

<b>Decision Taker:</b>	Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing
<b>Date:</b>	12 July 2024
<b>Report title:</b>	Grant for unpaid adult carer information, advice and guidance services
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>	Unpaid carers aged 18+ in all wards
<b>Classification:</b>	Open
<b>Reason for lateness (if applicable):</b>	Not Applicable
<b>From:</b>	Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing approve an 8-month grant request for the sum of £66,666.67 to Southwark Carers for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025, to continue delivery of existing services to the unpaid adult carers of disabled residents in Southwark.
2. The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing note this grant is requested to allow time to work with carers to co-design a new Carer Centre for unpaid adult carers and commence procurement for this new service.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Southwark Council's 2021 Carers' Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) estimates that Southwark currently has between 25,700 and 48,100 unpaid carers. This number is expected to rise in line with local and national population trends.
4. Unpaid carers make huge contribution to Southwark's health and wellbeing: in Southwark's 2019 Carers' JSNA estimates the work of carers to be valued at £447 million per year, with an estimated 5,900 people in the borough providing over 50 hours of unpaid care every week. However, caring often comes at a high personal cost: Office of National Statistics (ONS) statistics suggest that 7,200 carers in Southwark (27%) are not in good health; almost double non-carer levels (14%). Southwark's 2021/22 ASCOF scores show carer-reported quality of life to be 7 out of 12, with only 28% carers reporting they had as much social contact as they would like. Census data shows that carers in Southwark are more likely to live in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared with non-carers, and carers are less likely to work full-time and are more likely not to work at all.

5. In recognition of the value of unpaid carers in Southwark, the council has declared 2024 as 'The Year of the Carer'.
6. The Care Act 2014 recognises the role of carers, their need for support in their own right, and their need for a life beyond caring. The legislation includes duties to provide an information and advice service for carers, to deliver services that prevent, reduce or delay the development of longer-term needs for care and support, and to help carers look after their own wellbeing.
7. In Southwark, the council currently meets its Care Act prevention duties for unpaid adult carers through a range of commissioned services. The key services are:
  - The Ageing Well Southwark service, through which Southwark Carers are currently funded to provide the following services to the carers of older people:
    - Information and advice, including support navigating Adult Social Care statutory services.
    - A facilitation service, linking carers with other services that might meet their wellbeing needs, or the needs of those they care for (through referrals or signposting, or 1:1 personalised support).
    - Outreach services to identify new carers, including outreach in healthcare settings (e.g. hospital wards and GP practices).
    - Activity sessions to help carers enjoy their life outside of their caring role and to improve their mental wellbeing, such as peer support groups, a carer's café, and a film club.
  - Grant funding for Southwark Carers to deliver the same services as those set out above, for the carers of disabled residents, as an interim measure during the procurement process for the future Disability Hub.
  - The Wellbeing Hub, through which the provider Together is funded to deliver the following services targeted at the carers of those with a mental health concern:
    - Signposting and referrals to Southwark Carers.
    - Basic support, such as provision of food vouchers.
    - A Black Carer's Café pilot, to provide more targeted provision around health, support and community networks to black carers within the borough.

8. In addition to the three key services listed above, some carer services in Southwark are delivered via the following arrangements:
- The Dementia Support grant, delivered by The Alzheimer's Society, where support services aimed at those recently diagnosed with dementia are also offered to the carer(s) or families.
  - The Adult Advocacy contract, which delivers Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA) services for eligible carers receiving a carer's assessment or carer's support plan.
  - The Young Carers service, delivered by Imago.
9. In addition to commissioned services, the following projects aimed at improving the council's services for carers are underway:
- Adult Social Care are developing a Carer's Strategy.
  - Adult Social Care have established a Southwark Carers Delivery Group, which aims to improve data collection and quality assurance for young and adult carers, improve external communications to identify new carers in the borough, establish a United for Carers forum to enhance the carer voice within the borough, and secure funding for future projects to innovate Southwark's carer offer.
  - Adult Social Care recently engaged in a cross-borough project funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which developed evidence-based recommendations for improving the quality of digitally-available information, advice, and support for carers in Southwark. Work is underway to develop a plan to progress these recommendations.
  - The council's Local Economy Team fund the organisation Pecan to deliver employment support for unpaid carers as part of the Southwark Works contract. This involves outreach work to identify unpaid carers who are not working, and a subsequent 1:1 support offer for those interested in finding employment.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

10. Southwark Council should seek to commission services for carers that:
- Are co-designed with carers and responsive to their expressed needs.
  - Provide quality information and support that is easy for carers to find.
  - Inform carers of their rights and support them to access statutory support where eligible.
  - Support carers to improve or maintain good physical and mental health.

