

One Croydon Health and Care Board

Meeting in Public

Tuesday 19 November 2024

Title	Croydon Carers' Strategy		
Report Author	Claire Fletcher , Strategic Commissioning Manager, Older People and Carers		
Responsible Director	Bianca Byrne , Director of Commissioning, Policy & Improvement Kerry Crichlow , Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance		
Report for (<i>please highlight</i>)	Noting	Assurance/ Discussion	Decision/ Approval
Impact to Objective One Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities	The Carers' Strategy aims to address inequalities in outcomes, experience, and access to support for carers within the Borough.		
Impact to Objective Two High Quality Care	The Carers' Strategy aims to improving the quality of services provided for carers.		
Impact to Objective Three Supporting Our Staff	The document includes upskilling the workforce around the importance of carers and the role they play.		
Impact to Objective Four Sustainable Finances	Enhancing productivity and value for money is a key aim of the Carers' Strategy.		
Impact to Objective Five Developing Our Leadership	Shared leadership across the ICS will be integral to the success of delivering the shared Carers' Strategy.		
Report History	Committee/Group Name	Date	Outcome / Action
	Carers' Strategy Steering Group	20/06/2024	Approved
	Adult Social Care and Health DMT Meeting (LBC)	21/05/2024	Approved
	Children, Young People and Education DMT Meeting (LBC)	30/05/2024	Approved
	One Croydon Health and Care Board	10/07/2024	Approved
	Croydon Council Cabinet Meeting	24/07/2024	Approved

Executive Summary

The paper sets out the progress of the approval and implementation of the Croydon Carers' Strategy.

The Croydon Carers' Strategy has been developed as a system wide all-age approach to how we support carers. It will direct resources to provide the best impact on the health, wellbeing and resilience of carers within the Borough.

The strategy presented by officers and Cllr Yvette Hopley at Cabinet, alongside the current service provider, Carers' Information Service, and was approved. The document and the first-year delivery plan have both been published on the Croydon Council website, following a press release.

The Croydon Carers' Strategy will be officially launched on 21 November, to coincide with Carers' Rights Day.

BACKGROUND

The Croydon Carers' Strategy has been developed considering learning from the past four years and national guidance, creating a new strategy for the next five years. The strategy has been developed in conjunction with the views and involvement of carers.

The official launch of the Croydon Carers' Strategy will include an agenda focused on the six themes of the strategy, with speakers from across health and social care, carers and young carers. The aim of this event is to engage all sectors in carers' work and continue to foster a collaborative approach to improvement of an appreciation of the important role of unpaid carers across the Borough and the services and pathways designed to support them.

Further roll-out of the strategy at community and other events to highlight and engage a wide range of stakeholders in the strategy implementation, is planned for winter 2024/5.

GOVERNANCE

Carers' Partnership Board

The Steering Group responsible for the development of the strategy, formed of carers, senior representatives from both adult and children's commissioning (Council and ICB) and provider organisations has been stood down now that the work of strategy development has been completed.

Moving forward, members of this original Steering Group have been invited to become part of the existing Carers' Partnership Board, for ongoing monitoring of the strategy implementation. The Carers' Partnership Board includes a wide range of stakeholders group and carers.

OWNERSHIP OF THE STRATEGY

The ownership of the strategy is with the Croydon Health and Care Board, co-chaired by the Borough's Executive Mayor and Health's Place Based Lead.

Delivery of the actions within the strategy and underpinning Delivery Plan will be overseen by the Carers' Partnership Board. Project support from the commissioning team for older adults and carers will provide reports, quarterly monitoring and escalation for the Board.

Each partner organisation is ultimately responsible for the deliverables they sign off, as part of the jointly developed delivery plan. Enabling the ambitions and the outcomes of the Carers' Strategy to be costed in the context of efficiencies/other system pressures and with realistic timescales for future service model developments.

