



## Strategic Business Plan 2015-2020

### Our Vision

**For all family and friends carers across West Sussex to be listened to and valued**, have their rights and needs met and be given a strong voice in shaping carer support and services.

### Our Values

- **'Carers at our heart'** - we put carers at the heart of all we do to achieve the best personal outcomes for each carer.
- **'Working together for carers'** - we are committed to working in partnership with carers and other organisations.
- **'Listening to carers'** - we welcome innovation and creative carer-led solutions to achieve the results carers want.

### Our Strategic Aims

We will achieve our vision through the following strategic aims:

- **Supporting carers to have a good quality of life** and to be able to look after their own health and wellbeing.
- **Helping carers to have access to an early offer** of information, guidance and support.
- **Encouraging independence so that carers have a choice** of a life alongside their caring role including a social life, education, employment or volunteering.
- **Ensuring carers voices can be heard** and that carers are valued and recognised as expert partners in care.



## Introduction

### Well Informed to ‘Focus on the Future’

Our work in spring and summer 2015 included an analysis and review of the key drivers for change in the field of providing support for family and friends carers in West Sussex and consultation with our staff, volunteers, Trustees and carers about the future of Carers Support West Sussex.

Most importantly the Strategy, vision, values and strategic aims have been shaped by experiences of local carers. Their views and feedback have combined with the knowledge and understanding of carer needs of our staff, volunteers, managers and Trustees working together. Our review and planning took account of the changing political, economic, social, technological and demographic environment and policy context of our role and work – see **Appendix 2**.

All the stakeholders and supporters who have helped shape our plans are well-informed as they are people who are directly in touch with carers, partners and others from the field of health, social care, charities and community organisations who work with carers day to day.

Our summary strategy needs to be read in conjunction with the supporting appendices. We are keen for this to be widely shared. Our Board and Leadership Team are committed to achieving sustainability to continue to serve local carers in the longer term as a single point of contact and key provider as part of the range of support they need.

Across the course of the next 3-5 years we plan to focus even more on raising the profile of our work to achieve greater inclusivity and cultural diversity whilst lobbying hard for the best deal and best health and wellbeing for carers. Without local carers our health and social care services would seriously fail. We will do this in partnership with volunteers, supporters, other carer-facing providers and care organisations. We will work hard to secure significant added value in kind and diversify our income sources.

Our recruitment processes are strong and staff and volunteers are our greatest asset. Continuing to recruit a high caliber of people with exceptional carer-friendly communication skills will remain a high priority. This way we will help to create more Carer-Friendly communities across the county in towns and villages, health and social care settings, hospitals, GP surgeries and all the places carers go.

Although the timeframe of this plan extends beyond the current contract with West Sussex County Council we are optimistic about our future. I hope that our direction will find support from a wide range of people who share our values and respect the role of family and friends carers as ‘expert partners’ in care. I look forward to ‘working together to reach and support carers’.

*Jennie Musgrove, Chief Executive*

*October 2015*

## Our 'Think Carer' Behaviours



- T** Trusted for being responsible for what we do, with a 'can do' attitude: honouring commitments, ensuring confidentiality.
  - H** Honest, open and accountable to carers and our partners.
  - I** Integrity modeling best practice, open to challenge and continuous learning.
  - N** Nothing is too much trouble, finding flexible solutions recognising carers are experts in care and know their own needs.
  - K** Knowledgeable and skilled staff, volunteers and trustees engaging with carers, consulting and encouraging feedback.
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- C** Collaborating with carers and other organisations to build supportive, positive partnerships and the best outcomes for carers.
  - A** Approachable, accessible, welcoming and always actively listening.
  - R** Respectful of different cultures, encouraging open dialogue; promoting carer choice and control.
  - E** Excellence and efficiency achieved through best value, measuring and monitoring performance.
  - R** Reliable always acting on what is agreed, keeping people informed, ensuring accuracy of information shared.

### Strategy, Service Delivery, Annual Business Plan

All of the services provided by Carers Support West Sussex are explained in our literature and on our website which will be continuously improving and developing in consultation with carers over the coming months and years.

Our teams will set out their operational plans guided by our vision, values and strategic aims. This will ensure our service delivery and development is shaped by and fits with this long term plan, priorities and agreed direction for the organisation.

These more specific and targeted service delivery and development plans fit within the annual Operational Business Plan which sets realistic, measurable annual priority objectives, actions and outcomes for our Board and staff to achieve. This responsive and flexible annual plan covers the financial year April to March and is backed by agreed budget projections. Following review of progress, this is updated and continuing priorities may roll forward into the coming year.

