

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny Committee – 13 December 2019

Young Carers - Update

Lead Officer: Louise Palmer

Author: Louise Palmer

Contact Details: lzpalmer@somerset.gov.uk

Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson

1. Summary

- 1.2 On 13 May 2019, Cabinet agreed the future support arrangements for young carers based upon a vision for better identification of, better engagement with and better support for young carers both known and unknown within Somerset.
- 1.3 There were three components to the decision, all funded initially by SCC;
 - a) **Complex needs:** £120,000 allocated to assess and support young carers with more complex needs – facilitated via Team 8 and the Early Help Assessment tool.
 - b) **Grant Funding Young Carers Groups:** £53,000 annual grant fund for the facilitation of young carers support groups throughout Somerset. Managed initially by Children's Commissioning and Team 8, involving young carers themselves in the decision to award grants.
 - c) **Community Alliance:** £75,000 to develop a 'community alliance' to build local capacity to support young carers, especially those who may otherwise be hidden. This includes working with external organisations/enterprises to maximise social value and securing additional funding from other sources.
- 1.4 The first two of these actions (1.3a and 1.3b) have been implemented and progress is being monitored.
- 1.5 The third action – to develop a community alliance – is being developed with a grant funding process planned for Spring 2020.

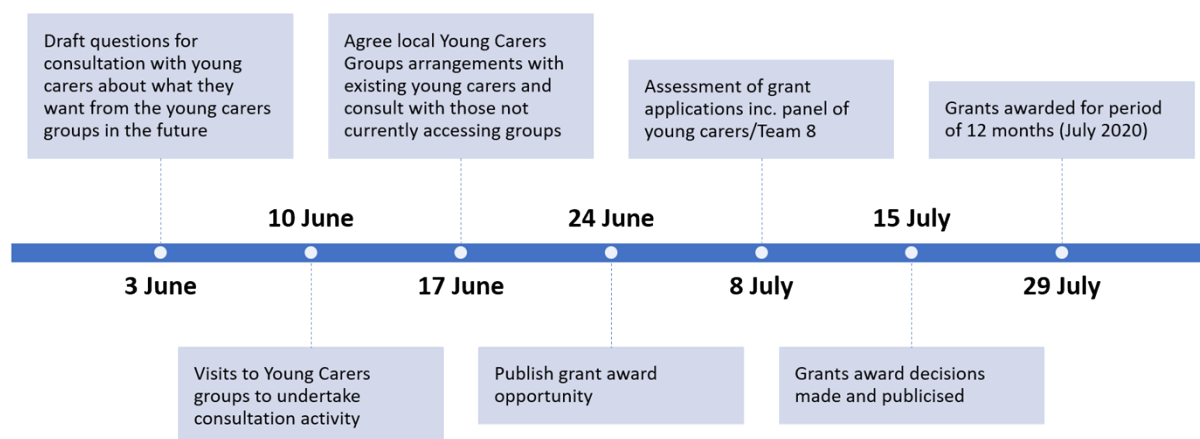
2. Young Carers with Complex Needs (1.3a)

- 2.1 Team 8 provide a preventative family service, working with a range of needs which impact family life and risk the escalation of that family into social care. Needs include mental health, eating disorders, family dysfunction, victimisation and gang related activity.
- 2.2 The investment of £120k has enabled capacity to be created and established in Team 8, allowing all staff to work with young carers with complex needs.
- 2.3 All staff in the team have the skills and knowledge to work with young carers, there are no young carer specific workers.
- 2.4 There are 222 young carers allocated to a worker in Team 8, as of November 2019. This is broken down by area as follows:
 - Taunton & West Somerset – 59
 - Mendip – 51
 - Sedgemoor – 49
 - South Somerset - 63
- 2.5 63% of young carers known to Team 8 are female.

