

## **Draft**

### **Recognising and Valuing Carers in Sunderland: A multi-agency approach to enable carers to realise an ordinary life 2008 – (to be debated)**

#### **Foreword by Deputy Leader of Council/Chair of Adult Social Care Partnership Board – to be agreed**

Unpaid Carers make up a significant percentage of the population both nationally and locally in Sunderland. The 2001 census recorded in excess of 30,000 people identifying themselves as having caring responsibilities in the city.

It is understood every day 6,000 people take on new caring responsibilities in the UK. Carers perform crucial roles in families and within their wider communities, by providing support, care and help with day to day tasks to those who otherwise find it very difficult to cope alone. People who care do so because they want to help the people they care about, but this often means that they end up juggling the support they give with other responsibilities, such as carrying on with work.

People who need care are a very diverse group, ranging from relatives, older people, friends, children, people with disabilities or those who are ill. Everyone has the potential to become a carer and indeed some people don't recognise the fact they are carers. More and more of us will become carers in the future as people live longer and health and social care improves. Responding to the needs of the growing number of people who care is one of the major challenges facing society.

Here in Sunderland we have a good record in supporting carers. The good practice was recognised in 2005 when the council were one of only four local authorities to receive Beacon Status for Supporting Carers. The award recognised the significant partnership activity taking place particularly within health and social care for the benefit of carers. It also recognised the input from carer support organisations and carers in shaping and planning services that carers see as important for the people they care for and for carers themselves to have a ordinary life alongside their caring duties.

If carers are to have the same opportunities as everyone else and have a life outside of caring, the support and recognition they receive must be improved. This strategy has been developed to enable carers to have that "ordinary life" as well as supporting carers to care. The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure carers are recognised for the impact they have in the delivery of care and for the input carers have in the city as residents.

In order to chronicle the achievements to date you will see examples later in the strategy of good practice from organisations in the city that have resulted in benefits for carers and the people they care for. However, we need to continue to build on these achievements. Partners must work together to

deliver this strategy and enable carers to have a life of their own alongside their caring role and to ensure that carers get the recognition they deserve and that they are valued for the contribution they make everyday to their families and communities.

Foreword to be signed up to by ASPB members and include agency logos:

- Deputy Leader of the Council (Chair)
- Lead Member for Adult Services
- Lead Member for Children's Services
- Member of Majority Party in Opposition
- Director of Health, Housing and Social Care
- Head of Adult Services
- Head of Partnerships
- City Solicitor
- City Treasurer
- Chief Executive, Teaching Primary Care Trust
- Chief Executive, Sunderland City Hospitals NHS Trust
- Chief Executive, Mental Health Trust
- Director of Public Health
- Representative of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector involved with the care and support of the elderly, mental health, learning disabilities, physical disabilities and carers
- Director of Community and Cultural Services
- Director of Children's Services

## **Purpose of the Strategy**

In the context of changing family structures, alongside the impact of an ageing population, an increasing number of people will become a carer at some point in their lives. As carers make up an increasing proportion of the population, they need a system that is on their side, a system that places them at its heart and a system that supports them with their caring responsibilities but also to realise a life outside of caring. Above all, carers need a system that recognises and values the increasingly important role that they play in society.

Sunderland's vision for carers is to ensure that the immense contribution made by carers everyday is recognised and valued by society and that they are respected as an expert partner in the provision of support to the person they care for. Carers will be enabled to have a life outside of caring where they can contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of the city and to fulfil their aspirations for a full, healthy, safe and prosperous life.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out a framework for partners to work together to achieve the vision for carers and enable people in Sunderland who have caring responsibilities now or in the future to have an ordinary life – a life outside of caring and an identity that is separate from that of the people they support. This means that they are not disadvantaged because of their caring role and that are able to access the same opportunities as others take for granted. For example, regardless of their caring role people should still be able to remain in or return to employment; to have financial security; to continue or begin to access leisure; learning and educational opportunities; to have good health and to be able to maintain their social networks. In the case of young carers, they should have the opportunity to enjoy their childhood and have the same opportunities as their peers so they can thrive, develop and learn and they should not be providing unreasonable levels of care.