There is also the flexibility within all plans to reshape to reflect the expressed views of carers, volunteers, staff, Trustees and partners as the commissioning and provider market changes and to adapt and adjust service development in the light of those changes.

For example we will adapt our funding base or staff budgets where there are recruitment challenges or the pressures of high demand within a specific support area. This ensures we do not duplicate assessments or other support work and that there is no unnecessary expenditure of statutory or charitable funding across the local carer support system.

We aim to ensure all plans add value to the range of carer services already available and result in personal carer outcomes, demonstrably representing good value for money. Within the wider health and social care economy this is essential to early intervention and prevention savings. Personal response, personal Carer Wellbeing Reviews and an offer of a personal statutory carer assessment will become a bedrock of our services out in the community.

## **A Strategy in Action**

A short summary of the Strategy and a copy of the annual Operational Business Plan is for sharing with new staff at induction and is available on our website. We intend these plans to be used in 'real-time' and be 'live' master plans which provide a clear framework and direction to our work to meet carer needs. Importantly to determine how we aim to grow in the years ahead to 2020.

Supported by clear and informed direction from our Board we plan to grow and diversify to help more carers and to share skills and resources widely through partnership. This Strategy and all the background supporting work and Strategy Map we now have sets a sound framework for services to be developed. It is also the framework against which we will meet contract and requirements and monitor and evaluate performance and value to both carers and funders.

The Strategy also aims to ensure our teams anticipate and plan for expected and unexpected change and that the organisation is nimble enough to respond to change. All decisions on this will be taken in the light of the Strategy and always in the best interest of local carers.

## **Communicating the Vision, Aims and Objectives**

The Board and Leadership Team also plan to communicate the vision aims and objectives clearly to enable staff and volunteers to deliver high standards of service and meet targets.

Embedding values and behaviours throughout the organisation is underpinned by a strong recruitment, selection, induction, supervision and appraisal process. In the longer term this will take account of how individual staff meet the vision, live the values, work through quality standards and apply 'Think Carer' behaviours.

## Strength of the Carers Trust

As a Network Partner of the national Carers Trust and member of Carers UK we have access to valuable resources and expertise. We stay up to date with the latest thinking on policy, and will aim to continuously improve and use evidence-based best practice. This will be important to Quality Assurance and evaluation of impact, outcomes and return on investment.

There is close synergy between Carers Support West Sussex and the 'vision' of the Carers Trust which is "a world where the role and contribution of unpaid carers is recognised and they have access to the quality support and services they need to live their own lives." We are confident that in all our activities with the Trust we are working to the same end results.

## Impact of 'The Care Act 2014'

### New Carer Entitlements

Very significantly for our Strategy going forward the majority of regulations under the new Care Act 2014 came into force in April 2015. This was the single most important piece of legislation affecting health and social care since the 1948 National Assistance Act.

The new Care Act brings more rights and entitlement for service users and carers and a far greater emphasis on wellbeing and personalisation. It introduced the duty for local authorities to provide a statutory standalone Carer Assessment as well as information and advice to every carer who requests this without charging. This new right to have this personal and separate individual statutory assessment is regardless of whether or not the person who is being cared for is either eligible for statutory care or receiving funded care.

### Partnership and Prevention

It has been important for Carers Support West Sussex to work in partnership with and under contract to the County Council and others to deliver a proportion of the higher number of statutory standalone carer assessments needed. Our aim is to help develop a robust carer-friendly pathway, process and outcomes for this very important step-change in entitlement for carers. Our work in providing these more formal assessments started actively from August 2015.

The Care Act heralds a major shift whereby local authorities must signpost everyone to sources of support and ensure they receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or which delay the impact of their needs.

Increasingly there will be more preventative support for people to get the information and advice they need to make informed decisions about care and support. The challenge for the local authority is to influence and facilitate development of the provider market to ensure there is a range of service providers offering a choice of high quality, appropriate services.

## Economic Value of Carers

Given the known high economic value of carers in West Sussex, carers are very often the first line of 'prevention' to help avoid or delay people needing to use statutory social care and health services, particularly hospital or care home admission. In providing such a vital role this front-line resource and massive army of 84,000 plus devoted and caring adults is helping avoid and reduce overwhelming statutory health and social care costs in the county. There could also be as many as 6,000 'hidden' young carers.

