

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMISSIONING GROUP

8th MAY 2018

REPORT OF THE INTEGRATED STRATEGY AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

YOUNG CARERS' SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

1. SUMMARY

In 2014, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) commissioned Eastern Ravens Trust (ERT) to deliver a young carers service for Stockton. The contract was initially for 3 years until 30th September 2017 with an option to extend for 12 months up to 30th September 2018. A review of the service took place in June 2017 and the option to extend was instigated. The total value of the contract is £420,492 (i.e. £105,123 per annum).

Options for the future delivery of the Young Carers' Service (hereinafter referred to as 'the Service') need to be agreed so that a new service is in place by 1st October 2018.

This report reviews the current service and outlines options for future delivery. The Commissioning Group is asked to identify a preferred option in order to allow sufficient time for further detailed work to be undertaken and approved as required.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commissioning Group is recommended to:

- Note the review of the current Service and the options outlined below for the delivery of the Young Carers' Service; and
- Approve Option 3 as the preferred model for service delivery.

3. BACKGROUND

The 2011 UK Census information estimated that there are 177,918 young carers under 18 years of age in the UK as a whole and 1,478 young people under 25 providing unpaid care across the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, with 344 of these young people under 15 years of age.

However, in 2010, the BBC, in partnership with Nottingham University, carried out a survey which estimated that there could be upwards of 700,000 young carers nationally (1.1% of the population). On this basis, there could be upwards of 2,100 young carers under 18 in Stockton-on-Tees.

As at 1st April 2018, there are 152 young carers being supported by the young carers' service in Stockton-on-Tees.

Although caring can be a positive experience for young people, providing them with valuable life skills, young carers can encounter specific problems, for example, 68% of young carers report that they are bullied at school. It is widely recognised that young carers are at risk of poor health and well-being, and their caring role can impact on their emotional and social development and on their education. For example, a report published by the Children's Society in 2013 noted that around 1 in 20 of young carers miss school because of caring responsibilities and many have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level.

Our statutory duties relating to young carers arise predominantly from the Children and Families Act 2014 which makes insertions into the Children's Act 1989. The Care Act 2014 largely focuses on adult carers but is relevant to young carers who are in transition to adulthood. The requirements of the legislation are discussed further below.

The National Carers' Strategy identifies several outcomes and priorities of relevance to young carers, and also has a range of national policy and guidance around it which specifically identify young carers as a group of people needing support.

The legislative framework is reflected at a local level, for example, in the aims set out in the Council Plan 2017-2020, in terms of both supporting Carers and achieving better health outcomes and community cohesion.

A new Government Action Plan for Carers is expected to be published in the next few weeks and it is anticipated that the Government's Green Paper on care and support for older people will be published in the summer. The delivery model for young carers will need to be flexible and sustainable to take into account any relevant changes and respond as services continue to develop.

4. SERVICES REQUIRED FOR YOUNG CARERS

The Children and Families Act 2014 defines a young carer as "an individual under 18, who provides or intends to provide care for another person". This care can include physical and emotional care, personal care or practical support to a parent, sibling, grandparent, friend etc. The responsibilities of young carers persist over time, and are beyond the occasional help that young people may provide as part of a family. There is no threshold of care and no requirement that a young carer is the primary carer.

4.1 Identification of Carers and Provision of Information and Advice

Under the legislation, local authorities have a legal duty to take "reasonable steps" to identify young carers in their area who have support needs and to provide information and advice. In order to identify carers, local authorities need to work closely with partners in the NHS and schools in particular and signpost carers to other services as appropriate.

Identification of a young carer in the family should result in an offer of a needs assessment for the adult requiring care and support and, where appropriate, the local authority must consider whether the child or young carer should be referred for a young carer's assessment under the Children Act 1989, or a young carers' assessment under section 63 of the Care Act.

4.2 No Wrong Doors Approach

One of the key principles around the legislative framework is that there should be a 'no wrong doors' approach. This ensures that young carers are not turned away and do not have to provide information on numerous occasions. This is reinforced by a memorandum of understanding developed by ADASS and ADCS which commits departments to work together locally.