The strategy has been developed by the Multi-Agency Carers Strategy Group which includes, carers and partners from across the city and it sets out areas for action that carers have identified as being important to them and that would enable them to have an ordinary life. The strategy complements the Sunderland Strategy by ensuring that carers are central to achieving the vision for Sunderland.

## **Who is a carer?**

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not manage otherwise because of frailty, illness or disability (The Princess Royal Trust).

The strategy covers three broad groups of carers:

- Adult carers - who provide care for another adult, such as a spouse, partner, relative or friend
- Parent carers - a parent or guardian who is likely to provide more support than other parents because their child has an illness or disability
- Young carers – somebody who is under the age of 18 who carries out caring tasks for another member of their family or close friend who is ill or disabled, often taking on the type of responsibility than an adult would have

The strategy does not cover paid care workers or people who provide care on a voluntary basis through a third sector organisation.

Carers are a diverse group with many people moving in and out of the caring role, possibly a number of times during their life course. Some may only provide care for a short time, while others may have caring responsibilities for a long period of their life, or the whole life of the person they support, for example parent carers. Caring involves, or has the potential to involve, each and every member of society.

## **What do carers do?**

The care given by an individual will vary depending on the circumstances of their situation and may change over time or from day to day, but it is likely to include:

- Personal care – washing, dressing, assisting with meals, prompting or administering medication and other similar tasks
- Domestic tasks – shopping, housework, food preparation and budget management
- Emotional support – giving reassurance to someone who may be distressed, anxious or confused

## Carers in the UK

- There are around 6 million carers in the UK (DoH, 2006) and every year 2 million people will become a carer ([www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk)).
- People caring more than 50 hours a week (1.25 million) are twice as likely not to be in good health as those who are not carers.
- Three quarters of carers are financially worse off because of their caring responsibilities. In addition, 400,000 people combine full time work with caring more than 20 hours per week (DoH, 2006). Over 3 million people juggle care with work
- There are also estimated to be 50,000 young carers in the UK - young people under the age of 18 who might be helping to look after a parent with physical disabilities or mental health problems, or who may be caring for a brother or sister with learning disabilities.
- Carers save the economy £87 billion per year, which is what it would cost to replace them if they stopped caring.
- By 2037, it is estimated that the number of carers would have to increase by half to 9 million to keep pace with the rising levels of frailty and disability. ([www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk))

The contribution of carers to society cannot be underestimated and they should be recognised and valued for the enormous contribution they make everyday. However, many carers face a number of issues which they report derive from a lack of recognition of the contribution they make to society, for example:

- 1 in 3 carers are not able to return to work because the right alternative care is not available
- 1 in 5 carers are forced to give up work because of their caring responsibilities losing on average £11,000 in income. This can lead to isolation and poverty
- Carers face barriers when they try to improve their skills, particularly as training and education opportunities conflict with their caring responsibilities
- 625,000 carers suffer mental and physical ill health as a direct consequence of the stress and physical demands of caring
- The benefits system does not recognise the contribution carers make to society. The main benefit for carers – Carer's Allowance – is just £50 a week for a minimum of 35 hours, equivalent to £1.44 an hour

## Carers in Sunderland

More Sunderland people are carers than the national average and more contribute over 50 hours a week. According to the 2001 Census, Sunderland had a population of 280,807, of which, around 32,000 people reported themselves to be a carer. However, it is important to remember that many people do not consider themselves to be a carer, they are just looking after their mother, son, or best friend, just getting on with it and doing what anyone else would in the same situation, therefore the true figure is likely to be higher.

The number of carers in Sunderland can be broken down as follows:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of people who provide unpaid care between 1 to 19 hours per week</b>	<b>Number of people who provide unpaid care between 20 and 49 hours per week</b>	<b>Number of people who provide unpaid care 50 or more hours per week</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
0-17	820	107	75	<b>1,002</b>
18-59	14,754	3,272	5,164	<b>23,190</b>
60-74	2985	830	2,450	<b>6,265</b>
75+	466	177	664	<b>1,307</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,025</b>	<b>4,386</b>	<b>8,353</b>	<b>31,764</b>

## What has the city achieved so far for carers?

To reference achievements so far, including:

- Council – Beacon Status
- HHAS – involving carers; funding of carers centre; emergency planning
- Sport and Leisure facilities – Carers allowance recognised to enable carers to receive concessionary status to access sport and leisure opportunities.
- Wellness Service – targeted work taken place with carers centre to ensure links are established with Carers and the Community wellness Programme, Wellness Guides distributed to carers via the carers centre
- City Hospitals – Carers Policy; involving carers in clinical governance to improve practice based on carers experiences
- TPCT – Employee Policy; involving carers in commissioning and reform processes
- NTW – Carers Charter
- Employment Worklessness Project
- Young Carers Pathfinder

## National Policy Context

Published in 1999 by the Department of Health, the **National Strategy for Carers** recognised that helping carers is one of the best ways of helping the people they care for. It emphasised that all social and health care organisations must focus not just on the client, patient or user – but must include the carer.

**The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004** was implemented on 1 April 2005 to give carers more choice and opportunities to lead a more fulfilling life. Until this Act, previous legislation only offered carers support in their caring role and carers assessments did not necessarily have to take into consideration wider issues of carers lives, such as training, employment and leisure.

The principle aims of the Act are to:

- Ensure that work, life long learning and leisure are considered when a carer is assessed
- Give local authorities new powers to enlist the help of housing, health, education and other local authorities in providing support to carers, and
- Ensure that carers are informed of their rights

This Act amended the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.

**The Work and Families Act 2006**, which came into force in April 2007 gives carers new rights at work. The Act builds on the right to request flexible working for parents of children under 6 or under 18 for a disabled child and extends this right to include employees who care for or expect to care for adults.

The White Paper **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say** (DoH, 2006) announced A New Deal for Carers with the aim of improving support for them through a commitment to update and extend the Prime Minister's 1999 Strategy for Carers and encourage councils and PCTs to nominate leads for carers' services. The updated strategy will reflect developments in carers' rights, direct payment regulations, carers' assessment and carers' grants.

It also announced plans to:

- Establish an information service/helpline for carers
- Ensure that short term, home based emergency care is established for carers in crisis or emergency situations
- Allocate specific funding for the creation on an Expert Carers Programme

**Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care** (HM Government, 2007) – the landmark protocol sets out and support the Government's commitment to independent living for all adults, outlining aims and values to guide the

transformation of adult social care. It recognises that within the context of changing family structures, caring responsibilities will impact on an increasing number of people, therefore the care and support system should be fair, sustainable and unambiguous about the respective responsibilities of the state, the individual and the family. The objectives of transformation include ensuring that family members and carers are treated as experts and care partners; supporting programmes which enable carers to develop their skills and confidence and to strengthen universal information, advice and advocacy for people needing services and their carers.

**Carers at the heart of 21<sup>st</sup> century families and communities** (HM Government 2008) sets out the Government's vision for carers and the actions required over the next 10 years to make the vision a reality. By 2018, carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. Support will be tailored to meet individual's needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen. Making this a reality requires changes and attention on issues including breaks, income, information and advice, the workplace, access to employment, emotional support, the health of carers and the specific needs of young carers.



## Local Policy Context

### The vision for Sunderland 2008 – 2025

The Sunderland Strategy has been developed to provide the framework for members of the Sunderland Partnership and all organisations, groups of people and individuals to work together to improve quality of life in Sunderland. It sets out a collective vision for the city and its residents and how the vision will be achieved.

The shared vision for Sunderland is:

*Creating a better future for everyone in Sunderland: Sunderland will be a welcoming, internationally recognised city where people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a healthy, safe and prosperous future*

Five strategic aims have been developed to achieve the vision:

**Aim 1:** By 2025 Sunderland will be an enterprising and productive global city with a strong and diverse economy providing jobs and careers, where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the regional economy, to fulfil their potential to be skilled, motivated and wealth creating without losing the special characteristic of Sunderland's balanced way of life

**Aim 2:** By 2025 Sunderland will be a city where everyone can be supported to make healthy life and lifestyle choices – a city that provides excellent health and social care services for all who need them. Everyone in Sunderland will have the opportunity to live long, healthy, happy and independent lives

**Aim 3:** By 2025 Sunderland will be a place where everyone feels welcome and can be part of a safe, inclusive community where people will feel safe and secure and can enjoy life