There is plenty of research evidence of the rising value of unpaid carers. Latest figures from Carers UK show an estimated 89,000 carers in West Sussex and a £117m increase equal to around 8% in estimated value of their support since 2011, to a total current estimated value of £1,537m.

To continue to benefit from this free help it is imperative that the whole local care system recognises the importance of ensuring that carers are prevented from developing needs for care and support themselves which then has a double-cost!

## Power of the West Sussex 'Joint Commitment to Carers'

To this end a new West Sussex 'Joint Commitment to Carers' is launching in November 2015 shared by the County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups. This states the main priorities over the next five years based on the views of carers and young carers. These priority commitments will be important in influencing our work and ability to identify more carers.

The local Commitment priorities are clear for all to see and dovetail with the messages and commitments of the Government's National Carers Strategy and NHS England's Commitment to Carers. The opening statement encourages everyone to 'Think Carer'. Carers Support West Sussex is fully behind the new local Commitment and each of the stated priorities which are also the mainstay of our Strategy. These are:-

- To raise the profile of carers and young carers, make carers part of everyone's core business
- To achieve personalised support for carers
- Ensure young carers do not carry out inappropriate levels of care and can achieve in education and employment
- Support carers to remain physically and mentally well
- Build a carer-friendly community
- A new local 'Family and Friends Carers Care Pathway'

It is great news that the new generic 'Carers Care Pathway' will be integrated within all patient and client care pathways and hospital admission and discharge procedures in West Sussex. This will help health and social care staff to identify, recognise and support carers which will result in stronger all round integration of carer identification and an earlier proactive offer of support.

This Commitment and Carer Pathway represents a major step forward for carer recognition and we are delighted to be part of this initiative with partners.

### **Prevention Value of a ‘Trusted Person’**

Part of our own long term vision is for a carer and patient to have a nominated ‘Trusted Person’ to link with them – in effect a Support or Care Coordinator. This is what carers have been asking for and it is proven as cost-effective elsewhere in the country. The role is also being piloted in West Sussex. This would be a fantastic specific long term partnership vision to achieve for carers. It is not an additional worker or practitioner but an identified, named person from a carer’s circle of services and support networks.

We aim to continue to strengthen our working partnerships across the statutory and community sectors (as promised by the Strategy) to reach more hidden carers to support more carers well with efficiency making sure our support is timely, personal and of preventative value wherever we can.

## **Delivering our Vision, Value and Aims**

### **Evidence of Need and Context**

The Strategy has been informed by feedback from Carers and other stakeholders. The external environment in which Carers Support West Sussex operates is increasingly demanding and complex. For the summaries of the Evidence of Need and External Context as reviewed – see **Appendix 1**.

### **Carers Support West Sussex Strategy Map**

Our summary Strategy Map provides a visual illustration of the Strategy and how we will deliver our vision, values and aims. The Strategy Map focuses on the critical areas of our objectives:-

- Carer Centred objectives
- Financial Objectives
- Operational Objectives
- Learning and Development Objectives

These are priorities for action across all service areas, for developing collaboration and joint working and to guide how we operate and manage our finances and risks internally within Carers Support. The aim is that we continue to grow our services through contract, grant and charitable support. For the Strategy Map – please see **Appendix 4**.

### **Operational Plans and Resources**

Underpinning structures and systems will cover the following and additional information:

- service operational plans
- risk analysis and register
- Business Continuity Plan
- budgets and cash-flow forecasts
- Marketing and Communications plan

- Fundraising Strategy
- staffing structure
- monitoring and evaluation framework
- Carer Services and Programme Operational Plans

### ‘Social Value Made Real’ – Our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The Framework identifies what we will measure and how we will collect data. Monitoring and evaluation is key to delivering high quality, responsive support and ensuring we are on track in achieving the strategic vision and aims through working to our values and behaviours.

Our Leadership and Management Teams will undertake regular analysis and review to ensure continuous learning and service and infrastructure development based on research, evidence and feedback from carers, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. This information will be available to the Board and the Teams will regularly update on performance.