- Provide carers with the opportunity for social contact.
  - Proactively identify new carers, particularly in underrepresented communities.
11. Two of the current key services for carers are currently being commissioned or re-commissioned: the Disability Hub and the Ageing Well Southwark service. The carer aspects of both of these services are currently delivered by Southwark Carers.
  12. Through the engagement processes for these procurements, the council received feedback from unpaid adult carers that carers' services in Southwark need to be better coordinated and less fragmented, that information about available support for carers needs to be more easily accessible, and that it would be helpful for carers if all offers of support were in one place.
  13. Additionally, feedback from carers via Southwark's 2021/22 ASCOF scores demonstrates a need to review existing services and identify opportunities for improvement: data shows only 57.7% carers found it easy to find information about support, and only 36.3% were satisfied with their experience of care and support. Similarly, the council's internal annual survey for carers routinely shows that carers have a poor experience accessing information and advice services.
  14. This combined feedback indicates that the best outcomes for unpaid adult carers will be achieved by completing a full review of existing services and commissioning a new, stand-alone service for carers that has been co-designed with carers and meets their expressed needs, and builds on lessons learned from the current services. This approach is supported by Southwark Carers and Adult Social Care.
  15. The current grant funding that Southwark Carers receive to deliver services to the carers of disabled residents will terminate 30 September 2024. To ensure continuity of service provision for carers of disabled residents and to ensure the council continues to meet its statutory duties, it is recommended that a grant of £66,666.67 is awarded to Southwark Carers for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025.
  16. If approved, this grant award would be an interim measure to allow time to work with carers to co-design a new service model, engage with other key stakeholders, and commence procurement of a new Carer Centre for unpaid adult carers.

### **Policy framework implications**

17. The Care Act 2014 recognises the role of carers, their need for support in their own right, and their need for a life beyond caring, as outlined in paragraph 5.

18. The Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027, developed by Southwark's Health and Wellbeing Board, includes 'early identification and support to stay well' as a key focus of delivery, including specific reference to "wellbeing support for carers and families". The Strategy also includes "strong and connected communities" as a key focus, highlighting the need to reduce social isolation and loneliness. This grant will meet both these priorities by ensuring the council continues to identify and support the wellbeing of new carers, and that existing carers receive continuous support. Similarly, the Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 includes a priority to support carers to care, which this grant aligns with.
19. Through the council Delivery Plan 2022-2026 Southwark Council has made an express commitment to support residents' mental wellbeing and to support unpaid carers. This grant is a mechanism for delivering on these commitments.
20. The Southwark Adult Social Care Business Plan 2023-2028 includes an express commitment to monitor and improve Southwark's carer offer. This grant will enable current services to continue, to allow time to review and re-design a new carer offer in collaboration with carers, ensuring services are improved in line with carers' expressed needs.

## **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

### **Community impact statement**

21. Awarding this grant would ensure continuity of service provision for carers in Southwark for those currently accessing Southwark Carers' services, as well as any new carers that are supported in line with the current service requirements to continually identify new carers. Through Southwark Carers, carers are provided with opportunities to socialise with other carers, sharing their stories and building a sense of community.
22. The delivery of this service aligns with the Southwark Council's Delivery Plan's commitment to support families and treat residents as if they were valued members of our own family.

### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

23. The Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:
  - The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
  - The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and
  - Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

24. This grant award should not have a negative impact in relation to the groups identified as having a “protected characteristic” under the Equality Act 2010 and the Councils’ equality agenda: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
25. Currently, the contract’s KPIs do not include data collection related to demographics. This gap has been identified, and this grant award will be accompanied by a review and update of the KPIs, which will include collection of demographic data and regular service user feedback, with an associated requirement for Southwark Carers to engage in targeted outreach work in response to any identified inequalities in access, outcomes or experience for service users.
26. A full health and equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the commissioning project for the future carer service.

### **Health impact statement**

27. Health benefits of this service include:
  - Improving mental and physical wellbeing for unpaid adult carers.
  - Reducing social isolation for unpaid adult carers.
  - Preventing, delaying, and reducing the need for care and support for unpaid adult carers.
  - Helping unpaid adult carers look after their own wellbeing.
28. All staff employed by Southwark Carers are paid the London Living Wage and are compliant with the Mayor’s Healthy Workplace Charter, which aims to reduce the mental health implications of financial insecurity and thus enabling them to deliver high quality, consistent care for service users.

