

# CARERS' STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

<b>Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Cllr Jane Palmer
<b>Cabinet Portfolio(s)</b>	Health and Social Care
<b>Officer Contact(s)</b>	Gary Collier – Adult Social Care and Health
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix 1: Carers Strategy Delivery Actions Influences Appendix 2: Joint Carers Strategy Delivery Plan Actions

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	This report highlights to Cabinet the key developments in delivering the 2023/24 Carers Strategy Delivery Plan and identifies priorities for 2024/25.
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>  <b>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</b>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Live active and healthy lives.</li><li>• Staying independent for as long as they are able.</li></ul> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thriving, Healthy Households</li></ul> <p>This report also supports the delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2022 – 2025 Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</li><li>• 2023 – 2025 Better Care Fund Plan.</li></ul>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	There is £1,163k funding to support carers included within the Better Care Fund. There are no additional financial costs arising from this report.
<b>Relevant Select Committee</b>	Health and Social Care
<b>Relevant Ward(s)</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATION

**That Cabinet notes highlights against the Carers' Strategy delivery plan activity for 2023/24 and the priorities for 2024/25.**

### Reasons for recommendation

1. The purpose of this report is to highlight to the Cabinet the key developments in delivering the 2023/24 Carers Strategy Delivery Plan and the priorities for 2024/25.

## Alternative options considered / risk management

2. None.

## Select Committee comments

3. The Health and Social Care Select Committee discussed the Carers' Strategy at its meeting on 24 July 2024. Members were encouraged to see that the consultation on the Strategy has prompted positive changes with regard to accessibility of language used. They were also pleased to note that the Hillingdon Carers Partnership had been providing an effective single point of contact for support and advice for carers for several years as required under the Carer Support Services contract with the Council. The Committee recognised that the Hillingdon Carers Partnership had been hugely successful in putting the voice of carers at the heart of everything that it does, which has helped it to secure significant funding to support its work with carers. This has both enabled the partnership to adapt to the changing needs of carers as well as to manage the increasing demand for its services.
4. Whilst it is recognised that there is a legal requirement for carers assessments to be undertaken before direct support can be provided by the Council, the Committee also noted that this can put additional pressure on carers and the high numbers of carers declining assessments is noted. The Committee looks forward to receiving further information on the learning that is being sought from other local authorities that have higher numbers of carers assessments to see if there is any learning that can be applied in Hillingdon.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5. This report is structured as follows:
  - A. Strategic Context
  - B. 2023/24 Delivery Plan Update Highlights
  - C. 2024-2025 Carer Support Priorities

### A. Strategic Context

6. Unpaid carers play an important role in our society. They provide vital care, and many carers derive satisfaction and pride from their roles. However, caring can come at a personal cost to carers in terms of their own health, financial situation, employment position and personal independence. In Hillingdon, we want to enable our residents to recognise and identify their role as a carer so that they know where to access the right support to enable them to continue in their caring role for as long as they are willing and able to do so.
7. There are three main sources of information about the numbers of carers in Hillingdon and these are:
  - *The 2021 census*: This is the main source of data about carers in Hillingdon. It showed that there were 22,465 people who identified themselves as carers in March 2021 when the census took place. This was an unexpected drop from 25,905 identified from the 2011 census and reflects the national picture. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) has identified that the co-occurrence of coronavirus lock-down arrangements as well as changes to the questions asked may have influenced how people perceived and

managed their provision of unpaid care, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond. The tables below provide an age-breakdown and comparison with the 2011 census.

<b>Age Breakdown of Carers in Hillingdon 2011 and 2021 Censuses Compared</b>		
<b>Carer Age Group</b>	<b>2011 Census</b>	<b>2021 Census</b>
0 - 24	2,569	1,875
25 - 64	18,676	16,625
65 +	4,660	3,965
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,905</b>	<b>22,465</b>

<b>Age Breakdown of Carers in Hillingdon 2021 Census Young and Young Adult Age Breakdown</b>	
<b>Carer Age Group</b>	<b>Number</b>
5 - 18	660
19 - 24	1,215
25 - 64	16,625
65 +	3,965
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,465</b>