Data collection and unit-cost measurement will be built into day-to-day service delivery and systems with additional focus groups, surveys, outcome reporting, sampling and one-to-one interviews gathered to add meaningful in-depth data for evaluation. Also to inform our training and development programme and shape development of our business systems. For the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework - **please see Appendix 5.**

## Quality

CSWS is committed to delivering quality services and to achieving the following accredited standards:

- Positive about Disabled People
- PQASSO Level 1 and 2
- The Social Care Commitment
- Helplines Partnership accreditation
- Carers Trust Quality Award

We will monitor continuous feedback and information on quality and carer satisfaction with our services together with outcome statistics. The key themes of carer need evidenced by our consultation has informed our Strategy together with the wider contextual evidence of other research, policy and legislation – for Needs Analysis - **please see Appendix 3.**

Our Single Number Telephone Response Line and staff provide a gateway service and support to carers available across West Sussex. Provision of excellent, joined up, real time, accurate information and advice is critical for sharing and in meeting this objective.

## Infrastructure

### Workforce

Our Managers will continuously review training and development needs of staff and volunteers, particularly in relation to the specified competencies needed to ensure safe, high quality and fully compliant services. The aim is for our workforce to embrace best practice, enhanced IT skills and the flexible working arrangements we offer. In turn our staff offer flexibility in how, when and where they are able to support carers to meet the carer's particular personal needs and preferences.

We are actively committed to making sure staff and volunteers are fully competent to deliver our services and that their employment with Carers Support is positive, rewarding and enjoyable. Our aim is to have a happy, well- motivated workforce who are well-supported and who benefit from our culture of very strong partnership working based on mutual trust. We will strive to be competitive in the difficult recruitment market.

### Data-Sharing

Working with provider colleagues returns a beneficial mutual learning platform. Sharing and pooling of skills and experience and data-sharing opportunities such as via our Carer Services Network partners (Crossroads Care, British Red Cross, NHS Carer Health Team) and others. For example the larger Community Alarm providers and organisations such as Age UK West Sussex and the more local provider Age UK organisations come into contact with very many carers to whom we can offer a service and vice-versa.

This partnership and data-sharing approach will remain a very significant part of the way the organisation functions, and our long term plan is that this will be strengthening year on year. We are committed to securing specialist input to resource this critical work to benefit carers, making their lives easier by removing "hands-off" signposting and by reducing of repeated information-giving.

Our teams are keen to continue to offer face-to-face support. This personal approach provides added value because staff understand a carer's home situation and see clearly what may be needed. Direct personal communication enables more informed, tailored support than via the phone or online contact.

We have plans to be innovative, practical, realistic and pragmatic in driving forward the agenda to safely share carer contact details electronically. We will need to grow our IT infrastructure and continue to use technical experts in the fast-changing field of IT to ensure we continuously move forward in progressing and developing our systems.

A strong IT infrastructure will continue to be fundamental to success and efficiency of our business and governance systems. For example Sharepoint frameworks for internal information-sharing so keeping accommodation, travel and meeting overheads low. Communicating and supporting more carers using web-based technology to achieve wider reach to carers and families who like to use IT.

We will also be pressing swiftly ahead with our Social Media Service for Carers from the point of the 2015 investment. This is not forgetting the many carers who do not use IT for whom paper-based information is often essential. Our teams fully understand this preference and whilst we will always press

for email where acceptable, we also aim to communicate cost-effectively in traditional ways according to carer choice.

### **Premises and Co-location**

Our Premises Strategy is to have a spread of presences across the county and to take advantage of opportunities to co-locate teams in pro bono or affordable, reciprocal value carer-friendly community settings wherever possible, sharing overheads and central services wherever we can.

This means working with and alongside health, social care and community sector partners and practitioners where we can best add value to integrate services and support. This will be in an appropriate setting where no doors are closed to integrating support and where suitable, worker-friendly desk space and a carer-friendly approach is promoted. We also plan that our staff should work where carers are and where they go, not the other way around.

We want to help shift the focus to carers being truly regarded as 'expert partners' in the local social care, health and community care system.

## **General Information and Advice**

The majority of enquiries (68%) we receive are for general information and advice about support available to the Carer themselves as well as that for the person or people they are caring for. 42% felt that through the information and advice provided they were more recognised as expert partners in care. We will continue to develop information excellence backed by efficient electronic information-sharing platforms.

Our commitment to getting the planned 'West Sussex Advice Network' operating to overcome the silos and barriers of different information organisations and separate service directories and data systems is strong. This collaboration is with trusted partner organisations, expert and accredited in this area such as the Citizens Advice Bureau Consortium and Age UK West Sussex.

