

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCILHEALTH COMMITTEE – 21ST FEBRUARY 2024EXECUTIVE – 4TH MARCH 2024Joint Report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health
and the Executive Director of Children’s Services on Wandsworth Carers and
Young Carers CharterSUMMARY

There are at least 17,500 people providing unpaid care in Wandsworth. Although the proportion of residents providing unpaid care decreased since the 2011 Census, the proportion providing more than 20 hours per week has increased. These are the carers that often require the most support as they are at greater risk to experiencing physical health problems and carer breakdown.

This report introduces the Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Charter. This Charter was developed by the Wandsworth Carers Centre, in partnership with the Council, local NHS and other stakeholders, and in consultation with carers themselves. It sets out the shared ambitions for carers and commits the Carer Partnership Wandsworth Board to produce an annual progress report for the Health and Wellbeing Board and describes the programmes of work currently under way across the Council.

GLOSSARY

ICB	- Integrated Care Board
SWL ICS	- Southwest London Integrated Care System
WCC	- Wandsworth Carers Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Health Committee are recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 2. If they approve any views, comments or recommendations on the report, these will be submitted to the Executive or the appropriate regulatory and other committees for their consideration.
2. The Executive is recommended to:
 - (a) Endorse and commit to the Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Charter,

attached as Appendix 1 to this report, which has been produced through consultation with unpaid carers and in partnership with other stakeholders in the health and social care system, setting out shared ambitions for carer experience and outcomes;

- (b) Note the Directorate action taken to date that will support the Charter's ambitions and consider any other actions that should be taken.

INTRODUCTION

3. An unpaid carer is defined as someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who, due to frailty, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability, could not manage without their help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability.
4. Unpaid carers are essential to the sustainability of the health and social care system. Earlier this year, it was estimated that unpaid carers in England and Wales contribute £162 billion per year to the economy. The Wandsworth share of this estimate is in the region of £572m.
5. According to the 2021 Census, 17,705 Wandsworth residents are providing unpaid care. While this represented a drop in carer numbers from the 2011 Census, an increasing proportion of carers are spending 20 or more hours a week in their caring role.
6. The pressures on carers are acute, with one survey reporting that 55% of carers were concerned that they were at danger of burnout. There is strong evidence that young people who have caring roles are more likely than their peers to experience academic difficulties and feel isolated.
7. The importance of unpaid carers was specifically recognised in the Health and Care Act 2022, which stresses the need to enable those who provide unpaid care to be supported to achieve their own life goals. The Act introduces new duties for Integrated Care Boards to involve carers in decision-making around developments in services and in hospital discharge.
8. At a local level, the importance of supporting unpaid carers is embedded in the principles of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 - 2029 and supporting unpaid carers is explicitly referenced as key in Step 16 (Mental Health and Suicide Prevention) and Step 18 (Dementia).
9. In January 2023, the Health Committee supported the following recommendations (Paper No 23-29), which were subsequently approved by the Executive:
 - (a) Support the development of a Carers and Young Carers Charter, through consultation with unpaid carers and in partnership with other stakeholders in the health and social care system, setting out shared ambitions for carer experience and outcomes;

- (b) Institute a process of annual reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board by the Council and other stakeholders, describing that actions that each partner has taken in support of attaining these ambitions;
 - (c) Support for a carer representative to be included in the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board; and
 - (d) Secure a carer representative on the Integrated Care System (ICS) Place Board
10. This paper provides an update on these four recommendations with a particular focus on the Carers Charter.

CARERS and YOUNG CARERS CHARTER

11. The Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Charter (Appendix One) has been co-produced with carers and young carers. The Carer's Centre conducted an online survey and held a number of focus groups. The Council's Children's Services Team held a number of focus groups with young carers. Earlier drafts were shared with the Carer Partnership Wandsworth Board which meets on a quarterly basis.
12. The Charter describes, in carers and young carers own words, what they want in terms of support across four themes – Working Together; Health and Wellbeing; Young Carers and A Life Alongside Caring.
13. In December 2023, the Charter was presented at the Health and Care Partnership meeting where members were asked to socialise it within their respective organisations and explore actions they can take to realise its ambitions. It was well received and Partnership members have asked for a presentation pack to facilitate.

MAKING AND MONITORING PROGRESS

14. As agreed following last year's report (Paper No. 23-29), progress in meeting the Charter's ambitions will be reported on an annual basis to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
15. The Council will be able to report on a number of areas. For example:
- (a) Adult Social Care have a number of initiatives underway including increasing the percentage of carers who have an up-to-date carer assessment; developing a Carer Champion Network for frontline staff; offering more digital support offer for unpaid carers and improving respite opportunities.
 - (b) Leisure Services has committed to ensuring that the new Leisure Strategy – Access to All – will consider the barriers to participation in leisure activities. Specific measures to achieve this ambition will be developed in 2024.