- *The Carer Register:* The Carer Register was established by Carers' Trust Hillingdon and is maintained by them. Registration by carers is entirely voluntary but is a key route by which information can be targeted by Carers' Trust. There were 1,453 young carers and 5,193 adult carers registered on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, which compares with 1,187 young carers and 4,790 adult carers registered on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. This is positive in that it both enables relevant information to be targeted to carers but also enables partners to obtain a greater understanding about the needs of carers in the borough.
  - *Short and long-term (SALT) return:* This is the annual return that the Council is required by law to provide to NHS Digital about people supported (including carers) under its Care Act responsibilities. The return for 2023/24 showed that 590 carers received support from the Council during that year. The main need being supported by this group of carers is learning disability (41%) followed by personal care need related to physical disability (33%).
  - *Carers Allowance recipients:* This benefit is available to people providing 35 hours of unpaid care a week or more to a severely disabled person. People providing this level of care are most vulnerable to experiencing a deterioration in their own health and wellbeing without support. Data published by the Department for Work and Pensions showed that in November 2023 (the most recent period for which data is available) there were 4,125 people entitled to receive Carers Allowance (CA) and 4,125 in payment, which represented an increase of 23.5% since 2018. However, the value of CA as an indicator of the number of carers is limited as the 2021 census identified 9,105 carers delivering 35 hours of care or more a week, which suggests that there are a significant number of carers who do not qualify for this additional benefit.
8. Data from the National Carers' Survey commissioned jointly by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Care Quality Commission (CQC) undertaken in November

2023 provides some qualitative information about adult carers already known to the Council who completed the survey. This survey was commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the data sample, which is carers who received a carer's assessment in the previous twelve-month period, and collection methodology are determined nationally.

9. 563 of Hillingdon's adult carers were sent a survey questionnaire and 30% (170) were returned, which was considered to be statistically valid by DHSC and CQC. The survey return rate was lower than in 2021/22 (34%) and also lower than the mean for other English local authorities with Adult Social Services responsibilities (32.2%). Cabinet may wish to note that the survey identified that the percentage of carers able to take a break away from caring for more than 24 hours (34%) was higher than in 2021/22 (20.6%) and also higher than the mean for England of 16.7%, which indicates that Hillingdon's carers are better supported. London and North West London comparisons will not be available until October 2024. The survey is scheduled to be repeated in November 2025.
10. The main actions identified from the survey results are unchanged from the 2021/22 survey and include:
  - *To explore expansion of Personal Budgets for carers, including as Direct Payments:* The number of carers in receipt of Direct Payments has increased over 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 but is still comparatively low (please see paragraphs 14 and 15).
  - *To work with care home providers to develop flexible short-break options for carers:* Care home providers are reluctant to accept respite placements for less than two weeks, which does not suit many carers. Officers are working on solutions, but these will take time to deliver.
  - *To continue to develop the range of social opportunities for carers, including peer support groups:* Hillingdon Carers Partnership has been very successful at developing a range of social opportunities for carers that provide breaks from caring (please see paragraph 35).

### **Carer Support Offer Summarised**

11. Cabinet is reminded that the main offer of support to young and adult carers in the borough comes through the Carer Support Service contract between the Council and Carers Trust Hillingdon and Ealing (CTHE), which is the lead organisation for the Hillingdon Carers' Partnership. The latter is a consortium of local third sector organisations that has been created to support carers in the borough. In addition to Carers' Trust, the consortium includes the Alzheimer's Society, Harlington Hospice (including their homecare arm called Harlington Care) and Hillingdon Mind. The funding for this service, i.e., £670k, is included in the Better Care Fund (BCF).