In practice this means that there needs to be clarity around how to access the service, for carers and their families and also for professionals who may be referring young carers into the service. There also needs to be clarity within the local authority so that, for example, social workers are aware of the service and how to refer into it.

4.3 The Right to an Assessment

An important principle of the legislation is that all young carers under the age of 18 have a right to an assessment regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it. Although an assessment can be requested by a child, young person, parent, etc, a young carer has the right to an assessment based on the appearance of need. An assessment should not be delayed until the young carer is struggling or has needs related to their caring role.

A central requirement of the legislation is that local authorities must adopt a whole family approach, taking a holistic view of the person's needs in the context of their wider support network in order to maximise the impact of resources.

Caring responsibilities should be considered to be 'inappropriate' if they involve anything which is likely to have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing or education, or which can be considered unsuitable in the light of the child's circumstances. The local authority must ask the young carer and their parent for their views during the assessment, and specifically address whether the young person wants to continue caring. On the basis of the assessment a support plan must be developed.

Local authorities should ensure that adults' and children's care and support services work together to ensure the assessment is effective.

4.4 Young Carers in Transition

The Care Act requires local authorities to carry out assessments for young carers who are approaching their 18th birthdays. A transition assessment must be carried out where the local authority considers the young carer is likely to have care and support needs after the young person turns 18 and there is 'significant benefit' to the young carer if an assessment is made. Young carers are entitled to an assessment even where the individual cared for does not receive care and support services.

Transition assessments and planning must consider how to support young carers to prepare for adulthood and how to raise and fulfil their aspirations. Young carers' assessments should include an indication of how any care and support plan for the person they care for would change as a result of the young carer's change in circumstances e.g. if a young carer has an opportunity to go to university away from home, the local authority should indicate how it would meet the eligible needs of any family members that were previously being met by the young carer. Close working between adult carers' services and young carers' services are required to support successful transition.

4.5 Respite

There is no specific provision in the legislation relating to respite, although there is a general requirement to provide support and to have regard to the health and wellbeing of young carers.

5. THE CURRENT YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT SERVICE

In 2014, SBC and CCG commissioned Eastern Ravens Trust to deliver a young carers service for Stockton-on-Tees for a 3 year period until 30th September 2017 with an option to extend for 12 months up to 1st October 2018. ERT is an established local charity which has provided the Young Carers' Service since April 2000.

Since 2014 the Service has been located in North Shore Community Zone, partly because it has outdoor space and sports facilities which are valuable resources in the delivery of the Service.

5.1 Identification of Young Carers

In accordance with the legislation, the service specification defines young carers as children and young people under the age of 18 who provide regular and on-going care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill or who is disabled or misuses substances.

In 2017/18, 308 young carers in total were supported by the Service. The table below illustrates the number of children and young people accessing the service in the last two quarters:

		Oct.-Dec. 2017	Jan.- Mar. 2018
Number of children/young people being supported by the service		191	190
Number of new referrals		22	47
Age of new referrals	5-10 years	7	26
	11-18 years	15	21
	18+ years	0	0
Gender (of new referrals)	Male	4	16
	Female	18	29
Carers status	Primary carer	21	25
	Secondary carer	170	165

ERT recognises the importance and challenges of identifying hidden young carers and, in accordance with the requirements of the service specification, works to raise awareness and build relationships across communities to increase early identification.

Of 69 new referrals into the service from October 2017-March 2018, the referral sources were as follows:

Referral source	Number of referrals	Percentage
Children's social worker	24	34.8
School/educational establishment	16	23.2
Self-referral	13	18.8

Referral source	Number of referrals	Percentage
Early Help Team	7	10.1
GP/health professional	4	5.8
Adult social worker	2	2.9
Other	3	4.4

The service specification requires the current provider to provide relevant, clear and timely information about young carers' services and issues at key distribution points. Efforts have been made to engage with all of the referral sources identified above, and as part of its awareness-raising activities, the Service has developed an information pack to send out to schools, healthcare professionals etc. and for use in outreach events.

