

**3 November 2014****Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, MID AND NORTH  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE****CARERS' INFORMATION AND ADVICE HUB****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to proceed with a tender for an Information and Advice Hub for Carers. This will join up existing information and related contracts for carers funded by Nottinghamshire County Council and the local Clinical Commissioning Groups.

**Information and Advice**

2. The Care Act brings both opportunities and challenges for local authorities and a programme is in place to plan implementation from April 2015. Carers are one of the main Care Act work-streams and existing joint planning arrangements between the Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and carer representative groups are taking this work forward. A key requirement of the Care Act is for the Council to establish and maintain a service for providing local people with information and advice relating to care and support for carers.
3. This sits within the context of how the provision of information and advice can provide opportunities to support the delivery of other new duties to carers; including prevention services, as well as carer entitlement to an assessment and support services in their own right. The Department of Health recognises the increase in demand the changed legislation will bring and allows, within the Act, for local authorities to consider the delegation of some assessment responsibilities to other parties and the opportunity to offer a supported self-assessment. Supported self assessment means that the person is in control of completing their own initial assessment, but the local authority' retains the responsibility to approve it and make the final decision about eligibility.
4. A further pertinent dimension of the Care Act is the local authority's role in preventing, reducing or delaying the need for care and support. The provision of accessible, accurate and credible information and advice is essential in meeting this requirement.
5. The 2011 Census identified an increase in the number of carers in the last decade by 7,517 across Nottinghamshire County. There are now an estimated 57,426 carers providing between 1-19 hours of care per week, and the number of carers now providing over 50 hours of care per week has reached 21,680.
6. In 2013-2014, Nottinghamshire County Council conducted over 4,700 Carers' Assessments. The introduction of the reforms within the Care Act is expected to bring about a significant increase in the request for carer assessments within the County. From

April 2015, the department can anticipate an estimated 600 to 1,000 additional carers presenting for assessment each year.

7. In addition to the legal requirements, local carers have voiced their need for more joined up, accessible information and advice. Healthwatch led a presentation to the 8 September Adult Social Care Committee on outcomes from the May Carers' Conference, "What next for carers?" Issues relating to information and advice were a key theme and although many positives were raised, areas for improvement were also identified, in order to ensure more carers can access information when they need it. This included requests for:
  - a one stop shop for information
  - packs of carers' information, more leaflets; not everyone has access to the internet
  - up to date information about what is available locally; sometimes information goes out of date and needs regular review.

### **Current Provision**

8. Currently, the Council funds three Service Level Agreements for specific Information and Advice services for carers in the County:
  - Universal Services for Carers (Carers Federation is the present service provider) at a value of £100,000
  - Giving a Voice to carers of people with a learning disability (Independent Voices for Engagement is the present service provider) at a value of £10,447
  - Support Service for carers of people with a learning disability (Mencap is the present service provider) at a value of £40,000.
9. In addition, the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) also commission the Carers Federation to provide information and advice at a value of £25,140.
10. The current situation means that there is potential overlap between all the services provided, duplication of management structures and potential for better outcomes from jointly commissioning one sustainable service across the Council and the CCGs.