### **Carers Strategy Group**

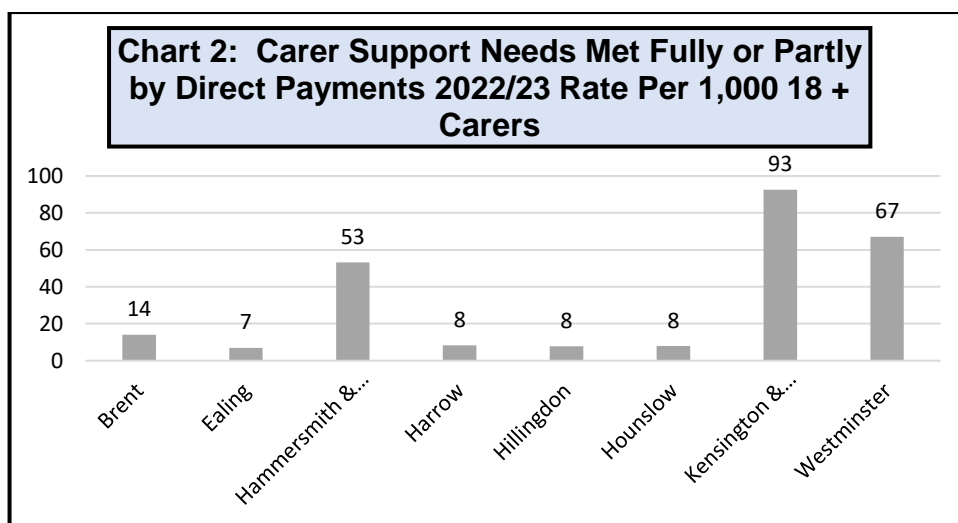
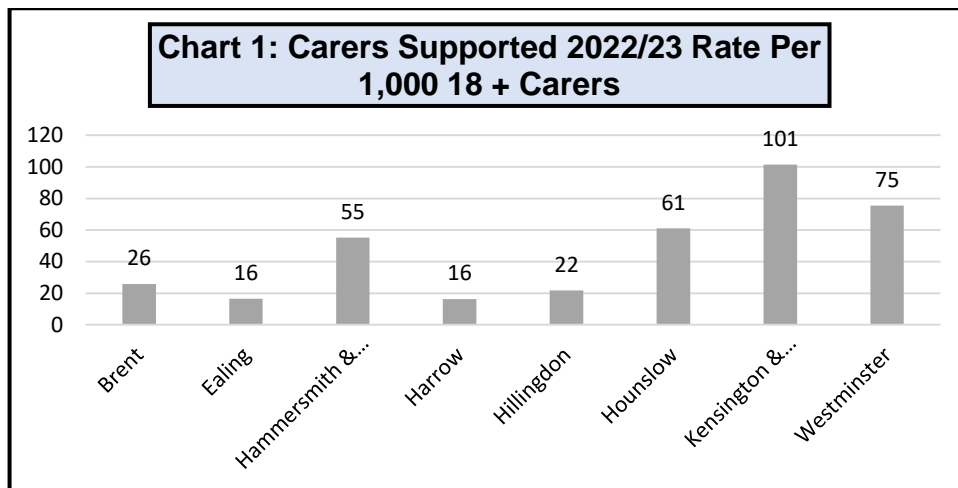
12. The multi-agency Carers' Strategy Group (CSG), which is chaired by the Council, has responsibility for overseeing the development and delivery of the Joint Carers Strategy. Membership of the group includes carer representatives in their capacity as experts by experience.

## 2023/24 Challenges

13. The challenges for carers previously reported to Cabinet have not significantly changed and include:
- The increase in the number of carers experiencing mental health issues seen during the pandemic continued during 2023/24 and can be seen by the number of carers accessing Hillingdon's Mind Family Support Service, which increased from 83 in 2022/23 to 207 in 2023/24.
  - Financial implications of being a carer, e.g., loss of employment income, being exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.
  - Impact on physical health of carers not taking a break (or not being able to take a break) from their caring responsibilities during the pandemic. This may be a contributing factor to an increase in the number of permanent admissions to care homes seen in 2023/24.
  - Convergence of pressures on mental health of carers from caring role, anxiety about financial concerns and impact on physical health.