Awareness-raising activities in schools are important to help young carers to identify themselves and also to inform staff about the issues. All schools in the Borough have been contacted throughout the contract and in the last quarter (January-March 2018), 16 awareness-raising sessions have been delivered to approximately 1,000 students. The sessions include class-sized 45 minute interactive workshops, small and large discussion groups and presentations in assemblies. The Service also seeks opportunities to attend meetings of governors and head teachers. Each quarter the Service monitors which schools are making referrals and targets awareness-raising activities accordingly.

ERT has been accredited to deliver the Young Carers in Schools Award which is a national scheme run through the Carers Trust and the Children's Society. The Carers Trust recently asked 72 schools in the UK which have received a Young Carers in Schools Award about the impact of implementing the programme. 89% said they had identified more young carers in their school, 94% had noticed improvements in the wellbeing and confidence of young carers, 60% had seen a positive impact in terms of achievement and 74% had noticed improved attendance. Ofsted have recognised the award and regard it as evidence of engagement with a hard to reach group. However, the Carers Trust are currently lobbying Ofsted to include a specific question about engagement with young carers in their inspections. The Service is encouraging schools in the Borough to participate. To date, two schools are interested in the scheme but none have received the award.

The Service also seeks opportunities to engage with other educational establishments, for example in February, a training session was delivered to school nurse and health visitor students the University of Teesside.

The Service attends SBC team meetings, for example, two training sessions have been arranged in May with adult social workers in Stirling House and Queensway, and a meeting has been arranged with the service manager of the 0-19 service provider.

Referrals are also received from GPs and other healthcare professionals. The Service maintains contact with all GP practices and has sent them promotional materials for display, for example, as part of the activities for Young Carers Awareness Day in January, the team visited GP practices to deliver posters, and recently attended a meeting with the GP Co-ordinators. The Service has also established relevant contacts within the CCG and has engaged with the CCG as regards the transformation plan.

The response of GP practices has been variable and the Service has identified engagement with healthcare professionals as being one the Service's priorities moving forward.

In terms of general engagement activities, the Service also attends multi-agency events with an information stand. Recent events include the Catalyst Health and Wellbeing event,

Stockton Riverside College Student Information Day, Living Beyond Cancer, and Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Partnership Event.

The Service organises activities for the annual Young Carers Awareness Day in January. This year, as well as visiting GP practices to deliver posters, the Service liaised with local MPs who wrote out to every school in the Borough to promote the identification of young carers and engagement. A family party was also organised for young carers and their families to attend free of charge and an interview was broadcast on local radio.

All of these activities take place alongside the support function, and therefore the time that can be allocated is variable. In order to maximise awareness-raising opportunities, links should continue to be developed with the Adult Carers Support Service which has been provided by SBC since 1st January. The Manager of ERT has met with the Manager of the Adult Carers' Support Service and some joint working is already underway, for example, in April both Managers had a joint meeting with the GP Coordinators to raise the profile of carers' issues. The Manager of the Young Carers' Service is also part of the steering group to plan activities for National Carers Week in June. Opportunities should be sought for joint promotion and co-ordination of attendance at events.

In addition the Online Carers' Hub, which is part of the Stockton Information Directory, has been operational since June 2017. The Online Carers' Hub brings together a range of information, advice and services primarily for adult carers, including access to a self-assessment tool and carers register. This Hub could be further developed to provide specific information for young carers. Opportunities could also be sought through the SBC Communications and Engagement Team to support the promotion of the service, e.g. the information provided for young carers on the SBC website is limited and could be further developed.

5.2 Process for Referring into the Service

The Service accepts direct referrals from young carers, family members, health professionals, and other services. As illustrated in the table above, a significant number of referrals are made by local authority teams, including Early Help, Adult Services and Children's Services but there is a lack of clarity around the referral routes and there are differences in the information supplied by different teams. For example, ERT receive referrals directly from children's social care by completing an ERT referral form whereas adult services submit referrals via the CHUB.

The Family Solutions Team Manager in Early Help has been reviewing the procedures and further work is needed in this regard.

