

Notice of KEY Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Permission to vary the existing Carers Centre Contract to include the provision of 1 Hospital Carer Support Worker for 12 months.
Decision Maker:	Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member of People
ELT Lead:	Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People
Report Author and contact details:	Faith Nare Commissioner – Live Well T: 01708 431432 E: faith.nare@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This contract variation supports the prevention duties under the Care Act 2014. NHS bodies and Local Authorities in England are required to involve carers and family members in the hospital discharge process.
Financial summary:	In March 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) agreed to award NEL boroughs one-off funding of £624,229 to deliver a project to better identify and support carers within and beyond acute settings. There are 8 North East London Boroughs participating in this project

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	with Havering allocated a total of £49,000. This will increase the value of the Carers Centre Contract to a total of £974,309.77
Reason decision is Key	Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more
Date notice given of intended decision:	24 June 2024
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	People's Overview and Scrutiny Board
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People -Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

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Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This report seeks approval from the Strategic Director of People to vary the existing Carers Hub Service contract with the Carers Centre SA Limited in order to provide additional duties to meet the needs of Carers in Havering.

The Hospital Carer Support Worker pilot will operate from 1st November 2024 for a total of 12 months and will be funded by the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF)

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

3.3.3 Powers of Members of the Senior Leadership Team (Constitution post 1st April 2024)

Expenditure

2.1 To incur expenditure for their allocated directorate within the revenue and capital budgets as approved by the Council, or as otherwise approved, subject to any variation permitted by the Council's contract and financial procedure rules.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background:

In March 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) agreed to award NEL boroughs one-off funding of £624,229 to deliver a project to better identify and support carers within and beyond acute settings. The funding was awarded as part of the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) in line with the following two priority areas:

- Services that reach out to, and involve, unpaid carers through the discharge process.
- Ways to encourage people to recognise themselves as carers and promote access to carer services

The 2021 Census estimated that there are around 148,000 Carers living across North East London (NEL) – but this number is likely to be under-reported due to the high number of 'hidden' carers across the sub-region. It is estimated that 7 in 10 Carers start their caring within an NHS setting, and hospitals are one of the key spaces where Carers can be identified.

The Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit (see Appendix A) that was co-produced with Carers and launched in 2023, concluded that there is significant work to be undertaken to improve the way that we identify, involve and support carers within acute settings. The Toolkit attached as Appendix details that many carers felt confused, overwhelmed and unsupported through the process. All London hospital settings are required to embed the practical steps outlined within the toolkit. However number of them are struggling to find the capacity required to effectively implement this, resulting in variation in Carer support across NEL hospitals.

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National Context:

The Carers UK charity and the University of Sheffield used 2021 Census figures to calculate the value that unpaid carers contribute to the economy. For England and Wales, this was estimated to be £162bn per year, based on a calculation of £25 per hour in 2021.

Despite recent Census data showing a decrease in the proportion of the population providing unpaid care, around 5 million people in the UK still fulfil this role.

Local Context: Carers Strategy:

The Carers Strategy refresh builds on the previous strategy (2017-2019) and reflected learning since the Pandemic that a greater focus on support for informal/unpaid Carers was needed. The Strategy also took into account how ways of living and working have changed dramatically since 2019. Following engagement with local carers, it sought to address shifts in needs of carers, whilst expanding scope of the strategy to range across all ages. (See Appendix A)

The Council commissions Havering Carers Hub to provide a prevention service to support Carers. The service provides a range of activities which support carers to sustain their role to continue caring, improve their wellbeing and maintain a life of their own. The service aims to identify 'hidden' carers and provide them with information and advice to navigate the social care system. They also offer 1:1 and peer support to help carers continue in their roles and reduce social isolation.

