything that is available to them and explain how to access it and what the benefits are such as equipment and assistive technology. For example, by introducing sensors in the home could provide piece of mind for a carer not feeling they need to be with the person they care for all of the time. We can't presume they will ask for the preventative interventions if they do not know they are available.

## Barriers to achieving the vision

In summary there are many possible barriers to achieving the vision:

- Resources
- Cost of care
- Lack of knowledge of services and support available or how to access them. Too much information and choices can be overwhelming.
- Terminology, jargon, and language including 'Assessment', 'respite' and 'break'
- Lack of information in formats for people who are blind, profoundly deaf or need Easy Read
- Carers are not aware of Carers Rights
- Postcode lottery of access to services across Dorset or near borders to other local authorities
- The care and support services available in the local community do not meet the need or demand.
- Digital exclusion
- Concerns and restrictions for vulnerable people caused by the Covid-19 pandemic
- Inadequate housing to support the care/equipment required including care technology advancements
- Lack of or cost of transport, including public transport to access services
- Services not being joined up – (example Home First where carers have not been consulted)
- The voice of the person not being heard or wishes assumed - not a personalised response
- Cared for person refuses support or replacement care
- People not planning ahead for caring roles/caring role escalates or hits crisis with no plan to cope. People are living longer; therefore, caring roles may last a longer period of time. Retirement age is increasing, people having to retire at a later stage in life, pensions being received later, working longer. This will have a knock-on effect on carers or people who may need or have to take on the role.
- PCN's boundary being different to Dorset Council boundaries.
- Different computer systems being used by key organisations - Health using their computer system 'SYSTMOne' and Social Care using their own client database 'Mosaic' without effectively joining up information or data.
- More than one place to register as a carer is confusing. (Carers must register with GP and Local Authority carer organisation to access available support).

There are many areas where the voice of the person could be assumed including people who lack mental capacity, severely disabled, memory loss or disabilities. For example, Parent Carers have the best intentions for their adult children who are disabled or disabilities who cannot tell us what they want. Some parents have told us they do not feel confident services would care for their child in the way they want and feel they need. Controversially it could be asked is the cared for person's voice lost? How do we know what they want, what life goals they have and what their aspirations are?

During the Summer of Coproduction some carers reported their dependent was heightened upon return from activity which took them time to calm. Is this the excitement of such stimulation and change of environment or stress? Some may be missing out on making or seeing friends, activities, and sexual relationships due to parent carers concerns and would rather keep them in the home environment.

What happens to the Carer when the cared for person refuses support from social care? Examples such as not willing to be means tested regarding their social care support or refusing for anyone else to enter the house or provide care. The Care Act states the carer should still benefit from advice, guidance, and personal budget. However, this still creates pressure to care for the cared for person, sometimes providing care 24 hours a day. Other examples include if the cared for person wishes to die at home, the assumption is the carer must deal with this and has no choice, or the cared for person is severely depressed.



## Appendix B: What is spent on support for carers

The budget is provided by the Better Care Fund, funding provided by the CCG which enables Adult Social Care to lead on Commissioning for services for Carers on behalf of Adult Social Care and CCG. Dorset Council was awarded a Carers element at a total of £1,112,941 for 2021/2022. This includes an amount carried forward from 2020/2021 of unused funds partly due to no new services being commissioned and no face-to-face engagement whilst a review took place, and poor uptake of the Short Break Service due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dorset Council Adult Social Care has commissioned contracts with Carer Support Dorset, the lead carer organisation to provide the early help and front door service. Dorset Council also commission's Rethink Dorset Carers Service for carers who care for someone with mental health illness. Often the Carer is suffering from mental health illness such as anxiety and depression.

Dorset Council have The Carers Case Workers posts providing one to one support for carers are employed by Dorset Council terms and conditions are funded by the Better Care Fund.

As part of the DCF (Dorset Care Framework), Short Breaks is a commissioned service of providers who have signed up to a standard fee, effectively providing a sitting service in the cared for persons home, enabling the carer to take a rest. However, this is currently under review. There is opportunity to have a Direct Payment in place at this point although uptake is low in Dorset but has increased over the past two years. It is proposed the cost of the Cared For Person having replacement care should move to their package of care and be means tested.