5.3 The Assessment Process

Each new referral is allocated to a key worker at a weekly meeting, although crisis cases are allocated within 24 hours of receipt. The allocated key worker initially contacts the referrer for clarification, and then contacts the parent to make an appointment with the family.

In all cases, two assessments are completed: the young carer's assessment is completed first with the young person on their own, and if the young person is brought into the service, a whole family assessment is also completed.

Although 308 young carers' assessments were completed in 2017/18, this number does not reflect the work to engage with the wider family and to complete whole family assessments. This needs to be reflected in the monitoring reports and is discussed further below.

5.3.1 Assessment forms

The Service has developed its own young carers' assessment form which captures the information it requires to provide an effective and bespoke service. This form is completed for every young carer accepted into the Service. SBC teams have their own assessment forms and therefore there is the possibility of duplication of effort.

Further consideration is needed as to what information is required. For example, there may be scope to develop a single young carers' assessment form for use by all SBC teams and the Service.

5.4 Support Provided

On the basis of the young carers and family assessments and the Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities (MACA-YC18) and Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring (PANOC-YC20) questionnaires, the Service makes a decision as to what support is needed. The service model operates through tiered levels of support. Young carers can step up and down the levels as their needs change:

- Tier 1 – young carer is coping and functioning well, requiring low level support.
- Tier 2 – young carer experiencing problems relating to their caring role.
- Tier 3 – young carer entrenched in their role as primary carer, requiring high levels of support.

Out of 190 young carers receiving support in January-March 2018, 74 were receiving Tier 1, 65 were receiving Tier 2 and 26 were receiving Tier 3 (25 were awaiting assessment). There is no time limit on support.

The Service provides a range of support in a variety of ways to suit individual needs e.g. one-to-one, in groups, by telephone, online etc. It disseminates advice and information, including a bi-monthly newsletter for young carers and their families which is distributed by post and email. If the SBC funding continues, one of ERT's priorities is to develop an app to help young carers to access advice and support and find out when activities are taking place. Research suggests that three-quarters of children aged 9 and over have a mobile phone.

As required in the service specification, the Service runs support groups for young carers. These are held on a Wednesday evening at North Shore Academy and provide a respite opportunity which is open to all young carers who are registered with the service. Outings are organised (e.g. to the cinema) when funding is available. Approximately 14 children regularly attend the Reception to Year 3 group, and 26-34 regularly attend the Years 4-6 group.

The Service makes efforts to ensure voices of young people are heard by listening to their thoughts on the Service during group activities and undertaking an annual evaluation. In response, additional funding is sought where possible for specific support projects and activities, and this is discussed further below.

A Young Carers Card has been developed which is issued free of charge and can be used to identify the holder as a young carer. This scheme has been running since January 2016 for carers aged 11-17 years and has been nationally recognised in a Local Government Authority publication, 'Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of young carers'.

The Service works with the Early Help Team and social care teams to provide the necessary advice and support for individual young carers and their families, and works with other

service providers to provide appropriate information for families about relevant services. In accordance with this, support may include:

- a referral via the CHUB to the Early Help Team if wider support is required;
- a referral via the CHUB into children's social care if a social worker is required;
- a referral via Adults First Contact into Adult Services if a social worker is required;
- signposting or a referral to another service.

In order to refer into social care, the Service is required to complete the relevant SBC referral forms, rather than submitting the completed ERT assessment and support plan.

If a social worker is already involved with the family, the Service notifies the relevant social worker it is getting involved with the family.

In all cases, referrals are only made with consent from the young person and/or family. The timescales for providing support and/or referrals depend upon how the relationship between the support worker and the young person and their family develops. The key worker advocates for the young carer and their family as required to promote engagement with the appropriate services. If there is no consent for a referral, information will only be passed onto the appropriate local authority team if a safeguarding issue is identified.

5.5 Young Adult Carers

The legislation requires that consideration is given to young adult carers as a specific group. The service specification states support is available up to a young person's 18th birthday, but recognises the need for flexibility to allow for a smooth transition into adult services for those who reach 18 whilst still engaged with the Service. In practice the Service supports young carers until their education has come to an end and they have moved onto the next step. This is based on the fact that they are still in receipt of child benefit until the end of their education, and it is an important year in terms of their exams. There are not many young carers in this category: in October 2017-March 2018, there have been no young carers receiving support over 18 years of age.

