



Carers Steering Group

Terms of Reference

V1 18/10/23

Background

Slough recognises the important role carers provide within Slough's diverse community, promoting the wellbeing of others. It is crucial they are valued as expert partners and supported to lead as full a life as possible alongside their caring role.

The Slough Carers Support Service moved into SBC on 1 July 2023, and we have received a lot of feedback as a result of that change. The biggest message we received is that Carers voices should be central to any changes in service.

To support this we are developing a Carers Steering Group to inform how the new service develops. The group will be made of people involved in Carer wellbeing. It will meet regularly to oversee and support the latest Carers Action Plan 2023-26 to be implemented in a way that makes a real difference to Carers lives.

The revised Carers Strategy covers the years 2023-2026 which was approved by Cabinet in October 2023 and has a comprehensive Carers Action Plan for real change.

Document Purpose

The purpose of this Terms of Reference (ToR) is to outline the key accountabilities and the reporting arrangements of the Carers Steering Group which is to be Co-Chaired by SBC and a Carers Representative.

This is a brand new group which is being created to act as a champion of all things carer and to hold SBC account for the actions set out in the Carers Action Plan as set out in the 3 year Carers Strategy 2023-26. The group will also take shared accountability for delivering on the actions set out in the Carers Action Plan.

The Group seeks to inform the development of the Carers agenda in Slough and to Council Strategy relating to the working lives of carers. It enables them to come together, share experiences, opportunities and knowledge, offer mutual support and discuss issues that are important to them. It encourages Carers to have their voice heard and to deliver the changes and actions set out in the Carers Strategy.

1 Constitution

The Carers Steering Group is co produced group made up of Carers, SBC, NHS, Co-Production Network and other partners. It is Co-Chaired by an SBC officer and a Carer (elected through due process) to co-own the Carers Action Plan ensuring it is delivered in a timely way within the 3 year period set out in the Carers Strategy 2023/26.

2 Constitution overall purpose

- To support, enable and empower anyone who self-identifies as an Adult Carer over 18 years of age.

- To enable Carers to have a strong voice to feel that they are part of and have a vital role to play in shaping and delivering the Carers Action Plan.
- To own the Carers Strategy holding all to account for its delivery and at the same time contributing to its delivery.
- To assist in formulating new and reviewing existing strategies for carers to ensure these represent the needs of those carers in Slough
- To ensure any offer carers is fair and as inclusive as possible.
- To assist the SBC in meeting its statutory obligations to Carers under its duties.
- Opportunity to update each other on local and national policy and developments affecting carers so matters can be addressed.

3 Key Roles and Functions

- Overall to deliver on the Carers Strategy 2023-26 and embedded Carers Action Plan and any future plans to support carers.
- To work with SBC and partners to raise the profile of adult carers.
- To identify new carers in Slough to ensure they have access to information and advice to support them in their caring role.
- To raise awareness and understanding about the needs of all carers within Slough's diverse community making no assumptions.
- To adopt a co-productive approach ensuring carers are equal partners, valued, listened to and have a stronger voice.
- To make decisions together about influencing local services and making those changes happen.
- Work with and engage the wider community on a range of issues relevant to carers.
- Support task and finish groups as required to help deliver the Carers Action Plan.
- To develop effective innovative ways of engaging with carers beyond the current arrangements.
- To listen carefully to what carers are telling us and act on this.
- To ensure parity in what is on offer to carers and address any inequalities.
- To influence local and national strategy making and monitor existing policies to ensure that the perspective and experience of different carers/carer groups are proactively considered.
- To provide an informal support to carers, through the development of virtual networks and meetings, where issues can be openly discussed.
- To promote opportunities to reduce social isolation for carers.
- To connect and provide information on carers via a range of media not forgetting older carers would prefer options that are more accessible to them e.g not digital only.
- monitor overall spend on carers.
- to oversee the service quality of providers delivering carers support in Slough
- provide and disseminate information relating to carers.
- set the agenda for continuous improvement.
- act as one method for consultation on relevant.

4 Membership

Membership is open to adult carers and defined partner organisations who work closely with the council in delivering the adult carer offer. Membership is renewed annually. The leadership for the group should be refreshed every 3 years to enable other adult carers to Co-Chair.

As members of the Carers Steering Group we will always consider our behaviour...

- Always respect different opinions and ideas and make sure everyone has the chance to speak.
- Always be kind to others and thoughtful in our actions.
- Actively listen and ensure the language used is inclusive avoiding making any assumptions.
- Work as part of a team to deliver changes for carers and learn from the group.
- Strive to ensure engagement, participation, co-design and co-production in all that we do.
- Use our experience to help find solutions.
- Represent the views and experiences of carers in the community
- Maintain confidentiality, seek permissions/consent e.g ensure data protection at all times.

In line with.....

The Nolan Principals of Public Life

Selflessness - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Membership

Organisation	Name
SBC Lead Commissioner Older People & Carers (Co-Chair)	Vanessa Pugh
Co-Chair (Carer)	
Co-Production Lead	Bestina Bukori
Co-Production Volunteer	
Integration Lead -Frimley ICB	Mike Woolridge
Health Watch Slough	
Public Health	Leidon
Age UK	
Community Hubs	
Operational Lead (Carers)	Niel Niehorster
Memory Clinic	
Special Voices	
Community Transport	
Alzheimer's Dementia Support	
Alzheimer's Society	
Slough CVS	
Carers Leads	
Katie Humphrey	Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Pushpa Kharbanda	Asian Carers

5 Reporting Arrangements (to be agreed)

The Carers Steering Group will report to the Directorate Leadership Team quarterly and is currently Chaired by Diana Balsom (Interim Carers and Prevention Commissioner).

6 Frequency of Meetings

The Carers Steering Group will meet on a quarterly basis. One of the meetings will be an Annual General Meeting to undertake several actions:

- Agree and elect Co Chairs (every 3 years)
- Review the progress with the Carers Action Plan
- Review the Carers Strategy (every 3 years unless major changes in statute)
- Review Terms of Reference
- Present the annual report from the Co-Chairs.

7 Minutes and Agendas

- The agenda and supporting papers will be circulated at least working five days prior to the Carers Steering Group.
- Agenda items will be agreed by the Co-Chairs but can be submitted from all participants.
- Minutes will be taken of the meetings. Minutes and an action tracker will be circulated to members within five working days of the meeting. The tracker will mirror the actions set out in the Carers Action Plan.

8 Review

The Carers Steering Group Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.

9 Quorum

In order fair and proper decisions are made it will require that two-thirds of the members of the group be present to make fully agreed decisions. Typically this is described as establishing a quorum. This means a percentage of members 65% are required to ensure they meet the threshold for a quorum. If the quorum is not reached then the meeting should not go ahead as there will be no opportunity to make any decisions. The Co-Chair/s will make the ultimate call on this.

9 Format

The Older People Steering Group will seek to meet in person. However the format of the meeting will be hybrid to ensure it is inclusive e.g to allow someone with caring responsibilities to fully participate whether the meeting is virtual or face to face.