

1 June 2015**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, MID AND NORTH
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE****CARERS INFORMATION AND ADVICE HUB AND SUPPORT SERVICE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Committee of the outcome of the recent tender for a Carers Information and Advice Hub and approve the extension of 2 Carers Support Service staff posts (currently temporary), and the establishment of 1 permanent Carers Support Service staff post, based within the Adult Access Service.

Information and Advice**Carers Information and Advice Hub**

2. The contract for the provision of a Carers Information and Advice Hub has been awarded to the Carers Trust East Midlands. The service will start on 1 August 2015 and the contract has been awarded for 2 years and 8 months (until 31 March 2018, with an option to extend for a further year). This outcome means that there will be a change of provider from the current contract, for the element of the new contract covering the provision of information and advice for carers. Council staff are supporting the providers to plan and manage the transition. Carers are involved in shaping the new service.
3. The contract will deliver services that will help to identify carers, provide information and advice, training and supported carer assessments. The contract also includes support to enable carer involvement in the design and review of services and future strategy. The contract is constructed so that additional services can be contracted by either the Local Authority or the Clinical Commissioning Groups, should this be required in the future. The service will be available to all carers who are looking after someone who lives within Nottinghamshire (excluding Nottingham City); this includes all carers registered with GPs across the six County Clinical Commissioning Groups.
4. This is part of the joint work between Nottinghamshire County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to achieve the strategic objectives of the Integrated Carers' Commissioning Strategy, the Care Act 2014 and NHS Outcomes Framework 2013-14.
5. The aim of the service is to provide a single point of contact for carers across the County for: advice and information; training and development; and engagement and consultation, with the key objectives being:

- to provide personalised information, advice and appropriate and proportionate support for carers in Nottinghamshire which enables them to feel informed and supported in their caring role
 - to enable carers to exercise choice and control in relation to their caring responsibilities and support them to achieve positive outcomes and independence in both their caring role and their life outside of caring.
6. The Carers Information and Advice Hub will offer a timely, responsive and reliable service to meet the changing needs of the carer, covering:
- provision of information support for carers, signposting to appropriate services and facilitating onward referral
 - assistance to carers to carry out online Carers' Assessments
 - provision of personal development opportunities for carers including training group/community development
 - facilitation of engagement and involvement opportunities for carers with the local Clinical Commissioning Groups and Nottinghamshire County Council.

Carers Support Service, within the Adult Access Service at the Customer Services Centre

7. The Carers Support Service is the first port of call for carers being referred to the Council for an assessment and the service undertakes assessment over the telephone, providing information, advice and signposting when appropriate. This service is delivered directly by the Council, as part of the Adult Access Service.
8. The Carers Support Service has been evaluated and is generally well received by carers, who find telephone assessments less intrusive, more convenient and less stressful for the cared-for person. The establishment of the service has meant that more carers receive their assessment and support much more quickly and the service is also proving cost-effective, as workers are not spending any time travelling.
9. Between June 2013 and April 2015, a total of 1,832 carers contacted the Carers Support Service. Approximately half of these requests were resolved either through the provision of information, advice and signposting to the range of carers services provided by the Council and its partners, or where more complex, requiring a face to face assessment and passed through to the District teams. 918 progressed to have a full carer's assessment completed by the Carers Support Service, resulting in 674 Personal Budgets for Carers.
10. On 12 May 2014, a report entitled 'Carer Triage Service' (now known as the Carers Support Service) was presented to Committee on the outcome of the evaluation of the service and Committee approved the extension of 1 FTE temporary Community Care Officer post and the establishment of a further 2 temporary posts up to May 2015. In order to meet the additional requirements relating to carers arising from the Care Act 2014, funding was also approved by Committee on 30th March 2015 for up to a further additional 2.8 FTE posts to be based within the Carers Support Service, in order to meet the additional demand in the most effective way across the whole county. This will include taking on new pieces of work not done in the past, such as carer reviews and making the final eligibility decision on the new online carers' assessments.

