

**From:** Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health  
Richard Smith, Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health

**To:** Scrutiny Committee – 6 June 2023

**Subject:** **Kent Adult Carers' Strategy One Year On**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:** In June 2022 the co-developed Kent Adult Carers' Strategy 2022 to 2027 which set out the vision and direction for carers support over the next five years in Kent was approved and launched.

This report provides a one-year progress update.

**Recommendation(s):** Scrutiny Committee is asked to **NOTE** progress of the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Kent Adult Carers' Strategy has three central principles (supporting you to be you, providing the best support possible and positive outcomes). It also aims to enable new ways of working to support carers, which keep the person at the heart of everything we do and will help us continuously improve the services we offer. Together, these describe our approach to supporting carers to achieve the outcomes they see as most important.
- 1.2 The Kent Adult Carers' Strategy does not sit on its own, it is closely aligned with the overarching Making a Difference Every Day Strategy for Adult Social Care, 2022 to 2027. Both these strategies provide the platform for Adult Social Care and Health's contribution towards meeting the objectives for Framing Kent's Future. The information in the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy has also been influenced by the 'People at the Heart of Care, White Paper 2021'.

## **2. One Year Progress**

### **2.1.1 Launch of the Strategy**

2.1.2 During the summer of 2022 we undertook community engagement events, visiting communities to share information, advice and guidance for adult social care including our two key strategies.

2.1.3 The Kent Adult Carers' Strategy has also been incorporated into the Kent and Medway Interim Integrated Care Strategy.

## **2.2 Kent Adult Carers' Strategy Delivery Plan**

2.2.1 Throughout the summer of 2022 there were several workshops and engagement events which provided an opportunity to work with carers, people that draw on support, carer organisations and staff to co-develop a delivery plan to support the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy. The delivery plan is attached as Appendix 1

## **2.3 Kent Carers' Forum**

- 2.3.1 One of the key actions identified in the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy Delivery Plan was to create a Kent Carers' Forum, so that carers' voices can be heard and partnership working can be improved. The Kent Carers' Forum will:
- Prioritise the action plan and review the delivery plan with specified timescales
  - Work with carers to ensure adult social care is supporting the outcomes defined in the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy
  - Identify barriers to delivering those outcomes
  - Working with carers to understand how to raise better awareness for others that care in Kent and those that may not identify themselves as an unpaid carer yet
  - Inform social care practice and commissioning of the views of carers on a range of areas including but not limited to development of services for carers and the cared for, Self-directed Support and informing strategy and commissioning intentions.
- 2.3.2 The Kent Carers' Forum meets every six weeks with options to join virtually or in-person. The group is co-chaired by the adult social care Assistant Director, for West Kent and a Carers' Right Campaigner and Kent Carer. The Kent Carers' Forum has 26 members which include carers and carer organisations.
- 2.3.3 The Kent Carers' Forum was promoted to carers at the Dementia Showcase event on 19 May 2023 and will also be promoted at the Kent Care Summit on 21 June 2023.

**2.4 Key Moments**

2.4.1 The update on progress is aligned to the key moments set out in the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy and detailed in diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Key Moments from the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy



**2.5 Positive Outcomes**

**2.5.1 Support workers building good relationships with carers**

2.5.2 We have implemented our Future Ways of Working operating model in adult social care which places people at its heart to make sure that adult social care teams and partner organisations work with people that draw on care and support including carers. The model sets out a strong and consistent framework for how we will operate and coordinate care and support to communities in the future.

2.5.3 As part of the model, we now have 24 new adult social care community teams, working at a place-based level to help the people that draw on care and support including carers, to access the right support at the right time. The teams' boundaries are now more closely aligned with the Health and Care Partnerships.

2.5.4 In June 2022, we launched our Practice Framework which focuses on a relational and strengths-based approach which is consistent across the whole social care workforce.

2.5.5 The new 'arranging support' operating model will go live in June 2023 and will see the creation of three teams: community support, placements, and hospital discharges. Each team will be aligned geographically to four areas of Kent, to support the 24 newly created locality teams that cover West Kent, North Kent, Ashford and Canterbury and South Kent Coast and Thanet. The new way of working will remove silos, improve the pathways for people and carers and reduce handoffs.