For young carers who are in transition to adulthood, the Service refers the clients to the Adult Carers' Support Service and signposts them to other relevant services if they need continued support. The Young Carers' Service needs to be closely aligned to the Adult Carers' Support Service in order to facilitate a smooth transition across services. However, not many engage with the Adult Service because there is a perception that the service is for older Carers.

Further consideration needs to be given to what can be done for this particular group of carers in order to support them through the transition to adulthood, for example, by working with the Adult Carers' Support Service to facilitate a specialised peer support group.

5.6 Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring reports are not available for the period of the contract.

Since the contract was extended in October 2017, discussions have been held with the Contract Management Team, an interim framework for reporting has been agreed and the Service has submitted the required quantitative and qualitative reports. A meeting with the Contract Manager took place on 24th April as part of the programme for contract monitoring which has now been established up to the end of the current contract.

On the basis of reports submitted in the last two quarters, the Contract Manager has concluded that the Service is performing well in all areas of the service specification and there are no concerns, although a more detailed breakdown of annual budget will be requested from the provider.

There will need to be further consideration of what monitoring data is required moving forward. For example, key working and family support take up a considerable amount of service capacity but have not been captured in the performance framework as set out in the service specification.

At present, the Service's client management system, Charitylog, has limitations in terms of its ability to report on the outcomes of the whole family model. Each young carer in the service has a client record on Charitylog, and each family member has a record which is linked to the relevant young carer's record. Every contact with the young person or family, and every professional discussion (e.g. with social workers) is recorded on the client management system. (Some paper records are also kept e.g. consent forms and meeting notes.)

In 2014, the system was able to record all that ERT were asked for (i.e. numbers of young carers receiving support), but the system is not able to report on the whole family outcomes. It will cost £700 in total to extend the reporting system and train the staff. If the funding for the Service was continued, ERT would pay for the extension of Charitylog to allow for reporting on family outcomes.

Each quarter, ERT sends photocopies of all completed young carers assessment forms for direct referrals to the Early Help Team so that client records can be created on the Early Help information management system to identify them as young carers. This allows the Early Help Team to monitor the direct referrals from non-local authority sources, and has been done on the basis of a consent form which gives permission for ERT to share information with other agencies that would support their families. However, consideration will need to be given as to how this information is being used by Early Help and whether this is permissible under the new GDPR.

5.7 Staffing

The Service employs three full-time key workers, the Manager of the Service and one administrative support worker. Casual workers are also paid for out of the budget to provide additional support to run support groups and holiday activities.

In 2017/18, 82.9% of key worker costs were born within the contact monies as well as 20 hours per week of administrative support and a small part of the Manager's salary. ERT pays the remaining costs for the Manager and key workers (approximately £15k in total).

The current staffing levels are considered by ERT to be adequate and, as at 31st March 2018, there are no waiting lists to access the Service.

Link worker

A request has been made by Early Help for a link worker. The Early Help Review is ongoing so it is not appropriate to consider the request further at this time. If the review of Early Help identified that a link worker would be a valuable addition to the Service, that link worker has been costed at £30k.

5.8 Financial position

In addition to the SBC funding, there are several other established funds which support the Service:

- Redundancy fund - £20,000.
- The Kathy Lindsey Memorial Fund provides £3,500 annually which can be accessed by service users to pay for a one-off item that they cannot afford to pay for themselves. This fund is not accessed often because ERT can usually find funding/support from elsewhere to pay for particular items. An in-house application form is available and access to the fund requires approval by the Board of Directors. The fund is cumulative and any unspent money rolls over to the next year.
- The Lucy Evers Memorial Fund provides £10,283 for service users to access support for anything related to their education e.g. courses, equipment etc.

As discussed above, ERT contributes approximately £15k each year to the contract value for staff salaries.