11. The expected increased demand due to the Care Act 2014 and the on-going work with Clinical Commissioning Groups and voluntary sector colleagues to raise the profile of carers, will mean that resources at the 'front door' are essential to help carers find information early, in order to support them in their caring role more effectively.
12. The temporary nature of the funding has led to difficulties retaining staff and two posts are currently vacant. As permanent funding is available for one post it is proposed to make this permanent. Future funding for the two other current posts will be dependent on the national direction and then local decision making regarding the future of the Better Care Fund post March 2016.

Other Options Considered

13. The option of not extending the Community Care Officer posts would be a high risk as carers would need to be seen by locality staff where a waiting list would quickly develop, leading to carer frustration, possibly increased carer breakdown and increased pressure on staff.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The recommendation to extend/establish the Community Care Officer posts is based on engagement with social care staff, managers, the Carers' Implementation Group and Clinical Commissioning Groups.
15. The evaluation of the Carers Support Service by Joanna Cooper (Public Health) was very positive with carers commenting that they liked the Carers Support Service, appreciated the accessibility and having a central contact point for information and to explain the process and possible opportunities for support.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

17. **Carers Information and Advice Hub:** the implications were detailed in the previous report entitled 'Carers Information and Advice Hub' considered at Adult Social Care & Health Committee on 3 November 2014, which is available as a background paper.
18. **Carers Support Service:**
 - by extending 2 FTE Community Care Officer posts (Scale 5, scp 24 – 28) until 31 March 2016, the costs for both posts will be £52,130 - £59,486. Funding for these posts has been agreed jointly with Health as part of the Better Care Fund.

- by establishing 1 FTE Community Care Officer post (Scale 5, scp 24 – 28) on a permanent basis, the cost will be £26,065 - £29,743 including on-costs. Funding is available for this from the Emergency Respite for Carers budget, which has been funding one of the temporary posts to date.

Human Resources Implications

19. **Carers Information and Advice Hub:** TUPE Regulations may apply to staff within the current Information and Advice service. TUPE regulations require the new provider to consider the employment rights of current employees.
20. **Carers Support Service:** there will be 3 FTE Community Care Officer posts who already have office space and line management arrangements within the Adult Access Service

Implications for Service Users

21. The provision of information and advice to carers is by its nature short term. Some carers however return to the current provider and have developed a relationship over the years. A transitions and communications plan is being developed between the two providers and supported by the Council.
22. Evaluation of the Carers Support Service has demonstrated a significant impact on improving the carer experience. Outcomes reported are that carers:
 - receive accurate information and immediate support to enable them to continue caring longer and avoid crisis
 - who can be assessed over the telephone have reduced waiting times, with cases being assessed within an average of a 7 day period
 - experience fewer handovers and an improved customer journey
 - have emergency respite arranged quickly and appropriately
 - are referred for a carers' break provided by the NHS when appropriate
 - are referred and signposted to relevant organisations, supporting prevention
 - are promptly assessed regarding a 'carers' personal budget' (this will then be referred to a manager for authorisation).

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) notes the outcome of the tender and that Carers Trust East Midlands will be the provider of the new Carers Information and Advice Hub
- 2) approves the temporary extension of 2 FTE (full time equivalent) Community Care Officer posts (Scale 5, scp 24 – 28) in the Carers Support Service until 31st March 2016, as detailed in paragraph 18 of the report.
- 3) approves the establishment of one permanent FTE Community Care Officer post (Scale 5, scp 24 – 28) in the Carers Support Service as detailed in paragraph 18 of the report.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 07/05/15)

23. The Adult Social Care and Health Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KAS 12/05/15)

24. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 17 and 18 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Carers Information and Advice Hub – report to Adult Social Care & Health Committee on 3 November 2014

Carer Triage Service – report to Adult Social Care & Health Committee on 12 May 2104

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.