## Current Performance Information

14. Cabinet is reminded that there are no comparative metrics in respect of young carers. There are two key sources of comparative data in respect of adult carers. One of these is the carer quality of life measures within the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF), which is tested via the National Carer Survey referred to earlier in this report. The second source is the national short and long-term (SALT) services return that all local authorities with adult social services responsibilities are required to complete annually. There is always a long time lag between submission of data and the publication of national reports to allow for benchmarking.
15. Consequently, the most recent comparative data is for 2022/23. Chart 1 shows Hillingdon's position in comparison with other NWL boroughs. This shows a higher rate of carers supported in Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, Hounslow, and Hammersmith & Fulham than Hillingdon. Except for Hounslow and as shown in chart 2 below, these boroughs have much higher actual numbers of carers having their assessed support needs met wholly or partly by Direct Payments.



16. Cabinet is asked to note that the data in chart 1 is based on SALT definitions and does not, for example, reflect the carers supported by the Hillingdon Carers Partnership under the Carer Support Service contract. It also does not take into consideration carers who benefit from an adult social care service provided to the cared for person. There is, however, a piece of work to be undertaken to identify if all NWL boroughs are counting carers supported in the same way and also whether there is learning from neighbouring borough practice that could be adopted locally. Cabinet can see in **Appendix 2** that increasing the numbers of carers receiving their support via a DP is one of Hillingdon's priorities for 2024/25 and Members may wish to note that numbers increased from 170 in 2022/23 to 198 in 2023/24.
17. The higher numbers of carers supported by the local authorities referred to in paragraph 14 means that by implication they have higher numbers of carers assessments being completed. There are currently no national measures in respect of carers assessments and officers will be discussing with other NWL boroughs scope for agreeing a measure based on the rate of assessments per 1,000 adult carers. Carers assessment practice in other boroughs will also be investigated to see if there is any learning that could be applied in Hillingdon.

## B. 2023/24 Delivery Plan Update Highlights

18. This section includes delivery plan updates additional to what was reported to Cabinet in December 2023. Actions are aligned to the outcomes in the draft Joint Carers Strategy.

### **Outcome 1: Carers are identified, recognised and able to make a positive contribution.**

19. **Re-establish carer leads in six GP Primary Care Networks (PCNs).** *Completed (Green)*. The report considered by Cabinet in December reported that the number of practices with GP leads had reduced to 33. Since that report, all 41 practices that are members of The Confederation have identified leads.

#### **Carer Leads in GP Surgeries: The Role Explained**

Key tasks include:

- Proactively identifying and supporting Carers, many of whom do not see themselves as Carers;
- Ensuring that a surgery Carer Register is maintained and updated regularly;
- Ensuring the practice provides active signposting to the Hillingdon Carers Partnership;
- Ensuring that standardised packs of information for Carers are available within the waiting room;
- Feeding into the Confederation and its partners, e.g., Hillingdon Carers Partnership and the CCG, any gaps in provision or requirements to help practices to support Carers further;
- Working with colleagues in the practice to provide enhanced access and flexibility of appointments for Carers;
- Considering how else the practice might facilitate improved carer-health – monthly Carer Health checks for example;
- Attending any training/information sessions that relate to the support of Carers within General Practice.

20. **Hillingdon Hospital: Ensure that the Cerner electronic patient record (EPR) system is developed so that asking if a patient has a carer or is a carer is a mandatory aspect of assessment and triggers appropriate care planning (if possible and where appropriate).** *Slippage (Amber)*: This is part of a large digital technology project and full implementation is expected to be completed by the end of 2024/25.

## Outcome 2: The physical and mental health and wellbeing of carers is supported.

21. **Hillingdon Hospitals: Ensure that the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) has the necessary information and resources to signpost carers and patients with carers to access support.** *Completed (Green)*: A mechanism has now been put in place to ensure that stocks of the *Are you a carer?* booklet are maintained.

### Achievements

22. Partner achievements during the review period that are in addition to the specific actions within the 2023/24 delivery plan are highlighted below for Cabinet's consideration.