The Carer will be awarded a personal budget, with the amount depending on the impact of their caring role for them to spend on themselves to improve their wellbeing and enable them to continue caring. This is in line with BCP Council's offer to Carers.

Adult Social Care also have joint contracts with BCP Council – Carers Card, Caring Matters and Time to Talk counselling service.

The Better Care fund also supports the Pan-Dorset Steering Group costs for carers to take part such as travel costs and 50% of an administration post to support the group hosted by DHUFT, in partnership with 50 % costs paid for by BCP Council. Funding is also provided to pay for 50% of the cost of producing the Pan-Dorset Valuing Carers Vision Strategy, the joint strategy across all partners.

To support the brokerage of Short Breaks funding was provided to support administration in the Brokerage Team at a cost of £35,700. Carers who are organising replacement care for someone who is classed as a self-funder, (someone who can fund their own care) have fed back they find it difficult and very time consuming trying to find a provider who can provide the replacement care, finding a quality service and someone who can provide consistency.

The Carer Support Dorset contract also has young carers in transition to adulthood element which since July 2021 is being explored with Children's Services under a Young Carers Project Group (Health, Social Care, and stakeholders) which will feed into the Young and Thriving priority. Please see their delivery plan. The Carer Support Dorset Young Carer Lead position was created in February 2022 and will work with Children's Services to support the delivery of young carers support for Dorset Council. The role of the Young Carer lead is to be developed as part of the Young Carers Project Group where everything is being reviewed, including coproduction where possible, to improve a good service for young carers. Currently the referral pathway is unclear, and the Carers register is held by Carer Support Dorset. There is 2 FTE Young Carer Leads in Children's Services who are part of this workstream and MYTIME Charity is also involved in providing an element of support to schools to raise awareness of

Young Carers and provides activities. The group are keen to prevent duplication of service and use the best resources to provide the best support possible.

The Better Care Fund tends to receive an annual uplift, however with the CCG being replaced by ICS (integrated Care System) it is unclear how the Better Care Fund will be administered. The budget is reported to the Joint Commissioning Board and Health and Wellbeing Board by the Directorate Accountant.

The total budget for 2020/21 was £1,112,941 including the uplift in year

Although we had declared in the BCF (Better Care Fund) return that all Carers spend had been spent in year £125,452 has been carried forward into 2021/22 to cover anticipated increases in costs for Carers as Covid restrictions are eased

BUDGET BREAKDOWN	Budget	Spend	Variance
Short Breaks Service	£316,016	£254,963	£61,053
Short Break Admin	£35,700	£35,700	£0
Mental Health Carers support (Rethink)	x	x	n/a
Carers Caseworkers Locality based	£160,000	£167,256	(£7,257)
Carers Caseworkers (Hospitals based)	£80,000	£57,351	£22,649
Carer Support Dorset	x	x	n/a
Carers Card*	x	x	n/a
Counselling* Paid ad-hoc	£20,000	£18,995	£1,005
Carers Training	£59,225	£1,500	£57,725
Consultation & Engagement inc. Caring Matters* and Prescription pads	£12,000	£5,105	£6,894
Carers Direct Payments	£15,000	£15,000	£0
<b>Total Carers provision</b>	<b>£1,112,941</b>	<b>£987,489</b>	<b>£125,452</b>

The cost of care has steadily increased with estimated costs being: (as at 5/7/21)

- o telecare equipment £150 plus
- o waking night care costs around £50,000 for 7 days a week
- o Residential placement in a care home for someone with Dementia costs (to Dorset Council) would be between £32,182 to £38,618 a year if on Dorset Care Framework (DCF) tariff. If the home did not accept the Dorset Care Framework tariff the cost could be anything between £44,000 - £57,000 a year.

