

Feedback from Staffordshire County Council (November 2017):

Actions that SCC (James Till, Commissioning Officer) have undertaken since the report to try and address some of the issues raised:

1. How aware are you that any carers you are working with can be referred to the Carers Hub for an assessment of need and a range of support?

It was clear from the feedback that not all professionals and carers themselves were aware of the assessment function of the carers hub and the subsequent services they had to offer as a result an assessed need. Firstly I have contacted our own assessment and care management district leads and attended team meetings to address this issue from a practitioner level and to re affirm the current carers offer. In addition to this I have also met with SSOTP, SSSFT as well as EDS, children's services and numerous other private and voluntary sector providers to ensure that the current carers hub offer is communicated, that the assessment process is clear and that support services available are then understood so that any assessed needs can be met through the hub. I have also ensured that any internal comms, Staffordshire connect and digital media have the latest up to date information regarding carers services at the hub. I am also involved in the new social care front door pilot steering group to ensure that the current carers pathway is understood and communicated.

2. Did you know carers may be entitled to a personal wellbeing budget to support them in their caring role and/or their personal health and wellbeing?

It was clear from the feedback that not everyone (including professionals) were aware of the personal wellbeing budget, its function, eligibility criteria and how to make an application to access this funding. A project of work around awareness was launched with the carers hub in August 2017 to highlight this and identify how we could communicate this to the public and professionals to ensure that this funding is correctly utilised to improve the lives of carers and achieve outcomes for assessed needs. This information has now been communicated to all of the above professional database which included a contracts overview document which included the purpose of the PWB, its application and its assessment process. This information has now been included in the latest version of the carers hub advertising literature which went live in October 2017. This now ensures that the message for PWB is clear and the relevant information on how to access this is advocated where it is needed.

3. How much do you know about and use the information and signposting service of the Carers Hub?

Following the assessment process from the carers hub there were concerns raised about the signposting and information service provided and how effective this was in meeting the needs of the assessed carers. An updated signposting database has now been implemented by the carers hub along with a regular weekly news update feed on the carers hub web portal which informs carers of any activities and any new upcoming events. The carers hub has also taken on board the feedback in terms of partnership working and has recently commissioned CASS to deliver its GP surgery work stream for the foreseeable future.

4. How do you best believe the various services and community-based support available to carers could be joined up and developed with the Carers Hub service? AND what role do you think the Carers Hub could have in making this happen?

We feel that the current voluntary and private sector companies still play a pivotal role when delivering services for carers in Staffordshire. As the commissioning officer for this portfolio I understand the importance of these key strategic partners within carers

services and I have taken it upon myself to meet with these partners to "bridge the gap" between commissioned services and the private sector. I have recently met with all of the relevant Staffordshire hospital PALS teams to ensure that the cares hub offer is highlighted to patients, I have met with MASE, CASS and NASCA among many other groups that offer a vital service to ensure that the joined up approach envisaged by SCC is followed through and is realised through the carers hub. I have also continues to regularly meet with the carers hub to ensure that any new supporting organisations are identified and regularly update within the hub's signposting database.

5. What else would like to tell us about support for Carers in Staffordshire and how it could be improved?

As the nature of the caring role for all ages across Staffordshire is ever evolving I feel that it is imperative that SCC remain outward thinking in our approach and employ innovation when developing its commissioned carers services. We understand the importance of the current voluntary and private sector carer support already embedded within Staffordshire and the importance of partnership working for the future of the carers in Staffordshire a continued evaluation and improvement of the current carers hub offer will be undertake by myself in order to embed this.

As you are aware the carers hub have commissioned an independent health watch report which will ensure that we gain a true market picture of the current carers services, along with SCC's practitioner survey and the national carers survey including independent voluntary sector feedback will enable us to develop a future carers service for the residents of all ages in Staffordshire that truly works and meets the needs of its clients.

Above all I would also like to re iterate that the priority standpoint for SCC is to ensure that we listen, evaluate and ultimately meet the needs of the carers within Staffordshire and will ensure employ innovation and clear market feedback to achieve this.