- 2.6 Team 8 is restructuring into the Family Intervention Team (FIS) January, which will extend the team's reach and capacity, enabling young carers to receive a service at evenings and weekends
- 2.7 Identification of Young Carers is via an Early Help Assessment (EHA), which may be completed by any professional in Somerset, including schools and NHS staff. This EHA may be used to refer to a service such as Team 8/FIS, who will then assign a worker and find out further information.
- 2.8 The Children & Families assessment and Early Help Assessment now have specific young carers questions within them. From this, a young carer can be referred to one of the youth groups, to Team 8/FIS or to social care where required.
- 2.9 Team 8/FIS provide further analysis to the assessment, which may change the response required, escalating to safeguarding or reducing to a community-based service such as the young carers youth clubs.

3. Grant funding young carers groups (1.3b)

- 3.1 Four organisations have been awarded funding to run five young carers groups in each area of Somerset from August 2019 – July 2020.
- 3.2 The bidding process followed the timetable below, including consultation with young carers, and assessment of bids by young carers.



- 3.3 An online survey was developed to capture young carers' views on young carers groups provision. The link was shared with existing young carers groups via the YMCAs, shared with school associations for further distribution within school networks, the Friends of Somerset Young Carers, CAMHs, SPCF, Young Somerset, Spark Somerset and Engage.
- 3.4 A number of bids were received for all areas of the county, including West Somerset, where no SCC young carers group provision had previously run.
- 3.5 Each bid was assessed for viability, cost, innovation and scope.
- 3.6 The strongest theme communicated by young carers involved in the evaluation of each bid was the desire for continuity;

"I'd like the group to be the kept the same but with more trips offered"
"Happy with group as it is"
"I'd like the group to be weekly but I like the group as it is"
"I wouldn't change anything about the group"

- 3.7 Funding of £49,564.30 was awarded across the following organisations:
- YMCA Dulverton Group (Sedgemoor)
 - YMCA Mendip & South Somerset (Mendip & South Somerset)
 - Minehead EYE (West Somerset)
 - YMCA Taunton (Taunton)
- 3.8 Commissioners sent a letter to the households of approximately 200 young carers known to Somerset County Council at the start of the new school year to inform about the Autumn term programme of young carers groups and to boost uptake.
- 3.9 A further letter is due out in December to inform young carers about the 2020 programme.

4. Young carers Community Alliance (1.3c)

- 4.1 The purpose of the Community Alliance is to increase identification and support to ensure more young carers get a range of support to choose from, with organisations outside the council.
- 4.2 A meeting has been arranged the end of January with a range of interested stakeholders to discuss how best to take this work forward.
- 4.3 Following this, a grant funding process will begin in the Spring to identify a range of voluntary sector organisations who can offer relevant and novel ways of identifying and supporting young carers. The grant process will require successful organisations to work together to share best practice.

5. Identification and participation data

- 5.1 Young Carer attendance at the new youth clubs from Sept – Oct 2019 have remained stable compared to participation in the groups which existed prior to the Cabinet decision, with the exception of the newly commissioned group in Minehead.
- 5.2 The new group in Minehead Eye did not exist prior to being commissioned in September and has begun with three attendees. This is expected to grow during the next quarter.
- 5.3 Attendance at the new youth clubs represents 37% of the young carers with an allocated Team 8 worker
- 5.4 A recent school survey asked for schools to report numbers of young carers in each school. 50% of schools responded. These schools reported 144 young carers in total who are not known to the council.
- 5.5 This data will be analysed so that schools are supported by relevant services where needed to ensure young carers are getting the right help.

6. Additional opportunities for Young Carers

- 6.1 The Bath Philharmonia has been successful in applying for funding from youth Music to improve access to music and provide opportunities for music making for young carers in Somerset. Two projects will run in Somerset offering dedicated ensemble sessions for our young carers, with the intention of a final performance at the Glastonbury Festival in 2021.
- 6.2 Friends of Somerset Young Carers continue to offer funding to individual young carers and to young carers groups.

- 6.3 Triangle of Care is a participation group for carers run by Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, who have taken an active interest in young carers and have asked for regular reports on progress, and welcome requests for support.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 To implement the Community Alliance plans
7.2 To explore input for schools so that young carers can be supported appropriately
7.3 To work with adult commissioners to create an all-age carers plan and to review Somerset's offer to all carers, including young carers.
7.4 To return to Scrutiny in July 2020 to report on the first 12 months of the new arrangements.

8. Background papers

- 8.1 Feedback from Young Carers