**Eligibility Criteria Consultation with carers 17th January 2024**

Carers Panel members (and an extended group of carers – 27 in total) attended an engagement event at Cockenzie House with ELHSCP and CoEL. The purpose of this event was to consult on the eligibility criteria for carer support in EL. Maria Burton and Gemma Twells-Davison co-chaired the event and asked carers to share their experiences of care to inform the re-development of the table of indicators that form part of the eligibility criteria.

ELHSCP have a duty to provide advice, information and support and have contracts in place with Carers of East Lothian and the Young Carers service to meet this duty and offer support that is early enough and preventative in nature.

In addition to this preventative work, there are other, more formal supports, not open to everyone due to resources that require carers to have an agreed personal budget. That is why carers are assessed against an eligibility criteria to ensure that support is given to those where the impact of caring is greatest.

When the Carers Act became law in 2018 each Local Authority area had a duty to publish carers eligibility criteria which they developed in consultation with carers. The statutory guidance that was published to support the Act includes a table of indicators that has been adopted in most areas across Scotland. When these were introduced in 2018 carers and carers representatives adopted these in East Lothian.

The conversations at the event sought real examples from carers of how caring has impacted lives, with the aim of improving how the indicators are applied in order to help workers to make more consistent and equitable decisions.

Carers were asked to think about how caring has impacted their:

· Physical and mental health

· Relationships

· Life Balance

· Finances

· Future planning

· Employment and education

· Home environment

Maria Burton agreed to keep carers informed of how this piece of work develops and report back to the Carers Panel.