

Community Partnership Group

Carers

Terms of Reference

'Carer' means an adult, who provides, has provided, or intends to provide care for a person of 16 years and over, who is in need of care.

A **'young Carer'** is someone under 18 years who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.

Purpose

The role of the Carers' Partnership Group (CPG) is to act as a critical friend. Assisting in the development, co-ordination and monitoring of services and support delivered to Carers across Central Bedfordshire.

Key Responsibilities

To include:

1. Monitoring the impact of local and national legislation on Carers' services.
2. Reviewing and supporting delivery of the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Carers Strategy. See link below:

https://centralbedfordshirecouncil.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/Communications/Ed_Lryt0UMNGkoq2rOznUkEBAulpkaOhtBT3zF4yHKMZWA?e=tE7pLX

3. Acting as a voice for Carers in wider forums and ensuring Carers' views are communicated effectively.
4. Promoting inclusion of under-represented groups.
5. Evaluating commissioned services and providing constructive feedback.

6. Ensuring Carers receive clear outcomes from their engagement.

7. Working collaboratively with the Autism and Learning Disabilities Boards to identify shared issues and develop solutions.

Board members

1. The Carers' Partnership Group will comprise:
 - a. Full members who attend and participate fully in board meetings.
 - b. At least 50% will be Carer Representatives.
 - c. Representatives from appropriate voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE).
 - d. Appropriate Statutory Services representatives (by invitation).

2. Members will remain on the Carers Partnership Group for a term of two years. The CPG will review membership on an annual basis; however, members will be removed from the Board after three consecutively missed meetings without notification.

3. The Carers Partnership Group values the lived experience of all Carers, recognising that insight gained through caring remains relevant beyond the period of active caring. Therefore, both current and former Carers are eligible to hold a substantive position on the Board, ensuring that a broad range of perspectives informs the Group's decision-making.

Chair

1. The CPG will agree on a Chair and Vice-Chair made up of Carer representatives who have put themselves forward to participate.

2. The role of the Chair is to facilitate the smooth running of meetings and ensure that the views of all members are listened to and given due consideration.

3. The Vice-Chair supports the Chair in their duties and stands in when the Chair is unavailable. The Vice-Chair helps ensure meetings run smoothly and encourages participation from all members.

Carer Representatives

1. Individual carers who are currently providing care or have previously cared for someone aged 16 or over, are invited to attend as '*experts by experience*'. Carers bring their own awareness of relevant issues. They may have links with local Carer networks, but they are not invited as formal representatives of these networks.
2. Representatives from organisations that work with Carers and represent their views are also invited to attend as Carer representatives.

Voluntary and Community Sector and Statutory Service Representatives

1. Are expected to attend CPG meetings on invitation and participate fully. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they should send notification at the earliest opportunity and if possible, arrange for a substitute to attend on their behalf.
2. These members are required to take responsibility and use their networks and links to Carers to support voice and consultation activities when required.
3. Representatives of Central Bedfordshire Council will be expected to follow up on issues and queries raised and provide feedback to the CPG.

Prospective new members

Any member of the CPG can introduce a prospective new member by putting them in touch with the CPG Lead at HWCB. They will then meet with the Chair and HWCB CPG Lead who will give an overview of the work of the CPG.

Frequency and Agendas

1. The initial launch meeting will take place before the end of November 2025. Two further meetings are planned for 2026, provisionally scheduled for April and September.
2. Extraordinary meetings can be called by any of the group members, in consultation with all other members with agreement by the Chair.

3. The agenda is usually set well in advance.
4. Any member of the group may suggest future agenda items.
5. Agendas will be sent out to members at least 2 weeks before each meeting.

Reporting/Governance

1. The CPG will report information back to CBC after each CPG meeting in addition to an annual report demonstrating service delivery achievements over a 12-month period.
2. The CPG will not discuss any matters relating to individuals under the age of 16 who are receiving care. Any such information will be referred to the appropriate personnel within Children's Services, and any subsequent response will be communicated back to the relevant CPG members.
3. The CPG will feedback on, and report to its members, on any local and national initiatives affecting Carers.

Communications

1. There will be a single point of contact for the CPG: Victoria Bloxham, HWCB Engagement & Volunteer Officer & CPG Lead. Telephone 0300 3038554/ Email: info@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk
2. Minutes of meetings can be found on the HWCB website once they have been approved.
3. Members will be asked how they wish to receive all communications – by email or post.
4. Members will be asked if they have any additional support needs to enable them to participate fully in meetings.

Lifespan of the Terms of Reference

1. The CPG will review the Terms of Reference annually unless an incident occurs that requires the terms to be reviewed sooner.
2. These terms of reference were agreed on 29th October 2025
3. The CPG plans to review them again 16th September 2026