5.9 Additional funding

It is estimated that ERT provides approximately £50k of extra service above the value of the SBC contract by obtaining funding for specific projects. Examples include:

- Funding of £9,344 for one year from Catalyst to provide 20 young people with counselling (online or face-to-face depending on young person's preference). Twelve were identified in the first quarter alone and all 20 places have now been allocated. There is currently a waiting list of 8 young carers. It is too early to assess outcomes.
- Funding of £5,453 has been obtained from Middlesbrough and Teesside Philanthropic Society and Force for Good (accessed via NARPO) for various activities in 2018/19.
- In kind contributions from partner organisations amounted to approximately £15,000 in 2017/18. Examples include a three day residential break for 24 young carers in August 2018 (worth £3,120) which has been provided to ERT free of charge. Little Sprouts is working with ERT on school holiday cooking workshops to promote healthy eating, and Morelife Activities is providing healthy lifestyle activities for young carers and their families. Art, craft and cooking activities are provided by ARC as part of a school holiday programme.

In 2017/18, fundraising events raised £4,673 and donations of £3,370 were received, which are primarily used for holiday activities.

5.10 Other work

In addition to its work with young carers under the current SBC contract, ERT has a wider programme of work. It runs a youth club three nights per week using funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the Department of Sport. Young carers accessing the Young Carers' Service are encouraged to attend these sessions, but the youth club is not exclusively for young carers.

ERT has also established a small project to work with children and young people who are involved in anti-social behaviour in the Borough and are currently working with a small group of boys in the Tilery area. This project is funded by the Willian Trust. ERT is about to start a community project with a girls group in Roseworth, with funding obtained via Tees Valley

Sport. (This is building upon previous work undertaken by ERT in the Roseworth area to provide school holiday activities.)

ERT is also working with Sported, a UK Sport for Development Charity, to develop business planning processes and has obtained a portable tennis court through the Tennis Serves Project which is delivered by Sporting Equals. The tennis court is available for use by young carers engaged with the service.

The Manager of ERT has stated that if funding was not available from SBC to run the Young Carers' Service after 30th September, ERT would continue to run the projects outlined above and it is likely that its work with young carers would continue, albeit in a reduced capacity.

5.11 Feedback from Service Users

In June 2017, a review of the service was conducted to inform the decision-making around whether to extend the contract until September 2018. As part of that review customer surveys were completed which are sufficiently recent to be of relevance to this review.

A survey was distributed to 150 stakeholders and 27 were completed. The majority of stakeholders were satisfied or very satisfied with the Service (96%). All stakeholders surveyed felt the service staff were helpful. The majority (83-87%) were satisfied with responsiveness, effectiveness, professionalism, accessibility and knowledge of the Service.

Surveys were handed out to children and young people at respite sessions. The children's survey was completed by 8 individuals and all thought that the Service was friendly, helpful and fun. Young people's surveys were completed by 17 individuals. All young people who completed a survey felt listened to by the Service, and described their experience of the Service as positive.

Parent surveys were emailed to all parents whose children were accessing support, and were completed by 25 individuals. All felt listened to by the services, described their experience as very positive, and felt that the service had made a positive difference to them and their children. Parents felt that the service gave their children time to spend with their peers, gave them time to spend together as a family, looked at their needs as a family, and provided support and improved their knowledge about the wider support services that were available.

5.12 Summary of Service Performance

ERT has delivered a good service to young carers and their families throughout the course of the current contract and is undertaking all of the actions set out in the current service specification. A range of work is undertaken to identify young carers and provide support, and ERT have added a significant amount of extra service above the value of the SBC contract.

However, there have been some issues around engagement with SBC teams, and while the whole family and no wrong doors approaches are clearly articulated at strategic level, there is inconsistency in practice within SBC teams.

A task and finish group could be established to discuss relevant issues and processes and to promote greater interaction between the Service and SBC teams.

6. DELIVERY OPTIONS

Several options have been identified for the future delivery of the Young Carers' Service and these are included in Appendix 1 (exempt information).

7. SUMMARY

On the basis of the review of the Service, it is recommended that the Commissioning Group adopt Option 3 as the preferred model.

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