

## Young Carers Future Service provision update

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Frances Nicolson  
Division and Local Member: ALL

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. In September 2018 Cabinet deferred a decision regarding the future direction of young carer provision in Somerset, pending full information about potential options. This decision was further deferred in February 2019, to allow adult commissioners to engage with the voluntary sector. A Cabinet decision is expected in early summer 2019. Until that time, the responsibility for young carers in Somerset is being held within Prevention Services in Children's Services.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the following arrangements, the Director of Children's Services is proposing to present to Cabinet in May:
- To maintain the level of Council spend on Young Carers;
  - To integrate the Young Carers assessment function into mainstream services;
  - To fund the voluntary sector to provide dedicated services for Young Carers where needed;
  - To propose additional arrangements to increase the identification of Young Carers by partner agencies.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. Young Carers are defined as '...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).' [Children and Families Act 2014 Section 96.]

The Act confirms that the Local Authority has a duty to provide an assessment of young carers under the age of 18 regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it.

Local Authorities must also take a whole family approach to assessing and supporting adults so young carer needs can also be identified when undertaking an adult or adult carer needs assessment.

This report provides details of the interim arrangements for fulfilling the Council's assessment responsibilities and in supporting Somerset's young carers.

- 3.2.** Following young carers' team staff moving to other posts in March 2019, local YMCA organisations are delivering young carer support groups to the same level as previously established by SCC young carer staff. These groups have largely moved to YMCA purpose-built premises, so children benefit from access to a greater range of activities and equipment. The YMCA young carers group staff are also able to support young carers to access youth activities alongside other children within their premises, to widen involvement with their peers.

Newly requested assessments and reassessments are being undertaken by getset and Team 8 staff, who are offering ongoing Level 3 services where an appropriate family need is identified and are confirming lead practitioner support arrangements with schools at level 2. It is clear that a significant number of young carers are well supported by their school, with named staff available to them, planned pastoral care support and group activities with other vulnerable children.

The Adult services assessment framework is compliant with the requirement to identify carers. Further communication is being provided to Adult Services staff to enhance understanding of their duty to identify young carers and the referral process to enable these children to receive appropriate support.

#### **4. Consultations undertaken**

- 4.1.** 60 young carers took part in an engagement group in November 2018. A family survey was sent to all young carer parents / carers in late February. This closed on 31<sup>st</sup> March by which time nine responses had been received. A summary of responses is attached on the last page of this report.
- 4.2.** Feedback has been gathered by Team 8 staff from Young Carers about their initial experiences of YMCA support groups. Children have expressed relief that the groups are continuing, that the YMCA venues are better than those used previously and that they are enjoying the wider range of activities on offer.

#### **5. Future proposed service provision**

- 5.1.** YMCAs have offered to run group provision until the end of the school summer term, pending the decision from Cabinet about the future operating model.
- 5.2.** No decisions have yet been made in relation to the best way to secure the engagement of the local voluntary sector, options range from a grant based approach to a county wide full tendering approach. Proposed key criteria will include the ability to raise additional sources of funding and the use of volunteers to secure added value in any funding arrangements.

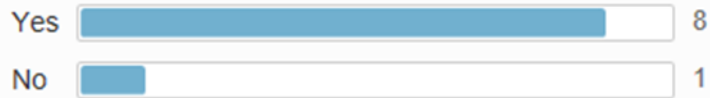
#### **6. Background papers**

- 6.** Parental responses to family survey – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (below)

## Young Carers Survey 2019 Summary Graphs

1

Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person who identifies as a Young Carer in Somerset?



2

How many of your children/young people identify as Young Carers?

