

Supporting Carers

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Cllr Atkinson will update the Community Wellbeing Board on her work undertaken as part of the Carers in Employment Task and Finish Group.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. **note** the update from Cllr Atkinson on her work as part of the Carers in Employment Task and Finish Group; and
2. **suggest** ways in which the LGA can assist with the recommendation as outlined in **paragraph 3** below.

Action

As directed by Members.

Contact officer:

Emma Jenkins

Position:

Senior Adviser

Phone no:

020 7664 3046

E-mail:

emma.jenkins@local.gov.uk

Supporting Carers

Background

1. The UK has three million working carers, many of whom are struggling to combine work with their caring responsibilities. One in five carers give up work to care full time and the difficulties of balancing work and caring may be a contributing factor. Most carers fall into the 45-64 age bracket so businesses can lose experienced staff at the peak of their careers. With the number of carers in the UK set to grow from 6.5 million to 9 million in the next 30 years, ensuring that carers are supported to stay in the workplace is an increasingly significant issue.

Carers in Employment Task and Finish Group

2. As a portfolio holder for Workforce and Carers for the Board, Cllr Elaine Atkinson has been attending the Carers in Employment Task and Finish Group on behalf of the LGA.
3. Co-chaired by the Department of Health and British Telecoms, the Task Group aimed to gather, examine, and present the evidence on the overall social and economic case for interventions which support carers to combine work and care, with a particular focus on the employer and employee benefits.
4. The Task Group also looked at how the care market can grow and support carers to combine work and care through increased availability of technology in the mainstream consumer market. It sought to develop the business and economic growth case for employers, as well as the potential of workplace support to enable carers to combine work and care. The group contains representatives from Government, the statutory sector and businesses.
5. The Task Group's final report is currently being finalised ahead of a launch later this summer. The report will be aimed at a number of audiences including employers, service providers, local and national government, the voluntary sector - including carers' organisations - and other policy makers.
6. Community Wellbeing Board Lead members recently gave their support to a recommendation from the Task Group as follows:

'LGA and ADASS should encourage effective joint working between Local Authorities and Care Providers, and the sharing of best practice on how they can work with Local Enterprise Partnerships, (LEPS), Health and Wellbeing Boards, Chambers of Commerce, local Business and other stakeholders in their area to support carers to remain in employment'
7. Cllr Atkinson will give a verbal update on the work of the Task Group at the Board meeting.