



## EXECUTIVE 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>North Northamptonshire Council All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029</b>
<b>Lead Member</b>	Cllr Gill Mercer – Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
<b>Report Author</b>	David Watts, Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnership & Housing

<b>Key Decision</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972</b>	N/A
<b>Which Corporate Plan priority does the report most closely align with?</b>	Active, fulfilled lives

### List of Appendices

**Appendix A** - NNC-All Age Carers Strategy (Draft)

**Appendix B** - Summary of the Supporting Carers offer

**Appendix C** – Climate Change Impact Assessment tool

### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive for a North Northamptonshire Council All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029.

### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. In this document, the term carer/carers refer to unpaid carers. Carers have told us that they do not like the term unpaid carer, and they wish to be referred to as carers. As carers can often be confused with paid care and support workers, this information is included for clarity.

- 2.2. This report contains all relevant information to inform the Executive of the recommendation for North Northamptonshire Council to adopt an All-Age Carers Strategy, which outlines key priorities for all carers living in North Northamptonshire, to support them in the best possible way to have a life alongside caring.
- 2.3. This is the first All Age Carers Strategy to be developed by North Northamptonshire Council.
- 2.4. Historically, a Carers Strategy has been produced by the local organisation Northamptonshire Carers Association, covering both West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) geographical areas. The strategy was produced in partnership with a range of organisations, including WNC, NNC and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). Whilst coproduction led by the organisation is valued, both WNC and NNC recognised the need for their own individual Carers Strategies to best identify the needs for carers in their localities.
- 2.5. The NNC All Age Carers Strategy has been developed collaboratively with carers living in North Northamptonshire via the following methods:
  - Surveys
  - Face to face workshops
  - Online workshops
  - Experts by Experience
  - Public Consultation
- 2.6. Local carers have been an integral part of developing the NNC All Age Carers Strategy, their voices, knowledge, and ideas form the Strategy, and identify their key priorities. We do recognise however, that there is work to be done to achieve a fully coproduced Strategy.
- 2.7. Following approval by the Executive, the Strategy will be implemented, and reviewed on a regular basis by a carers co-production group.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive approves the North Northamptonshire Council All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029.
- 3.2. Reasons for Recommendation:
  - The recommended approach ensures compliance with NNC's Care Act 2014 duties.
  - Carers in North Northamptonshire have identified 5 key priorities, implementation of the Strategy is now required to support these priorities.

- The Care Quality Commission now assesses how local authorities meet their Care Act 2014 duties; the All-Age Carers Strategy provides assurance in this area.

### 3.3 Alternative Options Considered –

- Adapting the “Countywide Strategy” developed by Northamptonshire Carers Association- this option does not meet the specific needs of North Northamptonshire’s carers.
- No Strategy in place - this option does not offer commitment and support to carers, it will lead to confusion, a lack of joined up approaches, and potential crisis for carers due to the lack of support and prevention. This would also not achieve value for money, as the cared for person may then need formal (paid for) care, and the carer may develop their own health and support needs.
- The proposed option most closely aligns with NNC’s Corporate Plan Priority of “Active and Fulfilled Lives”.
- The recommended course of action supports the duties placed on NNC through the Care Act 2014.

## 4. Report Background

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- 4.1. North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) does not have its own Strategy for supporting carers living in North Northamptonshire.
- 4.2. A Supporting Carers offer is in place for all carers, which is currently delivered by our contracted partner, Northamptonshire Carers Association. This contract is in partnership with WNC and Northamptonshire Children’s Trust (NCT), it is due to expire on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The Strategy does not replace the need for a Supporting Carers offer, but both the Strategy and the offer will work alongside and complement each other.
- 4.3. The offer includes many elements of support available to carers, which is summarised in **Appendix B**. Briefly it includes several respite options, carers assessments, support groups, training and information and advice.
- 4.4. A new Supporting Carers offer will be commissioned, it will follow on from the expiry date, there will be no gap in provision. The new offer will not be in partnership with WNC, but the partnership will remain with NCT. This is to ensure carers of all ages are supported in North Northamptonshire, under the same Corporate and Strategic Priorities.
- 4.5. The following legislation details the requirements of councils and their duties to carers:
  - The Care Act 2014.

- The Children and Families Act 2014.
  - The Health and Care Act 2022.
- 4.6. The following White Papers are also insightful documents supporting the legislation and proposed reforms:
- Health and Care White Paper and Bill
  - People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper
  - DHSC Build Back Better: 'Our Plan for Health and Social Care' Extra
- 4.7. Due to a vast amount of legislation, policy, and guidance for councils to ensure they are supporting carers in the correct way, it will be beneficial to have an NNC Carers Strategy in place. This will ensure the following:
- Statutory duties are not breached.
  - Carers are supported to stay in their caring role (if that is their wish).
  - Carers experiencing a crisis may be avoided if their needs are appropriately met.
  - Preventative solutions are in place to avoid the need for paid for care services/unnecessary hospital stays.
  - The need for carers locally is identified and the correct resources made available.
  - The NNC offer for carers is documented in a joined-up way, ensuring a plan is captured, documented, and implemented.
  - Carers voices are heard through engagement and co-production.
  - The recommissioning of carers services (October 2024) is informed by the Strategy.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1. Officers undertook a review of the current whole Northamptonshire Carers Strategy which was written by Northamptonshire Carers Association. The proposed new Strategy has been written by NNC officers, led by Experts by Experience, and using engagement and consultation feedback Prior to the local government reorganisation, Northamptonshire Carers were contracted by Northamptonshire County Council to provide carers services and had done so for a number of years.
- 5.2. As part of this long contracting arrangement, Northamptonshire Carers has routinely devised their own Carers Strategy for Northamptonshire. It is not known how this approach was formed, or the background behind it.
- 5.3. Northamptonshire Carers has grown as an organisation over the years and is also contracted by the Integrated Care Board and both Acute Hospitals. They are also part of the Integrated Care System pillars and bricks model and are a key provider in terms of carers services for both Health and Social Care.
- 5.4. Northamptonshire Carers have drafted a Carers Strategy for the whole of Northamptonshire - Northamptonshire Integrated All Ages Carers Support Strategy 2023 – 2027.

