

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

12 OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES TO YOUNG CARERS IN BRIDGEND

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an overview of the current service provision for Young Carers in Bridgend.

2. Connection to Corporate Plan / Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report supports the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017:

- **Priority 3:** Working with children and families to tackle problems early
- **Priority 5:** Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles
- **Priority 6:** Working together to make the best use of our resources

- 2.2 Supporting carers is a priority in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. A key feature of the Act is to provide equal rights for carers, putting them on a similar legal footing as those they care for.

3. Background

- 3.1 A carer is defined in the Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure 2010 as an individual, whether an adult or a child, who provides or intends to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis for:-

- a) A child who is disabled within the meaning of part 3 of the Children Act 1989, or
- b) An individual aged 18 or over

- 3.2 According to Carers Wales research, there are currently over 369,186 unpaid Carers in Wales with 17,855, in Bridgend. This is an increase of 10% since the previous census figure which was 16,164. Carers in Wales save the economy £7.72 billion per annum which is more than it costs to run the NHS. The NHS and Social Services rely on the willingness and ability of carers to provide support to people with health and social needs. The cost of replacing this care has been estimated at £7.72 billion each year. The 2011 Census identified 1372 Young Carers in Bridgend. (Carers UK, 2011).

- 3.3 A Young Carer is someone aged under 18 years old who takes responsibility for someone who is disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress or affected by substance misuse, or has substantial responsibility for caring for a sibling (ABMU Carers Strategy 2013-2016).

Young Carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. The tasks undertaken can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care and the structure of the family as a whole. Some Young Carers may undertake high levels of care, whereas for others it may be frequent low levels of care. Either can impact heavily on a child or young person.

- 3.4 The table below illustrates the number of children who are carers in the Bridgend area based on the 2001 and 2011 Census data.

| Number of Young Carers 2001 | Number of Young Carers 2011 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 509 | 1372 |

4. Current Situation / Proposal

4.1 Local Support for Young Carers

A Carers Strategy for Bridgend County Borough has been developed by the Bridgend Carers Forum in partnership with statutory and non-statutory organisations and was reported to Cabinet in April 2010. Young Carers are specifically mentioned in page 12 of the ABMU Carers Strategy, highlighting their specific needs.

4.2 Carer Strategy (Wales) Measure 2010

The Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure enabled the National Assembly of Wales to introduce legal duties on the NHS (lead organisation) and Local Authorities in Wales to work together and, in consultation with Carers, to prepare, publish and implement a joint Carers Information and Consultation Strategy. The Measure is not targeted at specific age groups but encompasses Carers of all ages including Young Carers (under the age of 18) and Young Adult Carers (aged 18 – 25 years).

4.3 Guidance issued by Welsh Government in relation to the Information and Consultation Strategy, specifically seeks to ensure that:

- Carers have the right information at the right time to support them;
- all health staff (including GPs) and Social Care organisations coming into contact with Carers can recognise their needs, provide them with appropriate information and signpost them to relevant services;
- Statutory agencies properly engage with Carers as partners in the provision of care involving them at all levels in the assessment, delivery and evaluation of care arrangements;
- A partnership is established between each Local Health Board, Local Authority, and Carers Service, so that a commitment is made to the ongoing joint working to improve the lives of Carers in the Local Health Board area;
- To ensure that action plans set out specific actions for Young Carers and Black, Minority Ethnic Carers.

- 4.4 Senior managers in Childrens and Wellbeing work closely in relation to the Carers Strategy, a component part of which is Young Carers. Childrens Directorate has responsibility for the identification and assessment of Young Carers. It also has responsibility for the assessment and disability services for disabled children and young people. There is a connection with the Carers Strategy given the caring responsibilities undertaken by parents of disabled children and the caring role their siblings undertake.
- 4.5 ABMU Carers Partnership Board has worked with Young Carers to develop information that is important to them, identified their needs through consultation and liaised with Young Carer groups regarding service development.
- 4.6. An ABMU wide Young Carers sub group meets regularly to plan services and support to Young Carers across the Western Bay area e.g. in 2014 the sub group arranged and funded a Young Carers residential consultation event.
- 4.7 Funding from the Carers Measure to date has enabled the purchase and provision of a range of resources to Young Carers. These include:
- A comprehensive booklet that can be used by Young Carers and professionals working with Young Carers, the booklet was designed in partnership with the ABMU wide Young Carers partnership and with Young Carers themselves;
 - A leaflet specifically for schools to assist with working with Young Carers;
 - A DVD produced by Young Carers themselves 'Too Tough to Teach' to raise awareness of Young Carers issues, in particular some of the challenges they face at school;
 - A board game designed by Young Carers which can be used at schools as part of PSE lessons to highlight Young Carer's issues;
 - I.D Cards and associated leaflets (see below).
- 4.8. In October 2013, a Carers Coordinator for both Adult and Children's services was appointed. A component part of the role is the development of services for Young Carers.
- 4.9 In October 2014, the Carers Coordinator organised a Young Carers conference for professionals that may encounter Young Carers. Young Carers attended this event to share their experiences and their views and to assist in identifying gaps in current service provision. The key issues the Young Carers identified were the 'missed opportunities' by professionals to identify Young Carers; and the difficulties Young Carers themselves have in self identifying themselves to staff at school, and the need for an I.D. Card. These two priorities have shaped the work plan for the Carers Coordinator for the past 12 months.