The service has been proven to provide good outcomes for carers accessing the Havering Carers Hub. A survey was conducted with 50 carers between April and September 2023 providing the following feedback:

- 76% reported their quality of life has improved
- 80% reported they had more social contact
- 98% reported they feel more supported
- 74% reported they have more balance in their life

Approximately 1,400 Adult carers are currently registered with the Havering Carers Hub. Although 60 new carers registered with the service in the last year, there remains a significant gap between the number of carers known to be registered with a GP (5,000) and/or the service and the estimated actual number of carers, which is reported to be nearly 23,000. One of the top priorities for Havering is helping those providing unpaid and informal care to identify their key role, and register for support, information and advice. To raise awareness and help address this issue, NHS NEL will be directing a targeted text message from Primary Care to those registered as a Carer with their GP to encourage them to register with the Havering Carers Hub for further information and advice.

Pilot Outcomes and this Project Proposal:

In 2019, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets undertook a pilot with their commissioned provider to deliver services directly within Hospital sites to improve the identification, recognition, and support of carers in health settings. In the 2022/23 financial year, this initiative identified 797 Carers within the Royal London and Mile End Hospital sites. They supported these carers—through the Hospital Discharge process, involving them in Care Planning/MDTs and linking them in with statutory and community-based support including benefits advice.

This proposal aims to apply the insights from a pilot completed in Tower Hamlets and adapt best practices from the Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit to establish a new NEL wide project to identify and support Carers both within and beyond acute settings. This new

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initiative will place a dedicated Carer Support worker at each of the major hospital sites across the ICS area to assist carers through the Carers & Hospital Discharge pathway.

These roles will be instrumental in identifying and supporting both Adult & Young Carers. Whilst the focus will be on acute settings in the first instance, this offer may extend to community-based health settings if there is capacity and demand for the support. Care technology can play a central role in supporting carers to manage and maintain their caring role. £50k has been allocated to explore how this can be delivered at the point of discharge.

It is anticipated that the project will have immediate and tangible impact once the Hospital Carer Support Worker is recruited and present on the wards. A final evaluation report will be collated which will set out a clear set of recommendations as to how the model can be further embedded. One of these recommendations will be to use the findings of the pilot to create a clear business case for future investment to continue funding/expanding the roles across NEL. If no further funding can be identified at the end of the delivery period, it is hoped that there will be a greater awareness of how to identify and support Carers across frontline Hospital staff.

There is also funding within the project to explore how Technology Enabled Care (TEC) can support carers to manage their role during and after a hospital admission for their 'cared for'. The TEC aspect of the Pilot will be explored later as the project has progressed and gained momentum.

Pilot Outcomes

- More Carers (of all ages) will have been effectively identified within Hospital settings
- More carers will have been effectively and appropriately referred for a Statutory Carers Assessment;
- More carers will have been effectively referred into their local carers support service;
- Improved Carer experience / communication / recognition within the Hospital;
- More carers will have been effectively involved in care / discharge planning processes;
- Increased number of 'successful' Hospital Discharges and/or a reduction in re-admission rates for residents who have received support from a Hospital Carer Support Worker;
- More/all carers identified within Hospital settings will be effectively recorded within health systems;
- A key output for this Project will be an evaluation report that sets out impact and learning from the project, identifies 'what works' and makes the case for future funding.

Performance and Monitoring

As this is a new pilot and a demand led service, no formal activity targets will be set. Data from the first 3 months of delivery will be captured and base-lined and Hospital Carer Support Workers will be expected to increase their activity/reach by 5% in each additional quarter of the pilot.

The London Borough of Newham (alongside the project Evaluation Partner) will be responsible for gathering activity and impact data from the commissioned providers and on behalf of NEL throughout the delivery period. This will be collated into a quarterly impact report that will be shared with lead Carers commissioners from each borough and discussed at a project partnership meeting every 3 months.

Each Hospital Carer Support Worker will be required to submit the agreed monitoring data to the Project Manager on a monthly basis via a chosen bespoke system. The Project Manager will be expected to discuss any concerns related to performance / activity with the Hospital

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Carer Support Worker and the Carers Centre Lead to co-produce an action plan with the relevant parties to address this.