## **2.6 To help carers tell their story once**

2.6.1 Information on Kent and Medway Care Record will be accessible to the people we support, our partners and staff. This will support all those involved in a person's care to login, track and update a single view of the care and support plan. The project is due to go-live in June 2023.

2.6.2 Working with carers and carer organisations, we have been exploring and testing a range of self-serve tools. The aim of self-serve tools is to give carers greater choice and control over how and when information and support can be accessed. These help people to access the relevant support for their situation, whoever the provider. We are making it possible to input information for assessments, applications, and requests online, to reduce the reliance on phone or face-to-face contact.

## **2.7 Personalised Support**

2.7.1 The Technology Enhanced Lives Project aims to ensure people can explore technology that is right for them and improves their physical and mental wellbeing, as well as empowering them to manage their home environment more independently. Carers can also draw on technology for support and reassurance, improving their quality of life, and of the person they are caring for. A 'build and test' pilot was set up in 2022 to test solutions and inform the final service. Procurement and award of the contract, along with the mobilisation and migration of existing services will take place in the summer of 2023.

## **2.8 Supporting you to be you**

2.8.1 **User Friendly Carers' Information** - At the start of 2023, adult social care launched the Digital Platform [Kent Connect to Support](#) which is an information, advice and guidance platform. This platform provides accessible information which is user-friendly and connects people and communities to each other, helping them to help themselves and others which will promote independence. The carers' content and pathways have been reviewed and updated for Connect to Support and the information continues to be tested and refined with carers. There are ongoing promotion activities to raise the profile of the Connect to Support Platform, including webinars for partners and promotion through carer networks.

2.8.2 Information for carers on [Kent.gov](https://www.kent.gov) has been reviewed and updated.

2.8.3 On 22 May we launched a community directory of services on the Connect to Support Platform, which will support carers to connect with local support networks.

2.8.4 The council currently commissions Carers Short Breaks Services which provide help through planned and unplanned breaks in the home which are delivered to the person who is 'cared for' for the benefit of the carer.

2.8.5 This Carers Short Breaks Service sits alongside several other commissioned services with the purpose of preventing people's needs from escalating and promoting people's well-being and independence. These services include community well-being, community navigation and adult mental health services.

## **2.9 National Carers' Week**

2.9.1 National Carers' Week runs from 5 to 11 June and this year's theme is recognising carers and ensuring they are "visible, valued and supported". There are a range of activities and events happening across Kent during National Carers' Week, details of which can be found in Appendix 2.

2.9.2 Members of the Kent Carers' Forum have been contributing towards the promotion of this. A press release is planned which will include information about activities, events and support groups being delivered by our commissioned carer support providers. This is a key opportunity to grow the membership of the forum itself and raise awareness of the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy.

## **3. Equality Implications**

3.1 As part of the development of the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy an Equality Impact Assessment was developed. This is a live document and continues to be updated.

## **4. Conclusions**

4.1 The Kent Adult Carers' Strategy 2022 to 2027 sets out the vision and direction for carers' support over the next five years in Kent and its delivery plan is being implemented.

4.2 The Kent Carers' Forum will play a key role in driving progress against the delivery plan. The forum will ensure that carers work with us in designing, delivering and monitoring the activities set out in the delivery plan. The Kent Carers' Forum provides a good network to share information and ensure proactive partnership working.

4.3 Progress will be measured against the high-level outcomes described in the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy.

## 5. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendation: Scrutiny Committee is asked to **NOTE** progress of the Kent Adult Carers' Strategy.

## **6. Background Documents**

Kent Adult Carers' Strategy 2022 – 2027:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/adult-social-care-policies/kent-adult-carers-strategy>

## **7. Report Author**

Georgina Walton

Senior Project Manager, Innovation Delivery Team, Adult Social Care

03000 415535

[Georgina.walton@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Georgina.walton@kent.gov.uk)

### **Relevant Director**

Richard Smith

Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health

03000 416838

[Richard.smith3@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.smith3@kent.gov.uk)