# Appendix C: who we engaged with

## Engagement in respect of Carers

### Digital/postal Surveys

- Carers Card survey April 2022
- Caring Matters Magazine Summer 2021 and December 2021
- ASCOF National survey October 2021
- Carers Card review with providers April 2021
- Short breaks and day opportunities February 2021
- Carers in Crisis scheme 2018
- Technology enabled care 2018
- Carers local activities 2017
- Carers Card questionnaire 2017

### Face-to-Face sessions

- Rethink Mental Health drop-in session – 21 July 2021
- Dorset Carers Hub, Dorchester – July 2021

### Dorset Council, Carers Reference Group (facilitated by Carer Support Dorset)

- Caring Matters question
- Carers Card question

### Dorset Council Councillor workshop

- 21 June 2021

### Provider workshop

- 26 July 2021

### Carers workshop

- 25 November 2021
- March – April 2022 Task and Finish groups led by Cllr Brooks

### Carer Support Dorset

- Surveys to Carers asking for feedback in respect of satisfaction with their service

### Dorset Council internal workforce survey for working carers

- June 2021

## Appendix D: relevant legislation and policy

This strategy considers the Pan-Dorset Carers Steering group Valuing Carers Strategy, Government legislation, local policies, National Institute for Excellence (NICE) Guidance and, most importantly carers' views as founded by the Dorset Reference Group, learning from surveys, and experts by experience.

### The Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 put in place significant new rights for carers in England including:

- A focus on promoting wellbeing.
- A duty on local councils to prevent, reduce and delay need for support, including the needs of carers.
- A right to a carer's assessment based on the appearance of need.
- A right for carers' eligible needs to be met.
- A duty on local councils to provide information and advice to carers in relation to their caring role and their own needs.
- A duty on NHS bodies (NHS England, clinical commissioning groups, NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts) to co-operate with local authorities in delivering the Care Act functions.

### The Care Act 2014

The Act outlines key components that local authorities must act or take into consideration when they come into contact with carers:

#### Wellbeing duty

The 'wellbeing principle' is an overarching approach that local authorities should take when exercising their responsibilities under the Act. Wellbeing covers a range of outcomes such as physical and mental and emotional wellbeing. It also covers participation in work, education and training and social and economic wellbeing.

Wellbeing can relate to:

- personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect)
- physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support)
- participation in work, education, training, or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing
- domestic, family, and personal relationships
- suitability of living accommodation
- the individual's contribution to society

#### Prevention duty

The Act requires local authorities to provide information and advice relating to care and support locally. The requirement is that local authorities provide an information and advice service in relation to care and support for adults, and support for carers.

This information can include types of care and support, the providers people can choose from, how to access care and support and how to raise concerns about safeguarding etc.

## Assessment

Both adult Cared For Person (needs assessment) and Carers (carer's assessment) should be assessed on the appearance of need and regardless of what the local authority thinks are the level of their need. The Cared For Person's outcomes are financially assessed. The Carers Assessment is regardless of their financial resources and is not means tested. The Carers assessment must consider how the person's needs impact on their wellbeing and the outcomes that they wish to achieve in day-to-day life. The adult's needs assessment must focus on outcomes of the person and the authority must also consult the carer. This can also be completed as a joint assessment.

It removes the requirement to ask for an assessment which has been in previous legislation and the Care Act removed the requirement for the carer to be providing substantial care on a regular basis. The only requirement is that the carer 'may have needs for support –whether currently or in the future'. The requirement to assess a carer on the appearance of need puts the carer's assessment on the same footing as the disabled person's assessment. The Act requires local authorities to consider whether the adult would benefit from preventative services, information, and advice or anything which might be available in the community.

## Whole family approach

The local authority must give regard to the family needs of the person being assessed, for instance the need to ensure that a child is not undertaking an inappropriate caring role for the adult concerned. The Act makes clear that a local authority may combine a needs or carer's assessment with another assessment it is carrying out on the individual or another person with their agreement. A local authority, when carrying out a needs or carer's assessment, may work jointly with another body which is carrying out another assessment.

## People who pay for their own care (self-funders)

Since the Care Act came into force people who pay for their own care have been able to ask the local authority to arrange services, but not residential care, on their behalf. Local authorities also have responsibility for providing information and advice to self-funders. More work needs to be undertaken in this area.

