



Tuesday 31 January 2017

Dear Carer

**RE: DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD FOR HEREFORDSHIRE'S CARERS – HAVE YOUR SAY**

To help us urgently to make the best case for proper funding for Carer support, please contact us to tell us specifically how Herefordshire Carers Support helps you so we can pass this on to decision makers.

- You know best how over the years Herefordshire Carers Support has worked to provide a genuine support centre for every Carer who needs and wants help and you know then what difference it will make for this to be cut in half.
- You know how hard it is to take the initial step to say you are a Carer and seek help, a step that skilled staff can support.
- You know the complications of being a Carer, navigating the health and care system, trying to keep yourself well and sane, as well as doing everything else you must - and how priceless is the opportunity to meet and share with others who've been there and who have a genuine expertise to help with everything. You will know the value of having someone who will listen to and focus on your needs and wants. The importance of regular contact, information, finance and legal advice.
- You also know how Carers are probably the most time- and resource-strapped people in society, making it very hard for them to prioritise themselves and to do anything like the self-help and volunteering the Council is assuming can happen.

Some of you who are very eagle-eyed may have seen a notice that the Council put on their [website](#) on Thursday 18 January (with no prior warning to anyone affected) that they are making major cuts to services for Carers for the 2017/2018 year that begins on 1 April 2017.

The effect of this for Herefordshire Carers Support is that **the Council intends to cut our funding by half** from £275,000 to £137,000 for the coming year. And worse, they say future years will see even more reductions, with **the Council expecting Carers to replace this support with self-help, self-management and volunteering.**

The board of trustees of Herefordshire Carers Support has been planning for nearly 12 months how to tackle what we always realised would be a difficult year. From the end of March 2017, the existing agreement for our funding expires and we knew money would inevitably reduce.

However, we did not expect such a huge cut and we thought we would know what would happen a lot sooner than this. Whatever action we take now, just a few weeks from the year end, this level of cut will mean redundancies among our talented, dedicated and loyal staff which we bitterly regret.

But more importantly, this new situation will have the most impact on you, the unpaid Carers across Herefordshire who are currently working hard to support those you care for and thereby saving huge sums for local and national government, especially in preventing the deterioration and hospitalisation of those you care for.

Of course you may prefer to make your views known by other routes and if you want any information to help you to do this, we are still here so do please get in touch.

To have your say please email [help@herefordshirecarerssupport.org](mailto:help@herefordshirecarerssupport.org) or call 01432 356068. More information is available on the [Herefordshire Carers Support website](http://www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org).

Yours sincerely

Sheila Marsh, Chair of trustees and Jacqui Bremner, Director



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