### Council Achievements

23. **Carers Assessments (Adults)**: There were 875 carers' assessments undertaken in 2023/24, which includes 244 assessments completed by Carers' Trust. This compares to 851 assessments in 2022/23 and 286 assessments undertaken by Carers' Trust. Triage assessments are much shorter than the full assessment and are used by Carers' Trust to help a carer identify whether they are likely to receive support from the Council, which would only be obtainable following a full assessment. In 2023/24, Carers' Trust referred 35 carers to the Council for a full assessment.
24. Nearly 84% of carers assessments for adult carers were declined in 2023/24, which reflects the pattern of previous years. At the November 2023 meeting, the Health and Social Care Select Committee requested that officers look into this in more detail and the intention is to review Hillingdon's experience from a broader NWL perspective. Cabinet is reminded that reasons given previously for declining an assessment include people who consider that the assessed care package for the person they are caring for sufficiently addresses their needs; people not wanting to identify themselves as carers, and those who feel that the services available through the Hillingdon Carers Partnership meet their needs.
25. Options for making the assessment form more accessible for carers are being explored and a task and finish group has been established to take this forward; however, it should be noted that the key purpose of the form is to identify whether a person meets the national eligibility criteria for carers, which therefore impacts on the extent to which it can be simplified. Carers who do not wish to go through the carer assessment process may still access the universal services provided under the Carer Support Service contract previously mentioned. This is also the case with carers assessed as not meeting the national eligibility criteria for carers.
26. **Respite and other carer-related service provision**: During 2023/24, 4,789 carers were provided with respite or another carer service at a cost of £2,442k. This compares to 3,970 Carers being supported at a cost of £2,004k during 2022/23. This includes bed-based respite and home-based replacement care funded arranged via the Council as well as supported provided through the Carer Support Service contract and other voluntary sector provided services. It also includes directly purchased services via Direct Payments.
27. The Committee may also wish to note that 2023/24 saw an increase in the number of carers receiving Direct Payments in their own right to address all or part of their assessed needs from 170 in 2022/23 to 204.



### More About Direct Payments

With Direct Payments, the Council's financial contribution to meeting assessed social care needs is paid directly to the eligible person either in the form of a pre-paid card or directly into a bank account. This gives the eligible person more flexibility and control to directly employ their own care workers or a personal assistant who will, for example:

- Be the same person and be available when required.
- Speak the same language.
- Understand cultural and/or religious needs.

### Hillingdon Carers' Partnership Achievements

28. The section of the report summarises some of the achievements of the Hillingdon Carers Partnership in 2023/24. It is important to note that these achievements relate to activity and targets funded through the Carer Support Service contract.
29. **New carers registered:** 910 new adult carers joined the carers register during 2023/24 against a target of 750 and 438 left. 321 new young and young adult carers joined the register in 2023/24 against a target of 50 and 55 left.
30. **Additional income for carers raised:** £1,590,549 carer-related benefits were secured against a target of £500k, which benefitted 233 Hillingdon families. This is the largest amount secured in a single year since the start of the Carer Support Service contract in 2016.
31. **Replacement care:** 106 adult carers were supported with 8,440 hours of replacement care received by adult carers against a target of 7,000 hours to 120 carers.
32. **Short breaks (adult carers):** 2,596 breaks from caring against a target of 1,000 were provided through carer cafés, trips (e.g., visits to arts, crafts, and cultural activities), social groups, and workshops.
33. **Short breaks (young and young adult carers):** In 2023/24, there were 2,596 individual breaks from caring, including:
  - 4 residential weekends away for 56 young people.
  - 29 different activity sessions as part of CTH school holiday programme.
  - 104 Young Carer and Young Adult Carer Club sessions.
  - 4 whole family trips attended by 144 family members.
34. **Psychotherapeutic and family support:** Via Hillingdon Mind, 91 carers in 2023/24 received psychological crisis counselling support and 207 carers received family support.

35. **Outreach events:** 43 outreach events were held in 2023/24. At its meeting in November 2023, the Committee expressed an interest in receiving more information about the outreach work undertaken by the Hillingdon Carers Partnership. HCP partners will be present at the July meeting and will be able to address any queries that the Committee may have.
36. **External funding attracted to support carers:** In 2023/24, £827k additional funding was secured from external funders, i.e., not local statutory organisations, against an annual target of £100k, and this included £530k from the Big Lottery for adult carers and £189k to support young carers from the Henry Smith Charity, which is an independent charity founded in 1628 to combat disadvantage and poverty.