### **Climate change implications**

29. All staff employed under this grant will either work from home or walk, cycle, or take public transport to work, thereby reducing emissions associated with travel. Providers keep printing to a minimal, keeping printing focussed on marketing materials and responding to requests for printed materials in order to keep information accessible for key groups.

### **Resource implications**

30. Southwark Carers will be required to observe and comply with the Council’s standard conditions of grant funding.

## Legal implications

31. Please see the concurrent report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance below.

## Financial implications

32. The grant will be a total of £66,666.67 from 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025. The budget holder within Adult Social Care has approved this grant request, and there is sufficient budget available within Adult Social Care to fund this proposal.
33. This grant request is a continuation of the £100,000 per annum that Southwark Carers currently receive to deliver services to the carers of disabled residents. The current grant funding terminates on 30 September 2024.
34. The below table shows spend over the period of the grant request, assuming the grant is approved:

Cost per annum:	£100,000
Cost over grant period (1 October 2024 – 31 May 2025):	£66,666.67
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£66,666.67</b>

35. The grant will be fully funded from the Better Care Fund through the Voluntary Sector Preventative services and the Voluntary Sector Carers schemes. Therefore, it is important BCF monitoring requirements are maintained.
36. The Government BCF policy framework confirmed the funding to continue for 2023-24 and 2024-25. However, funding is confirmed on an annual basis as well as any uplifts.

## Consultation

37. Commissioning officers have consulted with a range of carers to inform the decision to develop a separate, bespoke carer service, as well as engaging with Southwark Carers, who have confirmed they would like to continue to deliver the current service through 31 May 2025.
38. Extensive stakeholder engagement is planned to inform a revised service model for the future carer service.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance REF: [SB110624]

39. This report seeks approval to award a grant of £66,666.67 to Southwark Carers for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025, to continue delivery of existing services to unpaid adult carers in Southwark, and pending the design and procurement of a new service.

40. The decision to approve the report recommendation is one which is expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member under Part 3D of the council Constitution. The proposed grant award and the measures proposed to assess the effect and impact of the services are consistent with the council's statutory duties and powers (notably the Public Sector Equality Duty imposed by the Equality Act 2010) and with corporate policy as detailed within paragraphs 17 to 23.
41. The report notes that the proposed grant award will be regulated by appropriate funding conditions, including a break clause which would allow the council to end the funding arrangement in the event of any serious and/or persistent failures in service provision.

**Strategic Director of Finance REF: [14AM202425]**

42. The strategic director of finance notes the request for approval for an 8-month grant request for the sum of £66,666.67 to Southwark Carers for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025, to continue delivery of existing services to the unpaid adult carers of disabled residents in Southwark.
43. The Strategic Director of Finance notes the contents of this report and in particular the issues addressed under the 'Financial Implications' section. Commissioners will need to manage the contract carefully to ensure maximum value for money. The grant funding from the Better Care Fund (BCF) for the service reflects the shared benefits accruing to the council, ICB and health partners in their endeavours to improve outcomes for the residents of Southwark.

**Other officers**

44. Not applicable.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark's 2021 Carers' JSNA	Commissioning Directorate 160 Tooley Street London SE4 2QH	Lizzie Skelton 020 8176 0598
Link: <a href="https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=web&amp;cd=&amp;cad=rja&amp;uact=8&amp;ved=2ahUKEwjWuM3hmP2CAxUxW0EAHWttCNkQFnoECBgQAQ&amp;url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.southwark.gov.uk%2Fassets%2Fattach%2F33537%2FCarers-JSNA-2021-Final-1-.pdf&amp;usg=AOvVaw2GdzGXvBhTu8v9i0ohWNmx&amp;opi=89978449">https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=web&amp;cd=&amp;cad=rja&amp;uact=8&amp;ved=2ahUKEwjWuM3hmP2CAxUxW0EAHWttCNkQFnoECBgQAQ&amp;url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.southwark.gov.uk%2Fassets%2Fattach%2F33537%2FCarers-JSNA-2021-Final-1-.pdf&amp;usg=AOvVaw2GdzGXvBhTu8v9i0ohWNmx&amp;opi=89978449</a>		



## APPENDICES

No	Title
Appendix A	High-level Project Plan for Commissioning a New Carer's Centre

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Lizzie Skelton Project Manager for Adults, Older People and Complex Needs	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	25 June 2024	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director, Finance	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		12 July 2024