### **New specification for a Carer's Information and Advice Hub**

11. The proposal is that the existing four separate services are de-commissioned and a new joint specification developed by the Council and CCGs. This would lead to a tender in early 2015 with the new service starting in August 2015. The relatively late start is to allow for any TUPE arrangements, as there are existing staff that may be affected by the changes.
12. The service will cover all seven districts of Nottinghamshire (Mansfield, Ashfield, Newark and Sherwood, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe) across service users with a range of needs. This tender includes all carers including young carers aged 5-18.
13. The aim of the service is across the county is to provide a single point of contact for carers for advice and information, training and development and engagement and consultation and 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
  - 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. This will be achieved by targeting resources at all carers, but particularly those that may not be eligible for social care.
14. The Carer's 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
    - carrying out Carers Assessments as trusted assessors
    - provision of personal development opportunities for carers including training group/community development
    - facilitate engagement and involvement opportunities for carers with the local Clinical Commissioning Groups and Nottinghamshire County Council.
  15. The procurement process will be led by Nottinghamshire County Council in conjunction with Clinical Commissioning Groups in Nottinghamshire (not including Nottingham City).
  16. The Council will undertake further consultation and soft marketing to canvass independent views from both carers and potential providers to support and shape the detail of the specification. The Carers Commissioning Manager has already been in conversation with the Learning Disability Carers Group, who were generally in favour of the proposal and with the Carers Federation. Mencap and the Independent Voices for Engagement have also been kept informed.
  17. The specification intends to ensure the providers meet all the requirements and needs of carers across all the age groups and with different caring experience; for example, the specification includes sections on young carers and carers of people with a learning disability, substance misuse issues, etc.
  18. The model for the service will need to ensure coverage of the whole county whilst incorporating local sensitivity. As this is a joint specification with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), it is proposed that the Hub will have a presence in 3 localities:
    - North (Bassetlaw)
    - Mid-Notts (Newark and Sherwood and Mansfield / Ashfield CCGs)
    - South (Rushcliffe, Nottingham West and Nottingham North and East CCGs).
  19. The model will involve a range of approaches for contact with carers e.g. through online, telephone and face-to-face support. In line with the Adult Social Care Strategy, the new provider will offer short term interventions and will assist carers to access information and services themselves.

20. The specification will allow the possible sub-contracting of the engagement and involvement part of the Hub, ensuring a separate and independent voice for the provider and the carers.

## **Benefits**

21. The outcomes of the service will include an increase in:
- number of carers identified
  - number of carers assessed
  - number of carers accessing information and advice
  - number of carers being supported
  - number of carers who are engaged and involved in shaping the future CCG and Local Authority carers' agenda
  - increased satisfaction of carers with the information and advice they receive
22. Overall this will be an enhanced service, enabling a fairer and wider coverage of support to carers whilst being flexible enough to respond to local need and circumstances.
23. The new service will mean that the NHS and the Council will be able to consult and engage with carers on a joint basis leading to less duplication and more coherent communication.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, 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.

## **Implications for Service Users**

25. The provision of advice and information enables carers to take control and make well-informed choices about their care and support and how to promote well-being.

## **Options Considered**

26. Consideration was given to extending the current services. This however, would not support delivery of either an improved offer in line with carer consultation, or support delivery of the new requirements in the Care Act.

## **Financial Implications**

27. It is proposed that a minimum of £102,000 p.a. can be contained within the existing carer budget as detailed in paragraph 8, which will enable the offer of a 3 year contract to potential providers.

28. Discussion are taking place with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (except Bassetlaw) to utilise the £25,140 recurrent CCG funding for their 'Carers Centre Support', which is a separate contract (currently held by Carers Federation). The outcomes of the CCG commissioned 'Carers Centre Support' service are:
- to provide services across the County (except Bassetlaw) and maximise the most cost effective support
  - to provide an outreach support service to carers
29. There are further discussions with CCGs on the proportion of respective future funding as part of the joint Carers' Implementation Group and carers' element of the Better Care Fund. For 2015-16, there is a significant budget within the Better Care Fund, set aside for carers which will be used to top up the budget for the 'Carer's Information and Advice Hub'. This may continue into 2016 and beyond, but this is subject to decisions made by the Better Care Fund partners.
30. In summary, the budget available for the 'Carer's Information and Advice Hub' ranges from £102,000 to £150,000, depending on various decisions to be made by the CCGs and the Better Care Fund.
31. Depending on these decisions, it would be possible to tender for a reduced specification which covers advice and information and training for £102,000. If further funding can be secured through the CCGs and the Better Care Fund, then the full specification which includes engagement and involvement would cost £150,000.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

1. It is recommended that Committee approve a tender process in order to procure a 'Carer's Information and Advice Hub' as outlined in this report.

**SUE BATTY**

**Service Director, Mid and North Notts**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Penny Spice

Commissioning Manager

Email: penny.spice@nottsgov.uk

## **Constitutional Comments (SG 20/10/2014)**

25. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

## **Financial Comments (KAS 17/10/14)**

26. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 26 to 30 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.

- Committee Report – Implementation of Care Bill 25 November 2013.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All.

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