### **CNWL Community Adult Mental Health Service Achievements**

37. **Triangle of Care roll out across community mental health teams:** £40k was provided by CNWL to fund a post with Hillingdon Mind to support the roll out of the Triangle of Care model (see below) and facilitate CNWL accreditation by Carers Trust UK. The new Carers Engagement Lead started in January 2024 and in the period to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 63 carers of people with mental health needs were referred.

#### **Triangle of Care Expanded**

There are six standards to the Triangle of Care, and these are:

1. Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. Staff are '*carer aware*' and trained in carer engagement strategies.
3. Policy and practice protocols re: confidentiality and sharing information, are in place.
4. Defined post(s) responsible for carers are in place, e.g., Carers' leads or champions.
5. A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information across the care pathway, e.g., an introductory letter from the team or ward explaining the nature of the service provided and who to contact.
6. A range of carer support services is available.

38. **Mental health carer welcome pack:** CNWL and Hillingdon Mind coproduced a new information pack with mental health carers, i.e., carers supporting people living with serious mental illness. The purpose of the pack is to provide mental health carers with the information they need to navigate statutory services as well as making them aware of the support available from third sector organisations.

## C. 2024/25 Carer Support Priorities

39. Key influences for actions within the strategy delivery plan and supporting 2024/25 priorities are summarised in **Appendix 1**.
40. Priorities for 2024/25 that extend beyond business as usual can be found in **Appendix 2**.

### Financial Implications

41. This strategy commits a total cost of £1,164k in 2024/25. This is fully funded by the Better Care Fund and is reflected in the draft agreement under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 between the Council and North West London Integrated Care Board. The Section 75 is a separate item on the agenda for the September Cabinet meeting.
42. The breakdown of committed cost and BCF funding is summarised in the tables below.

Funding to Support Carers Included in the BCF			
Financial Year	LBH (£)	NHS (£)	Total (£)
2024/25	670,907	492,628	1,163,535

Carer Support Services in the BCF			
Service	LBH	ICB	TOTAL
Care Support Service	670,907	0	670,907
Carer Support Worker	0	19,093	19,093
<i>Are you a carer?</i> leaflet	0	1,000	1,000
Dementia Resource Centre	0	200,000	200,000
Support for carers, inc respite	0	88,196	88,196
LD Respite	0	184,339	184,339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>670,907</b>	<b>492,628</b>	<b>1,163,535</b>

## RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION<sup>4</sup>

### The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

43. The Carers Strategy Delivery Plans demonstrate to residents and carers in Hillingdon the shared commitment to supporting carers across the Council, the NWL Integrated Care System and other partners, and the shared accountability to improving services for carers.

### Consultation carried out or required

44. Carers' Trust Hillingdon and Hillingdon Health and Care Partners have been consulted on the content of this report. Consultation on the draft strategy has been supportive of the intended outcomes and delivery proposals. The main feedback has been about the accessibility of some of the language used and this will be addressed in the final strategy document.

## CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

### Corporate Finance

45. Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and note that there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report. Furthermore, it is noted that the support to Carers is funded through the Better Care Fund, with £1,164k being available to support this group in 2024/25, which is included in the approved budget for the Council.

