

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES - 12 JUNE 2024**

Present: Councillor Mpofu-Coles (Chair);

Councillors Lanzoni (Vice-Chair), Ballsdon, Cresswell, Davies,
Gittings, Griffith, McEwan, Naz, Nikulina, O'Connell and
Woodward

Apologies: Councillors Keane, McGoldrick and DP Singh

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to it being noted that further to Minute 33, School Standards and Achievement, a request for a report on attendance barriers had been agreed to be provided to the Committee.

2. JOINT ALL AGE CARERS' STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

The Committee received a report on the Joint All Age Carers Strategy for Reading. A copy of the Strategy and appendices, including the Action Plan, were attached to the report.

The report explained the development of the Strategy including a needs assessment exercise carried out by the Carer's Steering Group over the summer of 2023. Two separate surveys had been undertaken, one for carers over 18 years and one for young carers under 18 years. The survey collected 147 responses from carers across the borough.

Four focus groups were also undertaken during this time, with 44 carers sharing their experiences in this way. These focus groups took place at the Dementia Carers Support Group run by Age UK Reading; a coffee morning at the Alliance for Cohesion and Racial Equality (ACRE); the Whitley Wood Over 50s Lunch Club and the Coley Park Over 50s Lunch Club. In addition to the focus groups for adult carers, young carers were supported to take part in this piece of work by Brighter Futures for Children. Specifically, the early help teams who supported young carers and delivered a range of young carer's clubs. The team used the young carer's clubs to have informal discussions with young carer's attending.

The needs assessment surveys and focus group questions were co-designed with members of the Carer's Steering Group, including Carer Leads from Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust and Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Reading and West Berkshire Carer Partnership, Brighter Futures for Children and Adult Social Care/Reading Borough Council. Different methods of engagement were used throughout the survey period to ensure views were captured from as wide range of Carers as possible.

It was noted that key engagement partners for the Strategy included Reading & West Berkshire Carer's Partnership, Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust, Berkshire Healthcare

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Foundation Trust, Brighter Futures for Children, Berkshire West, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board, Healthwatch Reading, Compass Recover College, GLL - Better Reading, Reading Borough Council, partnership Forums and wider voluntary sector partners.

The Carer's Steering Group formed a Working Group to use the insight gathered during this exercise to inform and develop the Joint All Age Carer's Strategy and Action Plan. 2024-2027.

The 5 key strategic priorities for the Strategy were as follows and would be the focus for the Action Plan for the next 3 years. Where priorities talked about carers, this included carers of all ages:

Priority 1: Identifying carers and promoting carer's rights;

Priority 2: Supporting and recognising carers;

Priority 3: Maximising carer's voice;

Priority 4: Ensuring culturally competent support is available locally, including carers breaks and crisis support;

Priority 5: Supporting carers with employment and learning.

The Chair of the Carers Steering Group, Dayna White, Neighbourhood and Partnerships Manager, together with partners from the Steering Group provided the Committee with detailed information on the Strategy and key actions arising from the strategic priorities.

It was noted that the Strategy and associated Action Plan would be driven by the Carer's Steering Group and would be publicly accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board with progress reporting once every quarter.

The Committee requested an update be provided at the ACE meeting in January.

It was also noted that it was Carers Week, and the Committee congratulated officers and partners on the Strategy and celebrated all the work of carers.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Joint All Age Carer's Strategy for Reading be endorsed and adopted.**
- (2) That the Carers Action Plan to deliver the Joint All Age Carer's Strategy for Reading be endorsed and its associated resources be agreed.**
- (3) That an update on the Joint All Age Carer's Strategy be provided to the Committee in January.**

3. CO-PRODUCTION IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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The Committee received an update on Co-Production in Adult Social Care and Health. Michelle Tenreiro-Perez, Social Care Reform Programme Manager Directorate of Communities and Adult Social Care (DCASC), provided a presentation which included the following points:

- Co-production as stated in the Care Act 2014 was defined as ‘When an individual influences the support and services received, or when groups of people get together to influence the way that services are designed, commissioned, and delivered. It should bring people with lived and learned experience together as equals, to share power and to have influence over decisions that are made.’
- Benefits of co-production for the Council included benefits for people who draw on services, for people who work in services, increased uptake of services, and increased knowledge and awareness in the community.
- The Health and Care Act 2022 gave the CQC new regulatory powers to undertake independent assessment of local authorities’ delivery of regulated care functions set out in Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. Assessments of local authorities commenced in late 2023 and the Council could receive notification that Reading’s assessment was due to commence at any time.
- The status of co-production in the Council’s Adult Social Care and Health services reflected the national picture.
- Examples of co-production had included projects with Compass Recovery College, the Autism Strategy, and the Joint All-Age Carers Strategy.
- A Co-production and Engagement Officer started in a fixed term post of 23 months in December 2023. Since in post achievements have included supporting service/user carer panels in interviews of senior officers, scoring of voluntary sector front door procurement, networking and connecting with other co-production leads, attending team meetings, development of easy read practice and vocabulary guidance and sourcing and exploration of external funding opportunities.
- In March 2024 the Co-production and Engagement Officer chaired the first monthly ‘Working Together’ expert by experience panel. At the forum, attendees co-produced promotional material intended to increase attendance or encourage involvement by those who would like to be involved but who find attending regular meetings difficult.
- The vision for Co-production in Adult Social Care and Health included signing up to the Social Care Futures Community of Support and taking inspiration from the Social Care Futures vision by developing a shared purpose statement for staff.
- Future activities would be the delivery of a Co-production Charter, joint working to embed and deliver the new carer’s strategy, working with partners on the new build development for people with learning disabilities, developing a training programme for people with lived experience, communication launch both internally and externally of the ‘working together group’, review and amend Adult Social Care web pages, collaboration with housing regarding the new Disabled Facilities Grants Policy and working with the voluntary and community sector to co-produce a commissioned unpaid carer break offer.

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- Work to support the embedding of co-production had been agreed with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). SCIE were a leading improvement organisation and charity working with organisations at local and national level to support transformation in social care. The collaboration programme would be delivered over 4 stages: Building the Team, Insights, Make the Case and Bridge to Deliver. The aim would be for the final stage to be concluded by the end of August 2024.

The Committee thanked Michelle for the presentation and requested an update be provided, with an update of the Joint All Age Carer's Strategy, at the meeting in January.

Resolved - That an update on Co-Production in Adult Social Care and Health be provided at the meeting in January.

(The meeting closed at 8.00 pm)