- (c) Human Resources is committed to updating and developing its staffing policy in this area which will be reviewed and agreed at Director level at the latest by the time the new carer's leave regulations are effective in April 2024. A comprehensive new policy is planned that will include information about flexible working options and other support for carers e.g. ability to make and receive calls at work/parking at work and a carers' network, it will be the subject of consultation and be drawn on good practice examples elsewhere. HR believe that the Carer's Trust 'carer confident' level 1 accreditation is imminently achievable for the organisation, and officers would wish to explore options for scheduled work to attain levels 2 and 3.
 - (d) Children's Services is exploring several workstreams including funding to increase support for young carers; specialist training options for professionals across the workforce to increase confidence, awareness and ability to identify young carers; and developing a dedicated process for referrals and tailored support.
 - (e) The Council now requires Equality Impact Needs Assessments to consider the impact of service changes on residents providing unpaid care.
16. Other members of the Carer Partnership Wandsworth Board who will be asked to provide a progress report for inclusion in the annual report include:
- (a) Wandsworth ICB
 - (b) Battersea Healthcare CIC
 - (c) St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
 - (d) South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
 - (e) Wandsworth Carers Centre
 - (f) Alzheimer's Society Wandsworth
17. The annual report will also include updates on progress made in two projects funded through the Department of Health's Accelerating Reform Fund initiative. Both of these projects will be a partnership between all six local authorities in the Southwest London area and will focus on supporting unpaid carers.
- (a) The first project will create an online carer assessment platform for both adult carers and young carers that is proportionate to their level of need and preferences, responsive to their changing circumstances, providing real time support options to improve their health and wellbeing and reduce the number of times they must tell their story to health and care professionals.
 - (b) The second project will develop a collaborative approach across the region and scale up effective approaches for identifying unpaid carers from under-represented groups.

CARER REPRESENTATIVE ON THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

18. The Wandsworth Carers Centre successfully recruited one of their members to be the carer's representative on the Board and following a brief orientation, the volunteer attended two Health and Wellbeing Board meetings.
19. Unfortunately, the member signalled that they will no longer be able to attend the meetings and cited ongoing caring responsibilities as the main reason.
20. This illustrates the challenge of these roles for unpaid carers and the Carers Partnership Wandsworth Board is considering what, if anything, can be done to support another carer to fulfil these Board responsibilities whilst not compromising their caring role.

CARER REPRESENTATION ON THE ICS PLACE KEY ISSUES

21. Following discussions with the ICB, it was agreed that a designated representative on the ICB's Health and Care Partnership would have greater influence.
22. This position has been filled by the CEO of the Wandsworth Carers Centre.

SUPPORTING THE WANDSWORTH ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY (WESS)

23. The changes proposed in this report are not considered likely to have any significant impact on the Borough's commitments under the Wandsworth Environment and Sustainability Strategy.

COMMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

24. This report outlines the new Carers and Young Carers Charter 2024-2027 which has been co-produced with carers and young carers, which sets out shared ambitions and continued commitment to improve the lives of carers. Support will be across four themes – Working Together; Health and Wellbeing; Young Carers and A Life Alongside Caring.
25. The report also updates on progress made following recommendations in Paper No. 23-29. The Carers Partnership Wandsworth is joint funded by the Council and Southwest London Integrated Care Board through the Better Care Fund grant.
26. Actions to support unpaid carers in their roles is likely to represent good value for money for the system as a whole noting the high value contribution made by unpaid carers to health and social care. Any direct financial implication from the new approach will be managed by service prioritisation within existing budgets the respective Directorates.

EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

27. An Equality Impact Needs Analysis on support services for unpaid carers was completed prior to the recommissioning of the Carer Partnership Wandsworth Service in 2020. The EINA concluded that the service has a positive impact on most carers with protected characteristics and recommended action to improve the support for male carers and carers from LGBTQ communities.
28. The proposals contained in this report are not considered likely to have any equalities impact beyond those considered in this recent EINA.

CONCLUSION

29. This paper presents the Carers and Young Carers Charter that has recently been co-produced with carers in Wandsworth. This Charter will replace the Carer and Young Carer Strategy and is underpinned by an annual progress reporting requirement. The ambition of the new approach is to put carer needs and concerns at the centre of decision-making across a wide range of services and organisations, reflecting the centrality of the commitment of unpaid carers to the sustainability of the health and social care system.

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13th February 2024

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the committee secretary can supply it if required.

Wandsworth Carers and Young Carers Charter

Carers Charter 2024 - 2027

We have worked with unpaid Carers to develop this charter; the charter sets out priorities that statutory authorities and voluntary organisations pledge to work towards to make sure that local Carers are supported.



Working Together

I have access to appropriate information and services for me and the person I care for at all stages

I want professionals who understand the challenges and issues of being in a caring role

As a Carer, I want my lived experience, views and opinions to be valued by professionals including social workers and hospital discharge teams.

I want professionals to communicate effectively with each other to provide seamless support and clear communication pathways with professionals



Health & Wellbeing

I am offered support to understand how to look after my own physical & mental health and wellbeing so that I can take proactive steps to achieve this

I am able to receive a quick response from health & social care if my situation changes

I am made aware of any financial and other practical support that I may be entitled to

I am able to receive support to access or continue with education, training or employment



Young Carers

I have the opportunity to meet other young Carers who are in a similar situation to me

I am able to access age appropriate help to look after my own mental and physical health

I am supported to maintain my friendships, interests and hobbies outside of my caring role

Teachers and staff understand the impact that caring can have on my studies and help me to feel supported

I am supported in moving seamlessly from child to adult services



A Life Alongside Caring

I am able to access a Carers assessment or review in good time when I need one

I am made aware of support available in the community that will help me in my caring role such as training and social groups

I am offered respite options that work for me and am supported to maintain hobbies or interests outside of my caring role

I am able to maintain relationships with family and friends



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