5.5. The draft strategy provided by Northamptonshire Carers is informative, insightful and provides a number of priorities identified countywide for carers both from a Health, and Social Care perspective. This strategy and its engagement and outcomes will partly inform the NNC Carers Strategy, as this work does capture the voice of carers in many respects.

5.6. The development of the NNC Carers Strategy included the following:

- Engagement sessions with carers living in North Northamptonshire.
- Engagement sessions with providers for carers services in North Northamptonshire.
- An Expert by Experience sitting on the Strategy Project Group.
- A joint Insight Pack developed by NNC and Public Health.
- Engagement sessions with Health colleagues.
- A survey of carers residing in North Northamptonshire.
- Analysis and inclusion of the results of the National Carers Survey.
- Mapping of services within North Northamptonshire.
- Alignment with NNCs Adult Social Care Strategy.

5.7. The above activities informed the development of the NNC All Age Carers Strategy, where 5 key priorities were identified:

- Identification and recognition.
- Information and Advice.
- Carers Breaks.
- A life alongside caring.
- Joined up systems- telling my story once

5.8. A Carers Forum will be established, the membership of this forum will be carers living in North Northamptonshire, the forum will lead on the implementation and review of the Strategy.

5.9. The draft strategy has been published for Public Consultation.

## 6. Next Steps

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6.1. Following Executive approval, the next steps are:

Executive Committee	18 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Carers Forum Established – to undertake coproduced reviews and implementation of the Strategy	May 2024
6-month review	October 2024
New NNC Supporting Carers Contract starts	October 2024

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation**

- 7.1.1. There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposal to adopt an All-Age Carers Strategy.
- 7.1.2. The Strategy implementation will be undertaken by commissioning officers as part of their day to day working.

### **7.2. Legal and Governance**

- 7.2.1. Councils in England have a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to meet the assessed needs of carers. Having a Strategy in place supports the Council to meet this duty, alongside the Supporting Carers offer.

### **7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans**

- 7.3.1. The proposed Strategy supports North Northamptonshire's Corporate Vision of being: "A place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life". In addition, one of North Northamptonshire Council's Key Commitments is to ensure individuals have "Active fulfilled lives" and that as an organisation we "Value and support our carers and volunteers".

### **7.4. Risk**

- 7.4.1. There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report

### **7.5. Consultation**

- 7.5.1. The draft strategy has been published for public consultation.
- 7.5.2. The Consultation and Engagement Team supported the consultation, which was published from 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024, and ended on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024
- 7.5.3. This consultation was accessed by the public via the online NNC Consultation Hub – Citizen Space – Your Voice Matters
- 7.5.4. The results of the consultation were incorporated in the draft strategy and taken forward as agenda items for the Carers Forum.

## 7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

## 7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. The Strategy process and ongoing work may be selected for consideration by Scrutiny.

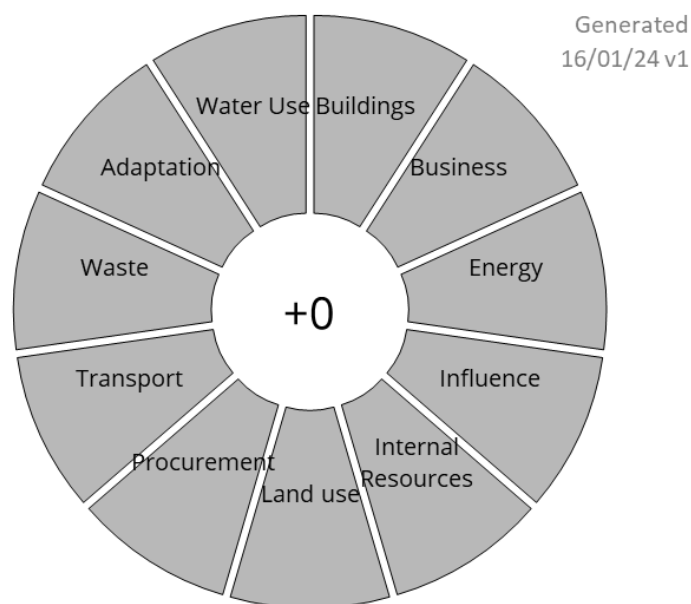
## 7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1. An Equality Impact Screening has been undertaken in line with the Equality Act (2010) and identified that a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this activity will not adversely impact individuals with protected characteristics.

## 7.9. Climate Impact

7.9.1 The tool has identified a neutral score, this is due to the activity being in relation to a strategy for unpaid carers and is not a policy/service/function change, or an activity to procure new goods and services.

7.9.2 The strategy will be reviewed throughout its lifetime and will inform future commissioning. When any commissioning activity takes place, a CCIA assessment will be completed as part of the process and will identify any Climate Change Impacts.



North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 11 mos

**7.10. Community Impact**

7.10.1. No implications identified.

**7.11. Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1. No implications identified.

**8. Background Papers**

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8.1 None