



## INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	3 February 2026
<b>Report Title</b>	Carers Strategy Annual Report 2025 - 2026
<b>Report Number</b>	HSCP.26.005
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<b>Consultation Checklist Completed</b>	Yes
<b>Directions Required</b>	No
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Appendices</b>	A – Carers Strategy 2023 – 2026 Action Plan B – Carers Strategy 2025 – 2026 Annual Report
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	2 - Any function or remit delegated under the Aberdeen City Integration Scheme, which is bound to be undertaken by the JB itself

### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the final Annual Report for the Carers Strategy 2023-2026 and to present the new Carers Strategy 2026-2030.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board:

a) notes the progress on the delivery of the Carers Strategy 2023-2026

### 3. Strategic Plan Context



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- 3.1.** The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 places a duty on Local Authorities and Health Boards to prepare and publish a local Carer Strategy. This duty is delegated to Integration Joint Boards under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Prescribed Local Authority Functions etc.) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2017 and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Prescribed Health Board Functions) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017. The development and delivery of the Carers Strategy is a specific action identified within our ACHSCP Strategic Plan 2025-2029 under the aim of modernising our approach to service delivery and the priority of making best use of our resources.

### **4. Summary of Key Information**

- 4.1.** On 31 January 2023 the Integration Joint Board (JB) approved our local Carers Strategy 2023 – 2026. Our strategy is for both adult and young carers and has four priorities:

Identifying as a carer and the first steps to support  
Accessing advice and support  
Supporting future planning, decision making and wider carer involvement  
Community support and services for carers

- 4.2.** This report is the final annual update for the current Carers Strategy and provides a summary of the work carried out over the past 12 months. This includes the latest updates to the Carers Strategy Action Plan (Appendix A), the significant increase in the number of Carers supported across the City, and details on the improvement projects used to support Carers in our local communities.

The Carers Strategy Annual Report for 2025 – 2026 can be found at Appendix B

- 4.3.** Key highlights from the annual report includes;
- Number of carers supported over the Carers Strategy period, services have seen significant increase.
  - Multiple improvement projects from the Carers Strategy Improvement Group and the expansion of support and break options to Carers.
  - Successful co-production of key elements of the refreshed Carers Strategy 2026 -2029 with all stakeholders.



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### 5. Implications for IJB

#### 5.1. Equalities, Fairer Scotland and Health Inequality

Our local Carers Strategy aims to enhance equality of opportunity for all carers. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 provides a definition of a carer and this is someone who provides or intends to provide care for another individual. An adult carer is defined as a carer who is at least 18 years old but is not a young carer. A young carer is defined as a carer who is under 18 years old or has attained the age of 18 years while a pupil at a school, and has since attaining that age remained a pupil at that or another school. The definition of a carer excludes paid carers, for example those working for a care agency, and volunteers. For this reason, the carers to whom the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 refers are often referred to as 'unpaid carers' to provide this distinction.

Ensuring that all unpaid carers have access to support is a central theme of our strategy. The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) carried out for the Carers Strategy can be found [here](#). Ongoing engagement and the development of our Carers Reference Group is required to ensure that all carers are aware of their rights within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and that local supports and services are developed with the needs of all carers in mind. The Carers Strategy Implementation Group (CSIG) works alongside members of the Equality and Human Rights sub-group to continue to develop our understanding of the needs of all communities in Aberdeen and specific actions on developing approaches to engaging with both minority ethnic communities and LGBTQ+ communities are included within the Carers Strategy action plan.

#### 5.2. Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

The ACHSCP budget for Carers in 2024 was £1,786,419 which is provided by the Scottish Government. This budget includes provision of social care services provided via our adult social work teams where these provide breaks to the carer as well as our specific carer support services. The actions outlined within the Carers Strategy action plan are delivered within



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the existing resource envelope and through additional, applied for, funding streams where available.

### 5.3. Workforce

The Carers Strategy is delivered by the Carers Strategy Implementation Group (CSIG) which includes our key workforce members, partnership organisations, unpaid carers representatives and the wider community. Members of ACHSCP, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, independent and third sector workforces were engaged with in development and delivery of our strategies. Several recommendations are included within our Carers Strategy with the aim of improving the knowledge of all members of our workforce on the rights of carers and appropriate routes to support. It is recognised that members of our workforce may be unpaid carers themselves and CSIG continue to link in with the work of the ACHSCP Workforce Plan to support them.

### 5.4. Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Having our Carers Strategy in place meets the legal obligations on the IJB within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

### 5.5. Unpaid Carers

The development and delivery of our Carers Strategy is focused on improving experiences of unpaid carers. Our Carers Strategy action plan and annual report represents our progress over the past 12 months and the new Strategy provides a look ahead over the coming years detailing what our priorities are moving forward. Unpaid carers will continue to be fully involved in the planning and delivery of services designed to support them.

### 5.6. Information Governance

There are no direct information governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. All photographs and case studies have been verified and consent given prior to sharing.



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### 5.7. Environmental Impacts

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

### 5.8. Sustainability

There are no direct sustainability implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 6. Management of Risk

### 6.1. Identified risks(s)

Supporting Carers is an important element of our approach to prevention in our Strategic Plan 2025-2029. By supporting carers to continue caring we will support the wider population to live well for longer at home and help reduce the demand on other Health and Social Care services, for example, unplanned hospital admissions. There is a risk that if we do not continue to have a robust Carers Strategy, the voices of unpaid carers will not be heard, and services designed to support them will not meet their needs. There is also a risk that the IJB fails to meet its obligations within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

### 6.2. Link to risks on strategic or operational risk register:

This report links to the following risks identified in the Risk Register:

Risk 4 -

Cause: Performance standards/outcomes are set by national and regulatory bodies and those locally-determined performance standards are set by the board itself.

Event: There is a risk that the IJB, and the services that it directs and has operational oversight of, fails to meet the national, regulatory and local standards.

Consequence: This may result in harm or risk of harm to people\_.



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Risk 6 -

Cause: Need to involve lived experience in service delivery and design as per Integration Principles

Event: IJB fails to maximise the opportunities created for engaging with our communities

Consequence: Services are not tailored to individual needs; reputational damage; and IJB does not meet strategic aims

### **6.3 How might the content of this report impact or mitigate the known risks:**

This report is the final annual report on the Carers Strategy 2023 – 2026 and presents the new Carers Strategy 2026 - 2030. The delivery of our Carers Strategy and action plan helps directly mitigate these risks. We continue to refine our approach in developing carers support services and improving the experience of unpaid carers across Aberdeen City.