

ITEM No ...5...

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT ON: CARERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2016 AND YOUNG CARERS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 296 - 2019

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides a progress update of the Council's response to Young Carers as outlined in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. In particular, it details the initial positive impact following the introduction of A Caring Dundee: A Strategic Plan for Supporting Carers in Dundee 2017-2020 and an accompanying Young Carers Statement and Framework, which includes Eligibility Criteria and Eligibility Thresholds (Article V of the Minute of meeting of this committee held on 10 September 2018 – report no 286-2018 refers).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that members:

- i. note the progress, success and impact to date
- ii. instructs the Executive Director of Children and Families Service to provide a further update report on the implementation of the Act in 12 months.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Funding for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 has been provided nationally as part of the additional £66m investment in social care by the Scottish Government which was included in the 2018-19 local government finance settlement. Dundee City Council has ear-marked £395,000 for Young Carers from its total additional allocation.

4.0 CARERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2016

4.1. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into force on 1st April 2018. The Act imposed new legal duties on Local Authorities and Health Boards in relation to Young and Adult Carers respectively. The Act defines a Carer as anyone who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person. It also notes that carers can be any age and may be parents, spouses, grandparents, daughters, brothers, same sex partners, friends or neighbours of the person being cared for.

4.2 The Act requires both Young and Adult Carers to be better identified and supported on a more consistent basis so that they can continue to care for others, if they so wish, whilst remaining in good health and leading their own independent lives. In respect of Young Carers, the intention is that they should experience a childhood similar to their non-carer peers and have access to support. This is consistent with Getting it Right for Every Child, which also promotes coordinated additional support for some children and young people.

4.3 LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

In Dundee, a positive response to the legislation is outlined in A Caring Dundee: A Strategic Plan for Supporting Carers in Dundee 2017-2020. This plan has been developed jointly by the Children and Families Service, Health and Social Care Partnership, Third Sector and Carers, who have committed to a shared vision to achieve: '*A Caring Dundee in which all Carers feel listened to, valued and supported so that they feel well and are able to live a life alongside caring*'. Based on what Carers said, the plan outlines 4 outcomes:

- I am identified, respected and involved
- I have had a positive caring experience
- I can live a fulfilled and healthy life
- I can balance the caring role with my life

4.4 DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Over the last 12 months, the Dundee Carers Strategic Partnership, consisting of representatives of both Adult and Young Carers, has continued to coordinate the implementation of the Act. The Young Carers Subgroup, Co-Chaired by the Council Children & Families Service and Dundee Carers Centre, also continues. Current membership includes Young Carers Voice, Learning and Organisational Development, School Nursing Service, Discover Work, Dundee and Angus College and Skills Development Scotland.

- 4.5 There has been an emphasis on co-production as the sub-group has continued to work with Young Carers to explore the best methods of identification. A range of resources have been developed, including posters and leaflets developed jointly by Education Managers and Young Carers to highlight policies and how Young Carers can self-identify and access support. Other measures to raise awareness include noticeboards, peer-led workshops during health drop-in sessions and Personal and Social Education (PSE) resources for use in S1-4 guidance classes.
- 4.6 In addition, every Primary and Secondary School now has a designated Young Carer Co-ordinator and the Carers Centre has named a key worker for every school. Young Carers can access informal support through these workers, details of whom are publicised within the schools. To help transitions, which can prove to be problematic for some pupils, a test of change on information sharing involving some Primary and Secondary Schools has also been introduced and will be extended across the city.
- 4.7 As a result, the number of Young Carers identified and receiving support has increased from 65 in September 2018 to 208 in August 2019; the number of Young Carers receiving short-breaks increased from 41 in 2017-18 to 59 in 2018-19; and the attendance and engagement of Young Carers in S1 in the test schools has improved. Examples of short-breaks, which provide Young Carers with opportunities they might not otherwise receive if they had not been identified or if services had not been developed, include:
- cinema trips
 - visits to Olympia
 - the purchase of musical instruments such as keyboards and guitars
 - books to enable young carers to participate in lessons
 - equipment to help them participate in hobbies, such as hobby craft vouchers
 - attending events such as the school prom
- 4.8 Other approaches towards involving and supporting Young Carers include a Young Carers Voice Group of 14-18 year olds. This group were invited to attend the Youth Scotland Big Skills weekend at University of Stirling in June 2019 and took a lead in the First Minister's launch of the national Young Carers benefits through YoungScot. In schools, Young Carers can also become Ambassadors to be involved in planning, awareness raising, training and support. There are currently 11 Young Carer Ambassadors in 6 of our 8 secondary schools.
- 4.9 Once identified, an assessment is coordinated by a Lead Professional and where it is jointly considered as necessary a 'Young Carers Statement' will outline the nature of additional support. Where necessary, this will also include arrangements for contingencies and emergencies. Where any assessment indicates any concerns about a risk of harm to a child, they will be responded to under existing Child Protection Guidance and Procedures. A Lead Professional will always complete the statement with the child or young person.
- 4.10 To ensure that Young Carers inform how a Statement is developed, the subgroup undertook a test of change with Young Carers in early 2019. This involved 8 young people from Primary and Secondary Schools, with support from the Carers Centre and the involvement of a Lead Professional, Coordinators in the schools and relevant family members. The test involved Young Carers attending their own Statement planning meetings in order to inform agreed supports and has been noted as a good practice example nationally.

