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This report may be of interest to: All Members

MILTON KEYNES CARERS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS 1999-2002

Accountable Officer: David Moore (Principal Manager (Regulation and Commissioning))

Author: Alison Shepherd (User and Carer Involvement Officer) - MK253915

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the consultation process on the Milton Keynes Carers Strategy and Action Plans 1999-2002, and to report on the likely financial implications of implementing the Strategy.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Strategy is being consulted upon now, and comments will be considered by the interagency Carers Action Group on 17 January 2000.
- 2.2 The future funding and activities of the Carers Project, training for carers, and support for members of the Council's staff that are also carers will be major areas of work in the coming year, and these areas of work may have future financial implications. Other major areas of work include Carers Assessments and planning new short breaks services.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to note the progress in consulting upon and implementing the Strategy and recognise that there may be additional financial implications of implementing the Strategy and supporting carers to continue in their caring role in Milton Keynes.

4. **Background**

- 4.1 The Committee endorsed the draft Strategy at its meeting on 9 November 1999 and asked that a report be submitted to its next meeting on the likely financial implications of implementing the Strategy. The draft Strategy is currently being consulted upon.
- 4.2 The Strategy has been widely circulated amongst health and social care professionals, relevant voluntary groups, independent providers, carers, all GP surgeries, the Primary Care Group, all members on the Neighbourhood Services Committee, members of the Community Care Assembly, the Community Health Council and the Chamber of Commerce.
- 4.3 Flyers encouraging carers to ring up for a copy of the draft Strategy have been sent to post offices in Milton Keynes, GP surgeries, libraries, Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, churches and other places of worship, hospital waiting rooms, Bletchley Community Hospital, Willen Hospice, pharmacies, supermarkets, and housing offices.
- 4.4 Responses to the draft strategy will be considered by the Carers Action Group at its meeting on 17 January 2000. In light of the Strategy being consulted upon at the moment, Officers have not rewritten the action plans, pending the results of the consultation process. The results of the consultation process will be reported to Members in due course.

5. **Issues and Choices**

- 5.1 Officers have considered the likely costs of the plans as currently drafted and particular issues are highlighted in the attached action plan. Other issues may need to be picked up following consultation or are the specific responsibility of other agencies.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Environmental

There are no immediate environmental implications in consulting upon and developing this Strategy.

6.2 Equalities

Carers and the people they care for can be disadvantaged in society. The Strategy aims amongst other things, to promote carers inclusion, and to improve carers access to benefits advice and to promote Council Tax Disregards.

6.3 Financial

There are no immediate financial implications, although detailed work will be carried out in the coming year to identify the cost to the Council and other agencies of providing carers with the support they need to continue effectively in their caring role. The Carers Special Grant provides resources for some of the planned work on carers issues.

6.4 Legal

The Council has a duty to inform carers of their right to ask for a Carers Assessment when the person being cared for is assessed or their situation is being reviewed.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

There are no immediate staff or accommodation issues arising from this work.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 The draft Strategy is being widely consulted upon, and the results of this will be reported to Members in due course.

Background Papers: Strategies for Carers: Neighbourhood Services Committee 9/11/99
Caring about Carers - the first national strategy for carers
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Carers Strategy 1999-2004
Milton Keynes Carers Strategy and Action Plans 1999-2002