First-Year Delivery Plan

The first meeting of the Carers' Partnership Board following Cabinet approval of the Croydon Carers' Strategy is due on 5 December 2024 (re-scheduled from postponed October 2024 meeting). The update below will be reviewed and commented on by carers and other members of the Carers' Partnership Board who will confirm the RAG status of each item and suggest actions and mitigations for keeping the whole plan performance. Overall current RAG – amber.

1. Procurement of new service models for adult and young carer services to include objectives from the carer strategy

RAG - green

The first action on the delivery plan was for a procurement of new service models for adult and young carer services to include objectives from the carer strategy. Creation of new service specifications (young carers, adult) have been agreed and socialised with carers and a competitive tender process to appoint providers for carer services (young carers, adult) is currently underway.

The closing date for applications passed on 28 October 2024 and bids are currently being evaluated, by a panel of evaluators from across health and social care and also carers. Mobilisation of new service models is on track to commence from 1 April 2025.

2. New Carer website to include culturally tailored information for carers and use of emerging AI technologies, where possible

RAG - amber

The Carers' Information Service website has undergone review, and a design company has been appointed. An initial specification for a new website has been co-developed with carer input. However, the work on the website development has paused during the re-procurement tender activity.

3.Participation in the South-West London (SWL) Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) programmes:

RAG – amber

In 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) launched the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) to support innovation in adult social care in England.

The aim of the ARF is to support the adoption or scaling of projects focussing on three objectives:

- people have choice, control and support to live independent lives
- people can receive outstanding quality and tailored care and support
- people find adult social care fair and accessible

Croydon has been part of a SWL programme of work funded by the ARF scheme. There are two ARF projects; New Carer Identification and Increasing access to Carer Assessments

Project risk: Funding for the ARF is released in two tranches. First tranche funding has been released. Second tranche funding is yet to be released. The AFR Steering Group will meet in November 2024 and December 2024 to review the project scale considering any changes to funding envelope.

New Carer Identification

This project will focus on developing a collaborative approach across SWL to implement and scale up effective approaches for identifying unpaid carers and increase the percentage of unpaid carers who have identified as such on GP systems.

There are various sources of data on numbers of unpaid carers and GP and ASC records only capture a small proportion on unpaid carers. It is recorded that across SWL there are 98,000 unpaid carers according to Census information, however of these, there are only 16,000 unpaid carers noted on GP records (approximately 16% of carers self-identified in census identified on GP systems).

This project is being led by Royal Borough of Kingston with Croydon input from commissioning and provider organisation representation.

The work commenced in February 2024 with a development day with all partners fully scoping project deliverables, project management and set up, governance and co-production approach.

The project team leadership and membership has also taken longer than anticipated to develop. Therefore, detailed scoping, development of workstreams, and agreement of deliverables, timescales, budget allocation has taken longer than anticipated. The project is now gaining traction with key personal employed by Royal Borough of Kingston now in place.

The has two main project deliverables;

- a needs analysis and best practice unpaid carer identification insights guide
- pilot communication campaign to test communications messages to help identify unpaid carers

The insights guide was due to have been developed by September 2024 to help inform the development of work. However, this deliverable has slipped significantly. The delivery date for this guidance document is now March 2025.

Croydon has taken a lead to drive delivery of a sub-project to deliver a pilot communication campaign. The focus of the campaign is to reach unpaid carers themselves as the priority target audience, and professionals as a secondary audience, using the campaign;

- to encourage unpaid carers recognise themselves as carers
- to show unpaid carers appreciation of the work they do
- to demonstrate how valuable the role of unpaid carers work in caring is to the community.
- to clearly communicate to the public, unpaid cares and professionals what is meant by 'unpaid carer' using language that resonates with local people
- to demonstrate the benefits of unpaid carers being recognised on GPs and ASC records, carers centres and networks

The pilot campaign will test communications messages with the public, unpaid carers and professionals to establish ways to best convey these themes.

The Croydon pilot communication project is due to commission input from an expert communications agency from December 2024, with a pilot campaign due to run in January to February 2025.