- 4.10 In response to the issues raised by the Young Carers, a training programme was devised to raise awareness of Young Carers' issues which has been delivered to 9 schools with 2 further sessions scheduled. The training has also been delivered to some of the social work teams in adults and children's services and has also been delivered to all of the school health nurses. As a direct result of the training, referrals to the Young Carers Coordinator have increased significantly as awareness is being raised.
- 4.11 The Carers Coordinator and Young Carers Coordinator have also jointly delivered training to young people at school via PSE days.
- 4.12 Following a consultation exercise undertaken by Action for Children and the Young Adult Carers Community Voice project, a Young Carers I.D card has been designed and developed. These cards were formally launched on 11th September 2015 at Brynteg Comprehensive School. Following the launch, the Carers Coordinator has emailed every school in Bridgend explaining that the card has been launched, enclosing a leaflet explaining the expectations on schools when the card is presented. To date there has been very positive feedback from members of the public and other partner agencies regarding the card. The I.D card will now be issued to every Young Carer as an outcome of a statutory assessment which has confirmed the Young Carer status. The Young Carer's Coordinator will maintain a central database of all I.D cards issued, and will review historical Young Carer assessments in order to issue the eligible Young Carers with an I.D. card.
- 4.13 The Young Carers Coordinator has also developed and implemented a new assessment tool for Young Carers.
- 4.14 In July 2014, a Young Carers Coordinator was appointed. The primary role of this post holder is to undertake statutory Young Carers assessments but has also assisted in development work with the Carers Coordinator. As an outcome of a statutory assessment, if the Young Person has been identified as a Young Carer a support plan will be developed with the Young Carer which could include a referral to a specialist service or support to access a mainstream provision, e.g. a youth worker to support the young person to commence attending a local youth club or activity.

The following is an overview of service provision for Young Carers and young adult carers within the county borough to date:

- The Young Carers' project based at Action for Children Family Centre in Brackla currently provides support to 50 Young Carers aged 8-18. There are currently 3 Young People on the waiting list for a service; these will be allocated a place by November 2015. Term time support groups are run on a Monday evening between 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm. The groups are split into 3 age groups, 8-11; 12-14 and 15-18. The purpose of the groups is to enable the young people to have opportunities to socialise and to provide an outlet to ask for further support.

During school holidays, the service provides trips and activities for the young people. In the summer 2015 school holidays the service worked with the Adult Young Carers service and Bridgend Carers Centre to provide additional activities. The Young Carers were able to access activities such as trips to Thorpe Park; Midlands Safari Park; ski-ing; horse-riding and gorge walking. There is a graffiti workshop and laser tag workshop booked for October half term holidays.

The service also offers 1:1 support and working with the whole family as and when required. This work covers such issues as bullying, school work, anxieties, relationships and supporting quality family time.

- The Young Adult Carer Community Voice Project based at The Carers Centre, is Big Lottery funded resulting from a joint bid by The Carers Centre and Action for Children. The project supports Young Adult Carers between the ages of 16-25 and provides training to Young Adult Carers in assertiveness and confidence building. Most Young Adult Carers attending this project have transferred from the Action for Children Young Carers project, with the aim being to provide continuity of support as they make the transition themselves into adulthood. The project is currently working with 20 Young Adult Carers, and over the past four months the Young Adults Carers forum has continued to meet, the service has also facilitated Mindfulness training; emotional health workshops; peer mentoring; Skills for Success training in addition to trips to Go Ape and a Wales rugby match. The project has undertaken consultations with Welsh Assembly Government and for research at the University of Birmingham. The project has also commenced a YAC editorial group to manage and create a new Young Adult Carers newsletter. The project is currently supporting 20 Young Adult Carers.
- A Young Carers E-learning resource is the process of being developed and rolled out.
- There are now lead workers (ex Youth Service) based in every comprehensive school in Bridgend who can work with Young Carers if they so wish. With the consent of the Young Carers who have been identified via the statutory assessment process, the Young Carers Coordinator has notified every lead worker of the names of the Young Carers within their school to enable them to make contact and offer support. This therefore, provides a consistent daily support to Young Carers in addition to/or in place of attending one of the specialist services referred to above.
- There is a Young Carers steering group which meets on a 4-6 weekly basis. This group is made up of key stakeholders from the specialist support services and from within BCBC, The group is chaired by the Group Manager for Disability Transition and Case Management, and oversees the issues and developments in relation to Young Carers.

5. Effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no current budget cost pressures for this financial year ending March 2016. However for the last three years The Welsh Government has allocated a “carer’s measure” grant which funds activities and the carer’s coordinator post. This grant funding we believe ceases at the end of March 2016 and Local Authorities will be responsible for securing the young carers activity through core budgets. As noted above the post of carer’s coordinator has been instrumental in securing the required statutory process and services to date and the Local Authority will need to replicate this going forward to ensure it remains statutorily compliant and inspection ready. The young carer’s assessor is within early help core budget and also requires annual review and budget allocation.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes this report.

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Background documents

None