## Duty of co-operation and integration

This makes integration, co-operation, and partnership a legal requirement on local authorities and on all agencies involved in public care, including the NHS, independent or private sector organisations, some housing functions and the CQC.

## Mental Health Act 1983 (2007)

Carers of people with mental health problems have several rights under this act, including to:

- be included on service user's Care Plan.
- be given general information about the condition of the person cared for, though not specific information if the service user does not consent.

- be given a copy of the service users care plan if
  - (a) the service user consents; or
  - (b) issues of duty of care or risk override the service user objections; and
- where the carer is the nearest relative):
  - request a Mental Health Act assessment of the person cared for.
  - be informed of the patient's detention, and the nearest relative's right to discharge the patient before application under Section 2 – application for assessment.
  - seek to have the patient discharged from hospital (giving 72 hours' notice), though the doctor in charge of the patient's care can prevent this action.
  - express his/her point of view when the patient's detention is reviewed by tribunal or hospital managers.
  - be told when the patient is due to be discharged from hospital, unless the nearest relative or patient has instructed that this information should not be disclosed; and
  - request advocacy visits for the person cared for.

Carers were first mentioned in social care legislation through the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986. Since then, several obligations have been placed on both social care and health to enable people to care whilst maintaining their own lifestyle, livelihoods, social life, and many other important aspects of day-to-day life and personal wellbeing. Carer specific provisions have been mainstreamed in Government legislation with the following examples being the most significant:

- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Work and Families Act 2006
- The Children's Act 2010
- The Equalities Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Care Act 2014

## The Children's Act 1989

A parent carer is defined as an adult who provides or intends to provide care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility. Section 17ZD (14) requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are parent carers within the area who have needs and support. The Act also obliges local authorities to assess parent carers on the appearance of need. The assessment must have regard for the wellbeing of the parent carer which has the same meaning as the definition in the Care Act 2014. The assessment must also consider the need to safeguard/promote the welfare of the disabled child and any other child for whom the parent carer has parental responsibility. Under section 7 the local authority may request the co-operation in specific cases to support needs of a carer of a child. The duties within the Children's Act also supports young carers and will further explained within the Young Carers Strategy by Children's Services.

## The NHS Long Term Plan

The NHS Long Term Plan places a strong emphasis on improving early intervention and support for patients and for carers. Arising from commitments in the plan there are key commitments relating to carers.

1.19. Carers will benefit from greater recognition and support

We will improve how we identify carers and strengthen support for them to address their individual health needs. We will do this through introducing best practice Quality Markers for primary care that highlight best practice in carer identification and support.

### 2.33 Continue to identify and support carers, particularly those from vulnerable communities

Quality marks for carer-friendly GP practices, developed with the CQC, will help carers identify GP services that can accommodate their needs. We will encourage the national adoption of carer's passports, which identify someone as a carer and enable staff to involve them in a patient's care and set out guidelines for their use based on trials in Manchester and Bristol. These will be complemented by developments to electronic health records that allow people to share their caring status with healthcare professionals wherever they present.

### 2.34. Carers should not have to deal with emergencies on their own

We will ensure that more carers understand the out-of-hours options that are available to them and have appropriate back-up support in place for when they need it.

2.35. Young carers - The NHS will roll out 'top tips' for general practice which have been developed by young carers, which include access to preventative health and social prescribing, and timely referral to local support services

1.40 and 1.41 We will ensure that initiatives around personalised care including personal health budgets and social prescribing are fully reflective of carers' needs.

5.20. Patients, clinicians, and the carers working with them will have technology designed to help them. There will be a digital service for managing interactions with the NHS, ready access to personal records, care plans, expectations, appointments, and medications, to enable care to be designed and delivered in the place that is most appropriate for them.

## Other important policy

Includes:

- NHS People Plan 2020
- Government Carers Action Plan 2018 to 2020
- Guidance from the Social Care Institute for Clinical Excellence concerning coproduction and strength-based approaches