The overall New Carer Identification project is due to be evaluated April 25 to May 25 and used to agree steps to ensure sustainability of the work.

Increasing access to Carer Assessments

RAG - amber

The project has a dedicated project manager and has completed mapping of current carers' services across SWL. Work has been shared work from previous Borough initiatives across SWL on how to increase access to Carer's Assessments using e-forms and tools. Carers have been consulted as to which parts of the Carer's Assessment pathway they felt would benefit most from enhancements using technology and proposals to pilot online Carer's Assessments have been developed at a high-level to ascertain acceptability to carers.

The market of providers able to meet the needs of carers in this regard has been scoped. Seven potential providers have been identified and their attributes and capability mapped. The next stage of the project is to review all potential providers and to develop a protocol for a pilot to test in the short-term whether the needs of carers can be met using these technologies.

The methodology for the pilot test is currently under development by the project group, overseen by the SWL ARF Steering Group. It has yet to be decided whether Croydon will be a test centre for this pilot phase of the project.

4. Increase awareness of the importance of carer identification within primary care

RAG - Red

This project work is yet to commence. The Carers' Strategy launch event November 2024 and the ongoing New Cares Identification work via the ARF will start the work to fully involve primary care partners.

5. Implement the recommendations in the CQC Assurance document for supporting carers

RAG – amber

CQC preparedness against the identified areas of assessment is ongoing withing Adult Social Care (ASC). Dashboards of Croydon's support of carers with volumes and waiting times for Carer's Assessments have been created and are reported on monthly to the ASC Performance Board.

6. Pilot different opportunities for carer respite to understand the most effective way to offer respite in future service models

RAG - amber

Short-term Better Care Fund funding to pilot respite ideas was granted to Croydon Council adult social care teams in early 2024, as well as external providers of adult carers' and young carers' services. Work is underway to evaluate these small pilot tests of respite. A full report and reflection on the findings of these tests will be brought the next Board.

This work will help inform a wider review of respite services which will commence in April 2025, when the new contract for externally commissioned carers support services will involve the consolidation of learning from the past contract's respite solution and co-design of new respite solution approaches with providers, professionals and carers, for delivery from April 2026.

7. Promote the carer strategy in all interactions with professionals and through alignment of strategic plans with carer objectives

RAG - green

The promotion of the Carers' Strategy is on track with the formal launch event and follow-up community events planned for winter 2024/5.

Board members are to take every opportunity to operationalise the strategy within working practice and promote to other staff, within their organisations. Feedback on progress can be fed into the Carers' Partnership Board.

8. Explore how the "No Wrong Doors" Memorandum of understanding could be implemented across the Croydon System, in line with the whole family approach

and

9. Work with schools and education settings to raise awareness of young carers needs and explore a system approach to supporting these Education Advisers, Health & Wellbeing, LBC

and

11. Develop the schools survey to include the identification of young carers

RAG - red

This project work is yet to commence. The Carers' Strategy launch event November 2024 will start the work to develop the 'No Wrong Door' approach for young carer support and a whole family approach and stress the importance of working with the education system on this agenda.

10. Explore with ICB system leads the wider offer needed for young carers, who have caring responsibilities for those identified with end-of-life provision

RAG - red

This project work is yet to commence and will benefit from linking with health pathways.

Update reports will be brought to the next Health and Care Board with continued progress against all first-year delivery plan milestones.

NEXT STEPS

As part of the delivery of the Croydon Carers' Strategy a delivery plan has been developed to describe how the partners will deliver the strategy, particularly the year 1 ambitions. The plan for the implementation for the strategy is through the following route:

MEETING	DATE
Official Carer's Strategy Launch to mark Carers' Rights Day	21 November 2024
Carers' Partnership Board to review and confirm RAG rating of the progress of First year Delivery plan actions	5 December 2024

The Health and Care Board is asked to note this report for reassurance of the progress of the Carers' Strategy implementation

Appendix A: Croydon Carers' Strategy: First-Year Delivery Plan