**Aim 4:** by 2025 Sunderland will be a city with a thriving learning culture where everyone can be involved in learning in a cohesive, inclusive city that is committed to social justice, equality and prosperity where creativity flourishes and where individuals can have all they need to thrive in the global economy

**Aim 5:** by 2025 Sunderland will be a clean, green city with a strong culture of sustainability, protecting and nurturing both its built heritage and future development and ensuring that both the built and natural environments will be welcoming, accessible, attractive and of high quality

### Local Area Agreements

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011 is a key element of the delivery plan for the Sunderland Strategy. It contains targets for 2008-2011, the first phase of the implementation of the Sunderland Strategy, based on priority areas for improvement. Subsequent LAAs will contain appropriate sets of targets as the journey to achieving the vision progresses.

The Carers Strategy complements the Sunderland Strategy and is key to ensuring that carers are integral to achieving the vision for Sunderland.

### **How the Strategy has been developed**

Carers have played a central role in the development of the Strategy and the process began during Carers Week 2007 where carers were asked what areas they would like to strategy to address. These views, alongside the 2008 National Carers Strategy, have been used inform and influence the strategy.

The Adult Social Care Partnership Board gave its support to sponsor the strategy and the Board sought commitment from partners to be involved in the developing the Strategy. As such, a Multi-agency Strategy Group was established to take forward the development of the strategy, which included key partners and carer support organisations. A partnership approach to developing the strategy is crucial, because if carers are to be supported within their caring role and to have a life outside of caring, then a joined up response is required all partners in the city to make this a reality.

Consultation

## **Implementing the Strategy**

The aim of the strategy is to support carers within their caring role and to have a life outside of caring. This can only be achieved by all partners working together to progress the actions that this strategy identifies. The strategy reflects the priorities of the Sunderland Strategy and will contribute to achieving the vision for Sunderland.

The implementation plan identifies key areas for action, along with lead agencies and timescales for completion.

To monitor progress, the Adult Social Care Partnership Board will receive 6 monthly reports on the implementation of the strategy, including where progress is going well and where it is not.

The Multi-agency Carers Strategy Group will reconvene on an XX basis to undertake a review of the strategy to ensure that it remains responsive to the changing world and that it reflects local and national developments.

## **Outcomes**

The following outcomes have been identified that this strategy will aim to deliver. Many of the outcomes are integral to each other, therefore the actions required to achieve the outcomes have been cross-referenced in the action plans. For example, Information and Advice is a fundamental theme in many of the outcomes.

### **Aim 1: Prosperous City**

**Employment:** carers and former carers can remain in or return to work, through the development of carers employment policies and the provision of good quality information and advice for both carers and employers

**Economic well-being:** carers are aware of the benefits they are entitled to through the provision of good quality information, advice and support to access them

### **Aim 2: Healthy City**

**Health:** carers and their needs are recognised and they are provided with advice, information and support to maintain their own health and that of the person they care for

**Wellness:** there will be opportunities for carers to access sport, leisure and wellness services and activities including support programmes to improve or maintain their own health and well-being

**Personalised Support:** carers receive a Carers Assessment that identifies how they can be supported both within and outside of their caring role. Staff will recognise and value carers contribution and they will respond to their needs. Carers' experiences of services will be improved.

### **Aim 3: Safe City**

**Young Carers:** young carers and their needs are recognised and support to them is improved in order to prevent young carers from having to take on unreasonable levels of caring. Young carers will enjoy their childhood and have opportunity to thrive, develop and learn

**Emotional Support:** the emotional needs of carers will be recognised and they will have a choice over where they access their support

#### **Aim 4: Learning City**

**Training, Education and Lifelong Learning:** carers have access to training, education and lifelong learning opportunities either for recreational purposes or to enable them to learn or regain skills to return to work, if they wish

#### **Aim 5: Attractive and Inclusive City**

**Recognition and Valuing Contribution:** carers will be recognised and valued for the immense contribution they make to society everyday

**Information and Advice:** carers receive high quality information and advice to support them both within and outside of their caring role

**Involving Carers:** carers are empowered to be involved in and influence the development of local services

**BME Groups:** the specific needs of carers from minority ethnic groups will be recognised and they will receive the support they need

**Parent Carers:** - to be discussed by Multi-Agency Strategy Group