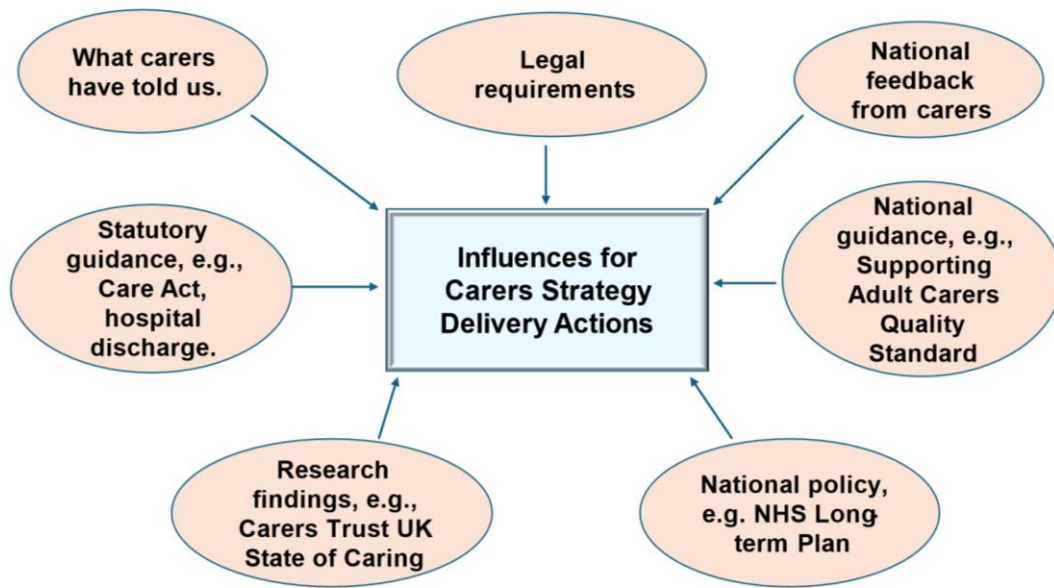
### Legal

46. Legal Services confirm that the Council is responsible for the functions addressed in this report under various statutory provisions, including sections 4, 10, 20, 60, 62, 63, and 64 of the Care Act 2014, and sections 17ZA, 17ZC, 17ZD and 17ZF of the Children Act 1989.
47. There are no legal impediments directly arising from the recommendation set out in this report. Whenever necessary, legal advice is given in relation to specific issues as they arise to ensure that the Council always meets its legal obligations.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

[2022-2025 Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

### Carers Strategy Delivery Actions Influences



## APPENDIX 2

### Joint Carers Strategy 2024/25 Delivery Plan

Key	
<b>CTH</b>	Carers Trust Hillingdon
<b>HCP</b>	Hillingdon Carers Partnership
<b>LBH</b>	London Borough of Hillingdon
<b>THH</b>	The Hillingdon Hospitals Trust

#### More About the Accelerated Reform Fund

This is non-recurrent government funding to support innovation projects developed collaboratively with others such as the NHS, care providers, voluntary and community sector groups to support priority groups such as unpaid carers.

Outcome 1: Carers are identified, recognised and able to make a positive contribution.		
	Activity	Lead Organisation
1.1	Implement the Carers Card Plus + project funded through the Accelerating Reform Fund for Adult Social Care	LBH/CTH
1.2	Expand the number of GP practice members of The [GP] Confederation with identified carer leads.	The [GP] Confederation
1.3	In consultation with adult carers and parent carers, review needs assessment process to simplify it as much as possible.	LBH
1.4	Make changes to the new electronic patient record system at Hillingdon Hospitals to support identification of carers.	THH
1.5	Continue the roll out of ' <i>open visiting</i> '* across wards at Hillingdon Hospitals.	THH

\**Open visiting* refers to the principle of unrestricted visiting hours in a hospital setting to enable carers, relatives, and friends to visit at any time.

**Outcome 2: Carers have access to quality information and advice at any point in their caring journey and know where to find this.**

	Activity	Lead Organisation
2.1	Include information about support for carers on web pages of 100% GP practice.	The Confederation
2.2	Develop a programme to ensure that information and advice is accessible to Hillingdon's diverse communities.	CTH

**Outcome 3: The physical and mental health and wellbeing of carers is supported and have a life alongside caring.**

	Activity	Lead Organisation
3.1	Retender the Carer Support Service contract to comply with procurement regulations and secure service stability for up to eight years.	LBH
3.2	Explore options for increasing the percentage of adult carers supported by the Council having needs met via Direct Payments.	LBH

**Outcome 6: Young carers are supported from inappropriate caring and provided with the support they need to learn, develop, and thrive and enjoy being a young person.**

	Activity	Lead Organisation
6.1	Working with young carers, review the young carer assessment process to ensure that it is fit for purpose.	LBH
6.2	Increase the number of schools participating in a young carer recognition programme.	CTH
6.3	Support schools to develop their own support provision for young carers.	CTH
6.4	Develop and deliver support sessions in school for the most disadvantaged young carers, e.g., those caring for a parent with mental ill health and/or substance misuse.	CTH