

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 26 February 2013

BY: Executive Director (Services for People)

SUBJECT: Carers Strategy: Caring Together Strategy for East Lothian 2013 - 2018

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present to Council a final draft Caring Together Strategy for East Lothian for approval.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 To approve the Strategy (The Strategy and other supporting documentation have been lodged in the Members' Library, Ref: 33/13, February 2012 Bulletin.)

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Strategy has been developed in partnership with people who use services, their families and carers, East Lothian Council, NHS Lothian, East Lothian Community Health Partnership and voluntary and independent sector providers in East Lothian. It sets out the steps we will take to improve both services and the outcomes experienced by service users.
- 3.2 This Strategy underlines our commitment to work collaboratively to ensure that the support and care available is provided to a high standard. We will work in tandem with wider service provision, for example in community wellbeing, housing, education, employment, telehealthcare and respite services. We aim to ensure that anyone can access services and other resources when they need them, regardless of income or where they live.

- 3.3 The Strategy reflects the work of the National Caring Together Strategy, which identifies 13 National Carers themes to be addressed. Rather than replicating the findings of the National Strategy, the local Carers Strategy seeks to build the local capacity and specific actions on a locally agreed strategic aim and direction linked to the Council and National outcomes.
- 3.4 The Key Local Themes identified within the Strategy are:
- Increased access to appropriate debt and financial advice for carers & families
 - Improved access to leisure, education, training/employment opportunities for carers
 - More carers will have access to appropriate respite/short -breaks opportunities
 - Carers have improved access to health and wellbeing services
 - Carers & families are less isolated through access to advice & support
 - Awareness of carer issues is heightened
 - Young Carers are included in carer support activities
- 3.5 Work conducted by the Planning group members has included two workshop days to develop the Logic model in support of the Strategy Action Plan and regular Joint Planning group meetings to identify the resources and activities supporting carers in East Lothian. The group members have actively participated in drafting and reviewing the core documents. The Action Plan is directly linked to the East Lothian Council Single Outcome Agreement and the resources engaged to support the actions are identified across all agencies including third sector providers.
- 3.6 At present, we face greater demands and more acute levels of need as East Lothian's population is rising quickly and people are living longer. Public bodies are facing their greatest financial challenge in a generation. The extent of the challenge we face requires us to develop our services differently in the future.
- 3.7 The increase in volume and intensity of need relates directly to the increase in the demographic of older people and the general increase in numbers of people moving to East Lothian.
- 3.8 The Carers Joint Planning group will continue to develop future support for carers of all ages in East Lothian including Young Carers. As part of this future work will determine the preferred means of maintaining dialogue with carers to inform future service developments.
- 3.9 The challenge is to increase dialogue without increasing the burden on carers who already have significant pressures to deal within their lives. In forming a carers' forum it is hoped that carers feel they are able to be

heard by key decision makers, commissioners and providers of carer support in a range of ways.

- 3.10 The identification of a carers champion would be achieved through the carers' forum in conjunction with the cabinet members with responsibility for Children's wellbeing and Adults' wellbeing.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Carers Strategy is the key policy document setting out how the Council and its partners will improve support and services for people who are carers between now and 2018.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and no negative impacts have been found.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - None
6.2 Personnel - None
6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Carers Strategy and Action Plan 2013 - 2018 (Members' Library Ref: 33/13, February 2012 Bulletin)

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