Recommendation:

This paper seeks to recommend the variation of the existing Carers Centre Contract for a period of 12 months. The Hospital Carer Support Worker role will add much needed capacity to support the consistent identification of and support to Carers across NEL hospital sites. This will ensure that Carers are effectively engaged in the Hospital Discharge process and better linked into relevant support services.

The nature of the additional service provision does not alter the scope of the original contract significantly, therefore the Council is seeking approval to modify under schedule 5 part 3 clause 3.36 of the existing contract with Carers Centre SA Limited.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1: Do nothing

This option has been rejected as this would result in large numbers of unpaid carers continuing to be unidentified and unsupported. The anticipated benefits expanded on in this paper further support the Council's Carers Strategy's Action plans to identify and support more people in the community to identify as Carers and be referred/ signposted to different services available in the Borough.

Option 2: Carry Out a Full Open or Closed Tender Process

This option has been rejected as due to the contract's value, a full procurement would be required. This process would take approximately 6 – 8 months to deliver and would negate the impact of the 12 month funding.

Option 3: Procure a Single Provider to work across NEL

This option has also been rejected as the time taken to undertake a procurement exercise would negate the impact of the 12 month funding. There is also uncertainty as to the outcomes of this pilot and whether this would become part of the larger service going forwards. There is also no confirmation as to the continuation of funding to support these role so is best placed to test as part of an existing service offer.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Faith Nare

Designation: Commissioner – Live Well

Signature: *F Nare*

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Date: 31/07/2024

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council must provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources, or take other steps, which it considers will contribute towards preventing or delaying the development by adults in its area of needs for care and support; contribute towards preventing or delaying the development by carers in its area of needs for support; reduce the needs for care and support of adults in its area and reduce the needs for support of carers in its area in accordance with section 2(1) of the Care Act 2014. The Council has an existing contract for the Carers Prevention Service for that purpose and it is making a decision to vary that contract to increase the level of services provided through the contract for that purpose.

The Council has the power to vary the contract through section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, which allows the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions, or through its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do. There are limitations on the general power of competence, but the limitations do not apply to this decision.

There are limits to the variations that can be made to a contract with public bodies after the contract has been made. Regulation 72(5) (b) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 allows the Council to extend a service or supply contract by 10% of its initial contract value. The value of the contract is currently £925,309.77 and this variation of the contract will increase the value of the contract by a maximum of £49,200 which is below 10% of its original value. The Council can use that provision to agree to vary the contract by that amount.

Therefore, the Council can agree to vary the contract.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This decision paper is seeking approval to vary the existing Carers Hub Service contract with the Carers Centre SA Limited in order to provide additional duties to meet the needs of Carers in Havering. The total cost of this variation will be £49,000 and the variation will run for 12 months from 1st November 2024.

This will increase the total value of the Carers Centre Contract to a total of £974,309.77.

In March 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) agreed to award NEL boroughs one-off funding of £624,229 to deliver a project to better identify and support carers within and beyond acute settings. The London Borough of Newham is the lead for this funding and will be receiving the funding from DHSC.

There are 8 North East London Boroughs participating in this project with Havering allocated a total of £49,000 for this project.

Clear Pilot outcomes have been identified and targets have been identified to ensure that the funding is achieving the desired outcomes and is achieving value for money,

LBH will need to invoice the London Borough of Newham to receive the funding and the £49,000 for LBH has been agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the London Borough of Newham and DHSC.

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The variation of this contract will not have an adverse effect on the London Borough of Havering's financial position as this will be fully funded from the Accelerating Reform Funding.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

Appendix A: <https://carers.org/downloads/carers-and-hospital-discharge.pdf>

Appendix B: [PowerPoint Presentation \(havering.gov.uk\)](#)

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date: 12 September 2024

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

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