- 4.11 On the basis of this test, a Young Carers Statement Workbook has been co-produced as a tool to assist all those taking part in the process. Almost everybody involved agreed that preparing the Workbook, which includes guidance on the importance of having a meeting to discuss the Young Carers views, was beneficial to both the young person and school. This approach is therefore also being rolled out across all schools to ensure Young Carers receive consistent support across the city.
- 4.12 In terms of the impact of these various activities, it is clear that they have firstly led to the increased identification and support of Young Carers. They are aiding transitions from Primary to Secondary School and assisting Young Carers to address barriers to their health and wellbeing, fully engage in education and achieve their potential. To illustrate this, Appendix 1 details a Locality Case Study and Young Carers Voice members have also said:

“I have enjoyed it (support). I have enjoyed that it’s a 1-1 and don’t have to speak about things in front of everyone else. It’s helpful because I don’t need to keep everything bottled up. My behaviour has got better since 1-1’s so I’m not getting moaned at so that’s better – for me and for Mum.”

“Being part of the Dundee Carers Centre has allowed me the opportunity to help other young carers in Dundee, it has helped me to understand my own role as a young carer and has helped me to build up my confidence and mental health. I have grown amazing relationships with staff and young carers within the centre and it has become like a second home.”

“[I got involved because] I wanted to change other young carers lives. And I wanted to make a difference to my community.”

5.0 GOING FORWARDS

- 5.1 Going forwards, the Carers Strategic Partnership will continue to coordinate the implementation of the Act and related developments. Priorities include consistently embedding practice to enable Young Carers to access support, developing transition work with D&A College including through a Young Carer Group and Carer Ambassadors and identifying Young Carer Champions in Children & Families Social Work teams to work alongside Young Carer Coordinators in schools.
- 5.2 Whilst the duty to implement the Act has been delegated to the Integration Joint Board (IJB), the IJB will continue to work in partnership with Children and Families Service and others involved in the delivery of services to Young Carers. As such, Elected Members will continue to have oversight of developments, including the impact of the Act on known numbers of Young Carers, associated resource implications and the capacity of services to meet their differing needs.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. There are no major issues.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

Baldragon Academy Young Carers Case Study

- A dedicated Development Worker (Young Carers) based one day per week in the school's Guidance Team base with a caseload of young carers from Baldragon and feeder primary schools
- Partnership agreement in place with named workers from Dundee Carers Centre and Baldragon, reviewed at regular intervals
- Partnership agreement covers planned outcomes, responsibilities, resources, accountability, reporting procedures and practical areas such as child protection, first aid and insurance
- Development Worker jointly delivers a young carers group with Young Carer Co-ordinators
- Transition programme was delivered during the Summer of 2018 (external funding secured by Dundee Carers from local trust) jointly by Carers Centre & Young Carer Co-ordinators
- Development Worker has worked closely with Young Carers Co-ordinators and Guidance Team to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence in identifying and supporting young carers including providing support to Health Drop-Ins & PSE programme
- First school to have a pupil in a Young Carer Ambassador Role (with two currently undergoing recruitment and training) who is supporting the Centre & school staff promote young carer awareness and support in the school and takes part in the Young Carers Voice group.

Key Impacts

- Increase of young carers known by the Carers Centre at Baldragon from **2** in Nov 2016 to **34** as of June 2018 (By June 2019 this is now **64** young carers)
- **29** young carers have received 1:1 support or accessed informal drop in support
- Establishment of fortnightly support group in Baldragon with a regular attendance of 10 young carers, run jointly by Carers Centre & School staff and supported by Young Carer Ambassador
- Group numbers are expected to rise to 20 by the end of the year based on the increased number of identified young carers in the school
- School staff report improved attendance of young carers who have been identified, in particular 2 of the 10 accessing group support show marked improvement in attendance as a result of support
- School staff report improved behaviour and confidence of young carers who have been identified and that young carers are more regularly approaching school staff for support than previously
- Staff observe that the group has increased the confidence of young carers which is observed in class and general social situations out with the group
- School Staff report improved relationships with families through summer programme and involvement in the group and this has led to significant improvement in ongoing engagement between staff, young carers and their parents and families which has meant that support can be put in place more quickly and at an earlier stage
- Through participation in this test of change, School Staff have reported improved knowledge of barriers to learning for young carers and have the knowledge, skills, resources and partnerships in place to increase pupil's confidence, behaviour, and in turn, their ability and readiness to learn in school. This means that pupils are better supported to attain, and that equity has been increased