## **Carers Rights and Expert Partners**

Many carers are unaware of their rights and what is available to them, frustrated by the many professionals they have to deal with and having to continuously explain their situation. Although 34% of carers feel more informed about their rights, many quoted lack of time and frustration in trying to deal with professionals as a barrier to accessing services they need. This situation should change over time helped by:-

- Our future Newsletter focusing on local areas
- Our Marketing and Communications Plan now developing
- Our work in Statutory Standalone Carer Assessments undertaken on behalf of the County Council
- In hospitals, as all this work becomes more widely known about

Raising the profile of the needs and rights of carers in West Sussex is a top priority for the organisation. Carers Voice and a range of local Carer Groups in towns and villages will also be a route to continuously keep carers well-informed and through which we will continue to gather evidence and feedback for our own development and to share with partners.

## Marketing and Communications

### Profile and Publicity

This is a critical high priority for the organisation. The Universal Services Contract sets annual growth and stretch targets for expansion of carers registered for support. Currently we reach around only 17-18% of the 2011 census estimate of 84,000 carers in West Sussex and we are not making sufficient progress in finding hidden carers from under-represented groups such as carers in BME and LGBT communities.

Our separate Communications Plan will help target carers from diverse communities and the new Communications and Marketing Team will integrate approaches with the Carer Network Team building on experience and learning to date. We have pockets of initiatives for this and will set more specific targets for our teams.

From late 2015 going forward all staff will have operational targets to support the drive to reach diverse community groups and individual carers. We want to find more Young Adult Carers and there are plans to grow our Programme in collaboration with the Young Carers Team hosted by the County Council and support them into early adulthood through a strong transition support programme.

Traditionally our small Information team has provided an excellent central service, outreaching widely in the community and producing a high standard of publicity and information. We increasingly work through cross-representing our partners, talking to carers and colleagues about and promoting 'Carer Services' in the round at events and meetings, including sharing information about services for short breaks and other respite, carer health and other wellbeing and support options for generic and specialist caring roles. We plan to be working even more closely this way wherever there are opportunities to do so.

This trusted 'partnership' approach to publicity and the use of common messages such as 'Think Carer' and distinguishing from paid care-workers by using the definition of 'family and friends carers' is likely to grow stronger. Information-sharing protocols are being put in place to underpin this direction of travel which is so fundamental to working together effectively to support and reach more carers in the context of higher demand from growing numbers without any increase or in the event of reducing capacity.

### Market Intelligence

The Team will engage with Network Partners and colleagues who are supporting expansion of the West Sussex 'Carer Voice' and in our Diverse Communities Programme to gain insight into the needs of carers known to us and to the needs of hidden carers.

A focus will be on marketing initiatives coupled with regular communication with community leaders to proactively widen reach and establish appropriate media and web-based presences. We will focus on national festivals, celebrations and awareness days to increase awareness amongst 'hard to reach' and diverse groups. This relatively new specialist marketing function within the organisation will provide leadership and resources for development of even stronger internal communications to support the quality assurance drive.

### Key Features of our Communications

Some key features and advantages of the stronger and longer term Comms expansion will be:

- development of our brand, use of press and radio media, leveraging PR opportunities
- a multicultural feel and approach, embracing diversity
- signage and reception functions to convey core messages
- high quality graphics and publicity documents
- common key messages agreed with carers and supporters
- building referrer relationships
- close working with the County Council and NHS using the full potential of partnership
- using target audience analysis and intelligence
- one-off marketing activities suggested by carers, staff and supporters
- gallery of photographic and leaflet resources and partnerships with design, print and production resource companies who work to brand
- shared exhibition resources at county-wide town and village events
- place-based and targeted campaigns to raise awareness
- a strong network of proactive 'carer champions' engaged out in the community
- sustained focus on social media activity such as discussion forums: wellbeing portals and social media extensions to support all communications for working with carers from all communities
- more user-friendly outcome and quality reports

Lack of timely information is a common complaint from carers and this exciting area of work will give front-line workers the central services PR programme support they need to operate effectively.

As self-referral remains the highest percentage of all sources of our referrals, higher public profile will continue to be fundamental to our success. We are an organisation committed to and contracted to find hidden family and friends carers and we aim to work hard to empower people to get in touch. To continue to offer a personal carer response Carers Support must therefore invest to source new funding for staff, services and infrastructure systems.

Delivery of a strong communications plan across the next 3-5 years as part of this strategy will open doors to communicate more easily to the wider population of carers.

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## Supporting Appendices

The following summaries are attached as Appendices. These, particularly the Strategy Map summary, are critical components of the main Strategy and should be read in conjunction with the main body of the Plan above.

1. Evidence of Need and External Context
2. PESTLE Analysis – Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental
3. Needs Analysis
4. Strategy Map
5. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework